



# **STOKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

## **EMERGENCY PLAN**

<b>Adopted:</b>	<b>16 March 2023</b>
<b>Updated:</b>	<b>29 July 2025</b>
<b>Updated:</b>	<b>1 March 2026</b>
<b>Updated:</b>	<b>29 May 2026</b>
<b>Updated:</b>	
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## Introduction and Aim

Our world is experiencing disruptive changes, for example, in weather patterns, the spread of infectious diseases, and geopolitical activity that can affect global supply chains. Any of these could lead to a situation where the parish finds itself without essential services, water, food, or transport and/or with multiple casualties who require assistance and support.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 creates an obligation on Local Authorities (South Hams District Council) to prepare a contingency plan for self-help in the case of emergency, and in turn it is good practice for parish councils to have an emergency plan. The Stokenham Parish Council Emergency Plan has been prepared to assist the residents of the parish to cope in the event of an emergency or other unforeseen situation that results in the disruption of normal day-to-day life in and across the area.

Most emergencies will be attended promptly by the 'blue light' services, that is to say, the police, fire and rescue, ambulance, and possibly the coastguard as appropriate. **The overall aim of the plan is to provide a framework to enable Stokenham Parish Council to support the community when outside aid from the emergency services and other agencies is unavailable or delayed, and in the rare event that such services are overwhelmed.**

This guidance by its very nature is generic and can be adapted to any incident. Once the emergency services are in attendance the information in the plan can then be used to provide assistance and local knowledge.

Situations that might require the community to act independently of the emergency services include isolation caused by coastal or river flooding, isolation due to impassable roads blocked by snow, or the unavailability of help from the emergency services due to widespread disaster or pandemic. The A379 is particularly vulnerable in the event of the sea breaching the Slapton Line between Torcross and Strete Gate, as is currently the case. In other situations, such as major spillage, aircraft accident, or missing persons, the emergency services might be reliant on local knowledge to assist their efforts.

The support provided includes the provision of first-line support for those who are in trauma or distress. This may involve psychological support. Whilst all people are vulnerable in emergency situations, there are some groups of people who are particularly vulnerable at such times, for example children, frail older people, those with mobility and/or learning difficulties, people who are isolated, and those who receive care from others. These groups of people will be identified and contacted in the event of an ongoing emergency as a priority through liaison with other agencies (for example, as happened during the Covid pandemic).

The Parish Council's designated Emergency Team (page 10) is headed by the Chair of the Council. The Chair of the Council leads and coordinates the community response and liaises with the emergency services, Local Authority, and media. It is the

responsibility of all other Councillors, as locally elected representatives, to participate in the emergency response as necessary. All Parish Councillors possess a full copy of the plan.

Lists of services and facilities available within and outside the parish, together with the contact numbers of individual volunteers who may be able to provide assistance, are available in the Appendices (pages 11-22). The Parish Council is very grateful to all volunteers listed in the appendices; in an emergency the participation of volunteers is central to a viable response.

The **Appendices** contain the following information:

1. Fresh Water Supplies
2. Food Suppliers and Cooking Equipment (out of hours)
3. Specialized Equipment (vehicles, lifting equipment, pumps)
4. Medical Services (doctors, nurses, pharmacists)
5. Emergency Accommodation (halls, schools, churches)
6. Emergency Services (including out of hours)
7. Pastoral Care/Psychological Support
8. Road and Snow Wardens
9. Call Cascade
10. Immediate Action Form

**To ensure confidentiality the contents of the Appendices are protected.**

The Emergency Plan will be updated annually and any suggestions for corrections, additions or updates should be sent to the Clerk, Gill Claydon, Highfield, Kiln Lane, Stokenham TQ7 2SF, email: [clerk@stokenham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stokenham-pc.gov.uk)

Please ensure you have the latest printed copy of this plan as details may be subject to change.

