

Tarring Flood Action Group



# Flood Risk at Home

How you can protect your property in the event of a flood

**STAY SAFE!**

**If you are in  
immediate danger**

**CALL 999**

## Am I at risk?

If you live in a flood risk area – and the Tarring Conservation Area, including the High Street, is a flood risk area - then there are a number of ways in which you can protect your home from flood water. A number of properties in the Street and surrounding areas have recently suffered the effects of flooding following heavy rainfall.

Tarring Flood Action Group (TFAG) has introduced a number of initiatives to reduce the risk of flooding and continues to work with a number of agencies to that end. However, given the nature of our built-up environment and the consequences of Climate Change, it is likely that risk to people and property from flash floodwater will be increasing and ever-present.

A recent survey carried out on behalf of TFAG by Project Centre has drawn up a map of the areas that are most at risk. Contact us at [tarringfloodgroup@outlook.com](mailto:tarringfloodgroup@outlook.com) if you would like a copy.

## What are my options?

Local Authorities do not routinely provide flood protection for private or commercial properties and it remains the responsibility of the property owner to take appropriate action to protect their property from flooding. This Guideline Note is one of two that have been produced by TFAG to help residents protect their property when flooding occurs.

Contact us at [tarringfloodgroup@outlook.com](mailto:tarringfloodgroup@outlook.com) if you would like a copy of **Guideline Note 2 “Flood risk at home – How can I proactively protect my property?”**

There are a number of options available to protect yourself and your property if a flood event occurs, including:

- **Sandbags**
- **FloodSax sandless bags or equivalent products**
- **Doorway floodgate barriers**
- **Airbrick flood covers**

For more information about the Tarring Flood Action Group visit [www.tarringfloodaction.org.uk](http://www.tarringfloodaction.org.uk)

## Sand Bags

Although they have been the standard property protection method for many years, the Environment Agency is not a fan of sandbags!

It says that sandbags have many pitfalls, including seepage, weight, set-up time and post-flood disposal. People should look to other products specifically designed to be fit for purpose when flooding strikes.

The Agency states:

***“Sandbags are relatively ineffective when compared to purpose-built flood protection products. We strongly encourage people to use these alternative products.”***



TFAG does not have the resources available to mount a sandbag filling operation in the event of a flood and supports the Environment Agency view that alternative products should be used.

Whilst sand bags are not the preferred method to protect property it is acknowledged that there is sometimes no alternative. The level of protection largely depends on how the bags are positioned and how quickly you can get them into place. The Environment Agency has produced a useful document aimed to provide detailed advice. You can download a copy by clicking on, or copying and pasting the following link or scanning the QR code on your mobile phone:-

**<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sandbags-how-to-use-them-to-prepare-for-a-flood>**



## Alternatives to Sand Bags

The Environment Agency now says that anti-flood devices such as FloodSax® are one way forward for people to protect their home.

The Agency states:

***“FloodSax® are a lighter, modern version of sand bags. The sacks need to be soaked in water so they expand, and then placed around the entrances to your home to protect against floodwater. They take up little storage and can be cost effective.”***

The Agency warns people to prepare beforehand as they just won't have enough time to react to flooding emergencies.

***“The most important thing is to prepare now by buying flood products in advance. Don't wait until flooding looks likely as you won't have time to buy or put the measures in place.”***

FloodSax® sandless sandbags look at first like a large pillowcase, weigh just 700 grammes before they come into contact with water and then they expand in around three minutes to weigh 20kg (44lbs) which means they are easy to store and deploy by most residents.



- Easy to store and can be vacuumed-packed to save even more room
- Can be expanded in water right next to where you need them and stay taut until flood subsides. **Please note that they cannot be energized by salt (sea) water**
- Lightweight before they are used with the standard bag weighing just 0.2kg (7 ounces) so can be used by people who would not be able to lift sandbags
- One can be expanded and put down the toilet to block it from foul water being forced up by the floodwater backing up through the drains and sewer where flood and foul sewers are combined - as is the case in some parts of the Conservation Area
- Long shelf-life (approx 5 years)
- 100% biodegradable

Floodsax and similar products can be purchased from local Building Merchants, such as Jewsons and Wickes and some have an own-brand version. FloodSax® can also be purchased from a variety of online suppliers, such as <https://stopmeflooding.co.uk>. Search 'sandless sand bags' for the best offers and to explore brands other than Floodsax, e.g HydroSnake, Quick Dam, DAM IT UP flood & spill barriers

Prices vary by supplier, but the cost is approximately £6 each. 5-7 FloodSax® are required to protect a single doorway, depending on the width. Check the instructions on the product purchased.

