

## **FLOODING – Ongoing support to you and the community**

As you will appreciate, the council is currently focused on supporting Herefordshire's residents, businesses and our staff during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. However, we wanted to let you know about the steps that we and the Environment Agency are taking at this difficult time in relation to the flooding which had such a big impact on a large part of the county prior to the coronavirus outbreak.

Whilst we aim to provide the best possible service that we can, you will understand that in the current circumstances we are unable to operate as normal in supporting the actions required after such a major flooding incident. We have had to stop and slow some of our normal activities in order to focus on the most important and urgent. This means that we cannot currently undertake the planned flooding drop-in sessions. This is also in line with Government guidance on social distancing.

We will look to rebook meetings and events as soon as possible. We apologise for the inconvenience but remain committed to helping you have your say about the impact of the flooding on you and your community and so would like you to give us your views by completing our survey at <https://surveys.herefordshire.gov.uk/flood/>.

Following on from the £500 community flood recovery grants and Council Tax reductions, business flood recovery grants of up to £2,500 and Business Rates reductions, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has announced the **Property Flood Resilience Recovery Support Scheme 2020** for property owners whose properties flooded internally in February 2020.

The council will be administering this grant in line with Defra's guidelines. The grant provides up to £5,000 towards the cost of installing property flood resilience (PFR) measures to prevent water from entering a building, or to reduce the impact of damage when water does enter a building.

Please note that Defra will require the completion of a survey undertaken by a suitably qualified independent surveyor to identify what measures are appropriate for a property. For successful applications, up to £500 will be available (as part of the overall £5,000 grant) to fund the cost of a pre-installation survey (to develop the project plan) and post completion inspection of the completed work. We will support community applications (for two or more properties) where the approach offers a better standard of flood risk reduction for applicants than would be the case by treating each property individually.

The council will be working with other agencies in order to deliver this scheme, however, the restrictions on non-essential travel and social distancing in response to COVID-19 makes delivery difficult at this time. We will therefore write again once more information is available as to how this

grant scheme can be delivered within the current circumstances. Whilst we appreciate that people may wish to take action to protect their property as soon as possible, it may not be possible to claim the costs of any PFR measures retrospectively if these are purchased prior to an application for funding being approved.

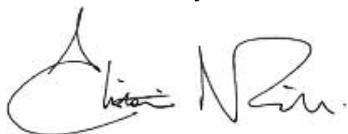
Funding for PFR measures is only available to the property owner. If you registered the property flooding as the tenant, please complete the survey so that we can update our records, ideally providing the contact details of the owner of your property or the agency that manages your letting.

The demands of this situation may mean that there may be delays in responding to you, but please be assured that we have not forgotten about you – our recovery work continues and we continue to warn and inform. Flood Alerts where properties are impacted or communities make decisions based on them (i.e. flood action groups) and Warnings will continue to be issued. Please do keep up to date with flood risk and sign up if not already at <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/5-day-flood-risk> and the Environment Agency's reporting line will still be open on 0800 80 70 60 to report flooding and environmental incidents. You can also email the Environment Agency at [Enquiries\\_Westmids@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Enquiries_Westmids@environment-agency.gov.uk).

Please continue to report defects you see at <https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole>. If you see any defects which need looking at as an emergency then please phone 01432 261800.

We will continue to update our webpage [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/floods](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/floods) and will write again with further information. You can get more advice from the National Flood Forum at [www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk](http://www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk). In the meantime, please email [Steve.Hodges@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Hodges@herefordshire.gov.uk) if there are ways in which Herefordshire Council can help.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alistair Neill', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Alistair Neill**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Herefordshire Council**