



news release

06 February 2026

West Sussex County Council Statement on Flooding

Adverse weather conditions across West Sussex are leading to road closures and flooding and West Sussex County Council wants to assure residents it is doing all it can to keep the county moving.

Since September, the county has above average rainfall, with highs of 190% above average being reached over the last few weeks. The Met Office is forecasting that these high levels of rain are set to continue for the remainder of the month, with another 60mm expected to fall between now and next Wednesday.

The persistent heavy rain continues to cause disruption across the county, in particular on the road network, with multiple roads closed due to standing floodwater and a rise in the number of potholes being reported.

The County Councils' Highways team is working hard to resolve issues caused by this unprecedented situation and will continue to respond to reports of issues from residents as quickly as possible.

During prolonged periods of heavy rain, the sheer volume of water means that no highway drainage can work effectively. If water can't be cleared straight away, it may be because:

- swelling watercourses, such as neighbouring rife or rivers, are overflowing
- the point of discharge for our drainage system, such as a neighbouring rife, is full so there's nowhere for the water to go
- the flood water is caused by blocked watercourses on private land
- pumping the floodwater out would only lead to more flowing in from the surrounding area.

If the council can't clear the water, where it is safe to do so, roads will be kept open with appropriate flood warning signs in place. However, where there is a risk to safety, full closures will be put in place with signposted diversions.

The increased rainfall, combined with periods of freezing temperatures has seen a spike in the council's number of potholes. In January 4,500 repair jobs were logged with the council's contractors, this is an increase of 1,500 compared to January 2025. So far in February a further 1400 pothole jobs have been raised.

The wet weather can make it difficult to fully repair potholes. Where a pothole presents a safety risk to road users, a temporary repair will be undertaken to make it safe. Once the weather improves, then a full 'sidesawn and sealed' repair will be made.

What we're doing:

The council has increased the number of crews working on the county's roads to respond to reports of safety defects including potholes and flooding. Over 22 reactive work crews are out Monday to Friday along with crews working at nights and weekends to keep on top of the work. Despite the increased volume of work in January, this additional resource means we are still completing these repairs in an average of 15 days.

Any reports received of significant flooding, the council's teams will assess and manage risks at each affected site. The safety response service and reactive drainage jetting crews will clear flooding where possible.

During storm events, teams are deployed around the clock to manage safety risks and keep the roads clear and moving.

The Riparian Drainage Team focuses exclusively on working with private landowners, town and parish councils and utility companies to keep the network of ditches, streams and other watercourses on non-council-owned land, clear and free-flowing.

How the public can help:

- Check before you travel. Major roads are disrupted with closure and traffic management in place due to standing water. Our [severe weather update webpage](#) is updated Monday to Friday to provide information on which roads are affected. Outside of this, you can use [one.network](#) to see which roads we've had to close.
- Don't ignore road closures. The water may be deeper than you realise or there may be hazards hidden below the surface. Driving through the floodwater may also create waves that flood nearby gardens, driveways and houses.
- Reporting flooding on roads or blocked drains here: [Flooding, blocked drains and gullies - West Sussex County Council](#)

WSCC appreciates that residents may be feeling frustrated by the ongoing situation, especially where we are unable to provide a quick resolution. Please bear with us, we are working as hard as we can to solve the issues that are being caused.

Area Specific Updates:

A29, Shripney

The A29 Shripney Road remains closed to all non-residents and non-local business users.

Residents north of Sack Lane will continue to access the area via the A29 Woodgate. Residents south of Sack Lane will be able to enter and exit Shripney Road via the Salt Box roundabout.

We have received a high volume of reports of motorists removing traffic management, ignoring the road closure, and in some cases driving the wrong way along the dual carriageway, causing serious safety concerns and significant amounts of floodwater to be directed into nearby properties. To maintain safety and support the community, the access point into the affected area is being staffed to ensure that only residents of the area are allowed through.

At this moment, we are unable to pump water from the carriageway. The surrounding rife, which normally carries water away from Shripney, is currently full. Any water removed through pumping would be ineffective as it would quickly be replaced by runoff from adjacent land and the rife itself. This could also potentially worsen conditions should the levels of rainfall continue to be as high as presently forecast.

Our teams continue to closely monitor conditions, with two inspections taking place each day to assess water levels and the impact on the carriageway.

We are progressing well with a temporary solution to enable Sack Lane residents to safely enter and exit the area. As with any measure we put in place, we must carry out the necessary safety assessments to ensure it is suitable for all users. Subject to these checks, we hope to implement this temporary solution early next week.

Sidlesham

Due to persistent high levels of rainfall, the flooding on Highleigh Road and Keynor Lane in Sidlesham worsened overnight. As a result, both roads remain closed until the floodwater subsides and it is safe to reopen them. We have identified that the main cause of the flooding is

the overflow of the neighbouring Rife, and we continue to work closely with the Environment Agency to find a resolution.

The Environment Agency are addressing a suspected blocked culvert on private land. They have organised a company to attend with specialist equipment in the coming days to hopefully jet and clear it.

We are aware that Ham Road is currently the only access route to the school. Our teams are inspecting the road frequently and will repair the potholes caused by the increased traffic to keep the route safe and passable.

The decision to close Sidlesham Primary School was made by the school, with due care and consideration for the safety of pupils, staff, and families travelling to and from the site. The school will issue further updates as needed.

For further information please contact the news desk on 0330 222 8090 or email pressoffice@westsussex.gov.uk.

For urgent out-of-hours enquiries please call 07767 098415.



[Click to Unsubscribe](#)