Please note that, once energized, they cannot be reused. For further information go to <http://www.floodsax.co.uk/>

## Doorway Flood Barriers

A more efficient method of halting floodwater ingress is a waterproof gate or barrier that is quick and easy to install.

Doorways come in many shapes and sizes, particularly in conservation areas like ours. There is no one-size fits all solution, but there are a number of alternatives at varying levels of cost. Some of these can be off-the-shelf products that come in a range of standard sizes, but others may need to be custom made.

Although more expensive than Floodsax type products, these types of barriers can be easily and quickly placed in position, and just as quickly removed when the flood or threat is diminished.

There are a number of companies offering this type of product, and if you wish to investigate further, two good starting points are [www.floodgate.ltd.uk/floodgates/](http://www.floodgate.ltd.uk/floodgates/) and <http://www.floodtite.com>.

These companies and many others offer a range of standard sizes as well custom made options to fit the less standard-sized doors that may be more prevalent in the conservation area. But do search the web for alternative suppliers!



## Air Brick Barriers

Yet another entry point for floodwater is the humble airbrick. So vital for the safe ventilation of your home, the airbrick needs to be blocked off to prevent the ingress of floodwater. As with Doorway Flood Barriers above, Floodgate and Floodtite (as well as other suppliers) offer easy-to-fit air brick barriers that can be quickly isolated.

Floodgate also offer the SMART AirBrick which is designed to replace existing airbricks. This retro-fitted product will shut off automatically when the waters rise, and return to a safe condition when the water has receded. More information can be found at [www.floodgate.ltd.uk/airbricks/](http://www.floodgate.ltd.uk/airbricks/), but do search the internet for alternative products.



**Remember: If you have suffered a flood, it is important to make sure that all airbricks are free of silt and functioning properly before using any boilers, heaters or fires that require ventilation.**

## Toilet Stoppers

A common cause of flood damage, even in otherwise well protected properties, is where foul water is forced up the W.C. This is caused by floodwater backing up through the drains and sewer. There is a greater risk of this in locations where surface water drains and foul sewers are combined - as is the case in some parts of the Tarring Conservation Area. There is a large range of flood defence products that will help with this.

Local builders' merchants sell fairly simple, easy to fit solutions such as Floodtite Toilet 'Panseal', an anti-flooding device for a downstairs toilet, which creates a secure seal around the toilet pan rim to prevent the back-flow of flood and foul waste water. It is fitted in seconds and requires nothing more than a few squeezes from a normal bicycle pump, which is included in the pack.



More robust solutions include FloodKit® Toilet Stopper, a patented product that will also prevent floodwater entering a downstairs bathroom from an overflowing toilet pan. It is designed to fit different shapes and widths of toilet, but requires a little more in terms of initial set up than simpler systems.

# More Information

## National Flood Forum - “Blue Pages”

Although local Builder’s Merchants are a good option for purchasing sand bags and more effective flood protection products it can be confusing to decide what type of cost effective product is best for you.

A charity called The National Flood Forum has produced the “Blue Pages” a directory of flood protection products and services put together to advise and inform you of the range of products available to help reduce the risk of flooding to your home or business.

This can be viewed by going to <http://www.bluepages.org.uk/> or phoning 01299 403055.

## Other things you can do to “Be Prepared”

- Identify your property risks and make sure that your flood defence devices are ready and you know how to use them
- Keep up to date with the latest information including by listening to local radio - especially when bad weather is expected
- Move important items to a higher level if possible
- Prepare an emergency grab bag containing bottled water, warm clothes, medicines and other essential items
- Keep a copy of the Tarring Flood Action Group’s Emergency Action Plan easily accessible so you know what to do, and who to contact, if necessary

*“We hope that this guideline note has been useful in getting you to think about how you can protect your property against flash flooding.*

*Make sure that you have the appropriate flood defence devices available to hand, or already fitted, so that you can protect yourself, your family and your belongings!”*

**Tarring Flood Action Group**