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## TOGETHER WE CAN REDUCE FLOOD RISK



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There are some simple things that can be done on a community scale, which collectively can help to reduce flood risk in your area.

In some cases a simple solution can be decorative and may even save you money.

### How can I make a difference?

**Water butts:** are used to collect rainfall from roofs. The water can be used straight in the garden or carefully filtered and stored for reuse within the home. This will not only reduce flood risk but help reduce your water bill.

**Rain gardens:** are planted areas designed to receive rainwater from downpipes or paved areas, so that the water enters the soil, reducing the amount going into drainage systems and reducing the risk of flooding, while making an attractive area in your garden.

**Permeable paving:** there are many materials available to make parking areas permeable, which reduces the amount of runoff from them. A simple solution that also means there will be less puddles on your driveway.

**Green roofs:** why not look into getting your leaky roof replaced with a Green Roof, they help soak up rain water and reduce water runoff from built up areas. Green roofs also increase biodiversity and wildlife, improve air and water quality, insulate the building and can provide amenity space. Even a flat roof that needs maintenance can be converted to a Green Roof.

**Swales:** are open channels which catch runoff and either store it to let the water infiltrate into the ground or transfer it somewhere safe. This reduces water runoff, restricts flood water, provides biodiversity benefits and helps to maintain water quality. These can be incorporated in green spaces and can make the landscape more interesting and more diverse.

**Green space:** can form a crucial part of flood management by providing space for managed flooding. Interesting and inventive landscaping can be incorporated to produce a garden or open space that attracts a variety of animals. This can incorporate flood storage areas.

**Watercourse maintenance:** the requirements for watercourse maintenance are explained in two other guides in this series: number 4 'Watercourse Management': <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/guides/watercourse-management/> and number 2 'Ditch Clearance': <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/guides/ditch-clearance/>

**Wetlands and flood attenuation:** wetlands function as natural sponges that trap and slowly release surface water, rain, groundwater and flood waters.

**Tree planting:** planting tree belts, hedges and wooded areas can help soak up rainfall and slow down water runoff.

**Flood wardens:** are nominated to receive flood warnings and pass these onto the community. They are trained to help the community to prepare for flooding and know what actions should be taken during a flood.

## Land owners and Farmers

**Contour ploughing:** ploughing across a slope rather than down the slope reduces the rate at which water runoff flows off land, reducing the risk of flooding and limiting soil erosion.

**Reduce soil compaction:** this will help to reduce the amount and speed of water runoff from the land, decreasing soil erosion and increasing the soil's productivity. Avoid working the land with heavy machinery and high animal stocks when it's wet, to reduce compaction of the soil. Information on a potential 'no till seed drill solution' can be found through this link: <https://cdn.harper-adams.ac.uk/document/project/Potential-of-No-till-Systems-for-Arable-Farming-Report.pdf>

**De-culverting:** culverted watercourses (piped watercourses) are prone to blockages and restrict the flow of water during a flood. De-culverting or 'daylighting' can reduce the risk of flooding as well as providing biodiversity benefits and helping to maintain water quality.

**Underground storage:** where there is insufficient land available for open flood storage such as swales or wetlands, flood water can be stored underground such as under car parks, to slow down and reduce the amount of water runoff entering the drainage system.

## Working Together

Collaboration between land-owners and communities is likely to be a key part of the success of flood management. Long-term funding measures, partnership working or incentives, and better use of local knowledge, will also be important.

## Funding

For more information about funding that may be available, please see the Funding Toolkit on the Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit:  
<http://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/risk/funding/>

## Further Information & Contacts

Natural Environment White Paper 'The Natural Choice: Securing the value of nature':  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/228842/8082.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228842/8082.pdf)

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<https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com>



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