

Severe floods in England

Rainfall in many areas in the South of England this winter at more than twice the average for January and February has caused severe floods. Parts of several towns and villages in these areas have been inundated, roads made impassable for normal traffic, with properties, even interiors of homes and businesses flooded in very large numbers. Accompanying gale force winds at times have brought down trees and power lines causing power cuts to thousands of homes and severe disruption to road and rail transport.

At the start of these incidents, the affected people have been very resilient relying on their own initiatives and resources to do what they could to minimise the damage to their properties and to help vulnerable people in their neighbourhoods. Affected people were visibly shaken by the plight they were facing but there was no panic or disorderly conduct. The local authorities and the emergency services were magnificent in their help and support to the affected people.

When it was clear that the adverse weather would be prolonged and severe, local and central government authorities, emergency services like the Police and Fire & Rescue and organisations like the Environment Agency and Met Office got together to co-ordinate plans and action to alleviate the problem. The government announced additional funds and even the military were called in to help evacuate affected people and to set up temporary flood barriers. Even the press, radio and television played a useful part in providing up to the minute news and criticising authorities and organisations, where appropriate, without fear or favour.

According to the experts, the adverse weather is expected to continue for several more days and even weeks. But the way the authorities and organisations in the country are working together to assist and support the affected people is admirable. SCOT General Council expresses sincere solidarity with the people affected and wishes them well for the future and a quick return to normal. Good social conscience is a strong trait of SCOT members; they react positively and promptly to help others. The General Council would request all members to be particularly vigilant at present and be prepared to assist vulnerable people in their neighbourhood needing help.

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