**REMEMBER:**  
**In an emergency, under no circumstances should you  
put yourself or others at risk**

## Characteristics of the Parish of Stokenham

The coastal Parish of Stokenham, one of the larger parishes in the South Hams of Devon, covers some 21 square kilometres. The parish consists of thirteen villages, hamlets and settlements the largest of which, Chillington, has some 500 households, a post office and general store, health centre, Methodist church and a public house together with a group of small industrial units. It also has a community hall with a sports field and children's play equipment. Stokenham itself has approximately 165 households, the parish church, a school, parish hall, farm shop with bar/pizzeria (offering a warm space during the energy crisis), and two public houses. The coastal villages include Torcross with a public house and several cafes, and Beesands with a public house, cafe/restaurant, and chapel. The remaining hamlets have no services at present. In total there are over 1,100 homes in the parish with a population of approximately 2,000.

The parish has many special designations including a National Landscape area, Area of Great Landscape Value, Coastal Preservation Area, Heritage Coast and Conservation Area. There are also Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) together with part of the National Nature Reserve of Slapton Ley and the adjacent shingle bank known as Slapton Sands, which separates the freshwaters of the ley from the seas of Start Bay. Many people in the parish are fiercely protective of such areas and take their responsibility as custodians, of these and other local natural environments, very seriously.

Chillington, Stokenham and Torcross are linked by the A379; a regular bus service runs along the route between Torcross and Kingsbridge and on to Plymouth. The outlying villages are reached along secondary roads not served by public transport. Many of the roads within the parish, including parts of the A379, are extremely narrow with passing places, and quickly become congested in the high tourist season and when there are road closures making access for emergency vehicles difficult at times.

The high number of tourists between March and October each year results in an increased proportion of the population being unfamiliar with the area. Any response to an emergency should be cognizant of the fact that tourists may be unaware of the risks inherent in their surroundings and lack the local knowledge necessary to keep themselves safe.

The nearest fire and rescue stations, both retained, are in Kingsbridge and Dartmouth and fire firefighters with firefighting equipment from both towns regularly attend incidents in the parish. The South Hams Hospital in Kingsbridge has a Minor Injuries Unit, open between the hours of 08.30 and 17.30, seven days a week. The X-ray department at the hospital is open Monday to Friday, 09.00 to 17.00. The nearest railway station is in Totnes.

There is a petrol station in East Charleton approximately 1.8 miles from the parish boundary in Chillington located towards Kingsbridge on the A379.

## Emergency Preparedness

Householders are recommended to keep a 3-day supply of bottled water (at 2 litres per person per day) in the home, together with ready-to-eat, non-perishable foods and a can opener. This supply should be checked regularly. They are also advised to prepare and keep close at hand a grab bag containing essential items in the event that they are required to evacuate their home in an emergency. The bag should be small enough to carry and be stored in a safe place where family members can find it. Contents of the grab bag might include:

- Details of medical prescriptions for you and other family members
- A blanket and supply of warm clothing for yourself and any dependants
- A list of useful telephone numbers (family, friends, utilities, doctors, etc.)
- A mobile phone and charger
- Important documents (passport, insurance certificates, etc.)
- NHS Numbers (you can obtain these from your doctor)
- Toiletries
- First aid kit
- Whistle
- Wind-up or battery radio with spare batteries
- Wind-up or battery torch with spare batteries
- Essential keys (house, car, work)
- Personal items (spectacles, contact lenses)
- Cash and debit/credit cards
- Candles and matches
- Small primus stove and gas canister

More information is available on the government website:

<https://prepare.campaign.gov.uk/get-prepared-for-emergencies/>

## Examples of Types of Emergencies

The changing climate means that we are likely to continue to experience more frequent severe-weather-related incidents. These include flooding, storms, snow and ice, heatwaves and drought.

### Flooding

Areas within the parish that continue to be vulnerable to coastal flooding and storm surges include the villages of Torcross, Beesands, and Hallsands. Intense rainfall events may lead to short term localised inland flooding (flash flooding) in parts of Chillington, Beeson, and Kernborough. In some cases, flooded roads might cut off communities, with limited access out of the areas. Although these events are inherently difficult to predict, their effects can be mitigated by regular pre-emptive clearing of culverts and buddle holes and the judicious use of sandbags. Households may obtain a supply of sandbags from local builders' merchants (these are no longer supplied by South Hams District Council).

Four-wheel drive and/or high freeboard vehicles are available if required to ferry people and possessions (see Appendix 3). In an emergency, temporary accommodation can be made available, with kitchen and toilet facilities (see Appendix 5).

