

The Swan Hotel in Newby Bridge, Windermere

Large brick built hotel
Flooded 2009 & 2015

The Swan Hotel is on the banks of the River Leven to the south end of Lake Windermere.

Sarah Gibbs has been the hotel manager for 11 years, during which time the hotel has flooded twice; in November 2009 and December 2015. Following the floods, Sarah commissioned a flood survey and was told that they were '1 in 1,000' year events. Sarah said she must be very unlucky to have had two 1,000-year events in the space of only 9 years! The floods caused substantial upheaval, great expense and the hotel had to close for 6 months. After the second flood, Sarah felt a particular responsibility towards the hotel shareholders and her staff, the latter of which depended on the hotel for their livelihoods. So, Sarah decided that she had to take action to mitigate the most significant risk that the business faced.

Sarah took the time to do some in depth research as to how, why and when the hotel flooded. She now understands the circumstances that lead to a flood and at what level it will flood. Armed with this information and supported by her insurers, Sarah has done the following to reduce the risk of flooding:

- Rigid temporary barriers are installed around the hotel to a height of 1.2m (4') The hotel has 'Flood Marshals' trained to put the barriers in place, which take 6 people about 1.5 hours.



- Door guards are fitted to external doors as a 'belt a braces' option.
- Non-return valves to all drains.
- Sump and pump fitted to the lift shaft (which flooded in the last flood).
- Smart airbricks to prevent water getting under the floors, as happened before.
- Several puddle pumps.
- Generators to power pumps and emergency lighting.

- The hotel has an extensive emergency plan, which all staff are trained in. It is regularly reviewed and refined. They have a 'dry run' every September to practice putting up all barriers.
- The floors all have a resin damp proof membrane beneath them, to prevent the water rising from underneath.
- The bar is solid oak and survived the 2015 flood. It has stainless steel fittings and easily removable equipment.
- The hotel kitchen is in the lowest part of the building. It has resin flooring (that survived the 2015 flood), which has now been extended up the wall to a height of 1 metre. There is washable plaster elsewhere and the kitchen equipment can be moved to a higher level if absolutely necessary.

As a result of all this work, Sarah was pleased to be able to report that they have maintained their insurance cover.



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