



December 2010

Dear Parish Council / Flood Action Group

Improved Flood Warning Service

At the Environment Agency we are always improving our flood warning service and we want to let you know about some important changes to your current service. As a Parish Clerk or member of a Flood Action Group, we are hoping that you can help us communicate these changes in your area.

We have revised our flood warning codes and updated our warning messages on Floodline Warnings Direct (FWD) and Floodline. They are simpler to understand, provide an earlier alert for the possibility of flooding, provide more local information and are clearer on the actions you need to take.

Our new three stage warning service - Flood Alert, Flood Warning and Severe Flood Warning will help you prepare before, and take action during a flood.

A Flood Warning will be issued when we expect your property to flood, to tell you to take immediate action to protect yourself and your property when you receive this message.

If the flooding poses a significant risk to life or significant disruption to your community we will then issue a Severe Flood Warning, but we will only do this in exceptional circumstances. This message will inform you to take additional action and follow the advice of emergency services.

Other improvements include:

- **Online forecasts of flood risk:** Every day we will put a County based forecast for the next three days on our website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk. This will be produced by our Flood Forecasting Centre and will include information about the upcoming risk of flooding from rivers, the sea, surface water and groundwater.
- **River levels on the internet:** We now provide information on the internet so you can monitor river levels in your local area.
- **Live information in our messages and on our website:** We will include 'real-time' information within our warning messages and on our website. This will give you specific information for your area including when flooding is expected and what locations will be affected.

We have enclosed a leaflet with details of the new flood warning codes, when we will issue them and what action you need to take when you receive them. Please

familiarise yourself with the changes, and update any community flood plans you hold. Please also share copies of the leaflet with your community.

Full details of the changes can also be found on our website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/floodmidlands.

We also enclose an article about the changes that you may wish to include in local newsletters or other publications, to help us inform your community about the revised flood warning codes.

My team and I are happy to discuss the changes, as well as offer advice on writing or amending community flood plans, either over the telephone or by attending relevant meetings. Please do not hesitate to contact us on 01543 404969 or by emailing, susan.mccarthy@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Susan McCarthy'.

Susan McCarthy
Team Leader Flood Incident Management
Midlands – Central Area