The organization to notify in situations of flooding is the Environment Agency (see Appendix 6). The role of the Environment Agency includes:

- Issuing flood warnings
- Receiving and recording details of flooding incidents
- Responding to pollution incidents
- Dealing with emergency repairs and blockages on main rivers, adopted critical watercourses and their own structures

### Storms, High Winds, Loss of Power and/or Communications

Local power and telecoms networks mostly still rely on overhead lines, so localised outages can be anticipated during exceptionally windy weather. Loss of electricity can have a knock-on effect on all other mains services. Mobile phone coverage within the parish is patchy and cannot be relied on to provide back up in the event of failure of the wired network.

If telephones are not affected and road traffic is moving freely contact should be made with the relevant service supplier to:

- a. report the loss of service
- b. obtain an estimate of when the service will resume
- c. obtain advice on making the situation safe if necessary

National Grid <https://powercuts.nationalgrid.co.uk/tweets> has as an interactive map that shows the location of power outages and forecasts recovery time. If reconnection is likely to be delayed the supplier should be asked to institute emergency measures to help the community deal with the situation until the services are reconnected. South Hams District Council (01803 861234) should also be kept informed.

### **Snow and Ice**

The Parish Council has established a volunteer Snow Warden scheme (see Appendix 8) and areas have been adopted where it is felt that gritting is most necessary:

- Twenty metres each side of bus shelters in the parish
- Outside Chillington Post Office
- The pavement from A379 to Chillington Health Centre
- The access/pavement to Stokenham Parish Hall and to Chillington Village Hall
- The steps down from Cotmore Way, Chillington to the A379
- Pavements only to the frontage of the access driveway into Stokenham School if school is not cancelled

### **Serious Road Traffic Accidents or Aircraft Crash**

This would probably only be a short-term problem before the emergency services took over, but help may be required in the form of emergency shelter, hot drinks, blankets, and first-line psychological support.

### **Major Pollution or Contamination Incident**

While there is no known major or hazardous chemical or biological process industry in the area the possibility of airborne or waterborne contamination reaching the parish cannot be wholly ruled out; a nuclear power station across the channel in France, a nuclear installation at Devonport Dockyard, and the decommissioned nuclear reactor at Hinkley Point in Somerset are all within 70 miles as the crow flies. However, management of any such incident would be technically very specialized and thus any response by the community would be confined to communication and observance of measures recommended by the MoD, Police and Emergency Services.

## **Wildlife**

In addition to situations that threaten serious damage to human welfare, emergencies that threaten disruption or destruction to plant life and animal life can occur.

There have been instances of H5N1 avian influenza found in birds in Devon. Whilst the risk to human health is small, the advice from Devon Wildlife Trust is not to touch any sick or dead birds. If any dead or sick waterfowl, gulls, seabirds, birds of prey, or more than five of any other species together are found, then report this to Defra on 03459 335577.

There are other agencies that attend to sick, injured, or dead animals. For specialist wildlife advice please contact one of the following animal rescue organizations for support:

- RSPCA - 0300 1234 999
- Secret World Wildlife Rescue - 01278 783250
- Wembury Marine Centre - 01752 862538
- Falmouth Coastguard - 01326 317575
- British Divers Marine Life Rescue - 01825 765546

## **Water Supply Failure**

Lack of a fresh water supply and/or contamination of the drinking water supply can have serious consequences. A list of private wells and boreholes in which drinking water is regularly inspected by the Local Authority is given in Appendix 1. Failure of the mains water supply, in addition to inconvenience and reduced fire-fighting capability, can cause a public health hazard from contamination of conduits. Good communication within the community will be of paramount importance in this eventuality. South West Water has a duty to dispatch bowsers containing fresh, uncontaminated water supplies as soon as possible.

## **Major Fire**

Most fires are one-off incidents that are readily brought under control by the emergency services but there may be occasions when a fire spreads and multiple households need to be evacuated.

The Parish of Stokenham has a range of residential, industrial and farm buildings. The residential buildings include a number of thatched properties which can be particularly problematic in the case of fire. The Community Safety Prevention Manager of Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service notes that:

Fire in a thatched roof is difficult to detect and once started is almost impossible to control. Once a fire has taken hold within a roof it will spread rapidly, due to the very nature of how thatch burns, and detection is often too late and invariably devastating.

