

## **FAQs regarding Temporary Barrier Deployment – February 2020**

### **Why did the Environment Agency not install the temporary barriers in our community prior to Storm Ciara when our community flooded?**

The forecasted river levels were not expected to reach the “triggers” we use to deploy the barriers. Once we were aware that the trigger levels would be met there was insufficient time to install the barriers safely.

### **What is the usual ‘lead time’ you require to deploy the barriers?**

24-48 hours is the lead time we usual work too. Realistically we need approaching the full 48 hours, due to reasons listed below.

1. We need to ensure the barriers are available from our National Stock (A national decision has to be made as they may be required elsewhere)
2. We need to secure the resources available to deploy them (including delivery time)
3. We need to arrange traffic management (minimum 24 hours notice)
4. We need to arrange site security
5. We need to contact Ribble Valley Emergency Planners and community contacts
6. We need to notify the community via letterbox drops / door-knocking to ensure cars are parked outside the construction area.
7. We need time to physically deploy the barriers.

### **Have you been deploying the barriers based on your agreed triggers since storm Ciara?**

No. Due to the current uncertainty in the weather forecast and recent flooding our current stance is to install the barriers, where practicable, whenever we feel there is a realistic chance of them being required.

### **How were you able to deploy the barriers quicker than the ‘usual’ lead times on Saturday 22 February 2020?**

Following rainfall on the Friday evening, which was much heavier than forecast, we took the decision to deploy as soon as practically possible. In that particular instance we had already secured the resource for a potential deployment on Sunday 23 February so we were in a position to work with partners to respond much faster than usual. Unfortunately we were not able to carry out the planned community letterbox drop in this instance due to the timescales involved.

## What are you currently basing your deployment decision on?

- Latest forecasting data. We are also considering allowances, where practicable, for the uncertainty around where and when the rainfall will land and the rainfall intensity.
- Professional advice both within the Environment Agency and from our professional partners and feedback from the community

## How long will you be using the above approach rather than your agreed triggers and how can we comment on these procedures?

The decision to revert back to our standard triggers will be communicated to our communities once decided. We are aiming to arrange community drop-events, with our partners, for Billington and Ribchester once we have a stable weather window. At this point we will be welcoming community input into the recent barrier deployment.

## Are the barriers guaranteed to be deployed?

No. It is important that communities are aware that the barriers are NOT guaranteed.

In addition to lead times we need to ensure that the barriers can be installed safely and that the criteria mentioned above have been met. Please note that it is not possible to install the barriers in windy conditions and this has been one factor in our recent installations – ensuring we could have them installed whilst we had a suitable weather window.

## Communities should remain vigilant. Remember to Prepare Act Survive.

- **Prepare** in advance. Check your flood risk, know what to do if flooding is expected, and be ready to respond. Check your flood risk and keep up to date with the latest situation at <https://www.gov.uk/check-if-youre-at-risk-of-flooding>, call Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or follow @EnvAgency and #floodaware and #prepareactsurvive on Twitter for the latest flood updates. Have a bag ready with vital items like insurance documents and medications in case you need to leave your home
- Be ready to **act** if flooding is possible. Stay tuned to local media and listen to advice and directions given by the emergency services. Move vital, valuable, irreplaceable items upstairs or to safety. Turn off gas, water and electricity.
- **Survive**. Call 999 if you are in immediate danger. Listen to the emergency services and evacuate if asked to do so.

You can find out further information via the website below on a range of flood-related materials including 'what to do before, during and after flooding'

**[www.TheFloodHub.co.uk](http://www.TheFloodHub.co.uk)**

If you have any questions on the above please contact:-

inforequests.cmbinc@environment-agency.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

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