As with the case of a serious road traffic accident or aircraft crash a fire is likely to be a short-term problem before the emergency services take over, but help in the form of emergency shelter, hot drinks, blankets, and first-line psychological support may be required.

### **Unexploded Ordnance**

Unexploded ordnance from World War II, including anti-tank mines, torpedoes, and other munitions can be washed up or exposed on the beach at Slapton Sands due to its history as a major Allied training site. A recent incident in 2025 involved a Royal Navy EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) team conducting a controlled explosion on a device found near the memorial car park. When found, the public should not touch the item, immediately call 999, and ask for the Coastguard.

## Risk Assessment

Key: H = High M = Medium L = Low

Hazard/Incident	Probability of Occurrence	Community Impact
Storm damage to roads and properties in Torcross, Beesands, and Hallsands	H	H
Sewage pollution	H	M
Surface flooding and heavy rainfall	H	M
Unexploded ordinance	H	L
Interruption of the water supply	M	H
Viral disease/pandemic	M	H
Sustained electricity outage	M	H
Other severe weather events: heavy snow, high winds, lightning strikes, prolonged cold or heat	M	M
Cyber Crime	M	L
Animal diseases – e.g. foot & mouth	M	L
The unexpected – e.g. nuclear incident	L	H
Acts of terrorism or dangerous individuals	L	M
Major road traffic or aircraft accidents	L	M
Fire and explosions/ building collapses	L	M
Hazardous vapour releases/liquid spillages	L	M

## The Parish Emergency Team

Listed on the next page are the names of people in the Stokenham Parish Council Emergency Team (as previously noted the details of the volunteers in the Appendices are kept confidential).

If you become aware of any situation you feel requires emergency action as outlined in this plan, please contact the Clerk of the Council in the first instance.

## Stokenham Parish Council Emergency Team

<i>Emergency Team Leader</i> Cllr Piers Spence	Email: <a href="mailto:piers.spence@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">piers.spence@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	07971 813864
<i>Deputy Team Leader</i> Cllr Paula Doust	Email: <a href="mailto:paula.doust@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">paula.doust@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	01548 581495 07938 390037
<i>Clerk of Council</i> Gill Claydon	Email: <a href="mailto:clerk@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">clerk@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	01548 581185 07840 560270
<i>Emergency Plan Co-ordinator</i> Cllr Steve Taylor	Email: <a href="mailto:steve.taylor@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">steve.taylor@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	07306 089414
Cllr Gail Addison	Email: <a href="mailto:gail.addison@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">gail.addison@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	01548 581319 07817 326951
Cllr Jonathan Ansell	Email: <a href="mailto:jonathan.ansell@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">jonathan.ansell@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	01548 511325 07723 206293
Cllr Olly Brooking	Email: <a href="mailto:olly.brooking@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">olly.brooking@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	07835 363231
Cllr Adrian Goodman	Email: <a href="mailto:adrian.goodman@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">adrian.goodman@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	01548 581058 07917 735220
Cllr Kim Greening	Email: <a href="mailto:kim.greening@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">kim.greening@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	07942 289114
Cllr Chris Hart	Email: <a href="mailto:chris.hart@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">chris.hart@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	07479 006114
Cllr Tim Lynn	Email: <a href="mailto:tim.lynn@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">tim.lynn@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	01548 511502 07773 037605
Cllr Richard Pain	Email: <a href="mailto:richard.pain@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">richard.pain@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	01548 511551 07736 414000
Cllr Liz Robinson	Email: <a href="mailto:liz.robinson@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">liz.robinson@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	07967 116682
Cllr Charles Rogers	Email: <a href="mailto:charles.rogers@stokenham-pc.gov.uk">charles.rogers@stokenham-pc.gov.uk</a>	01548 580623 07814 426026
Other Volunteer Members of the Emergency Team	Details available in the Appendices	

## District and County Councillor

Cllr Julian Brazil Prawle	Email: <a href="mailto:julian.brazil@devon.gov.uk">julian.brazil@devon.gov.uk</a>	01548 511110
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