

Press release: Multi-agency exercise to test temporary barriers at Beales Corner in Bewdley

The Environment Agency's field team, along with support from Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, Bewdley Town Council and other partners, will be testing out the deployment of temporary flood barriers and the local community flood plan.

The exercise, which will start at 09:00am, will provide an opportunity to test our barrier deployment plan and procedures in this training exercise. We will be testing our working arrangements with partners and the local Community Flood Group, so the barriers can be quickly and safely erected when needed during a flood, with minimum disruption to residents and businesses.

Pedestrians and traffic will be unable to use this section of road and pathway between Millside Court to where it joins with Kidderminster Road, via the Stourport Road. Access to Bewdley Bridge and the town will remain fully accessible by using the Kidderminster Road.

Mark Bowers, Flood Risk Manager said:

This is a test of our operational equipment and local community flood plan. Although we have carried out numerous barrier deployment exercises at our training depots, doing it on location will give our field team invaluable experience.

It's important to remember that we can never protect 100% against flooding, and we can't guarantee that specific communities will always have access to temporary barriers.

Local residents and businesses should be prepared by checking their flood risk, signing up to flood warnings and finding out what they can do to protect themselves and their property by visiting the Prepare for Flooding page on GOV.UK or calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

Nick Farress, Bewdley Town Council Clerk added:

This will be a vital practice run to test our new community led flood plan which has been developed to support the Environment Agency in retaining the temporary barrier at Beale's Corner. The Town Council are very grateful to our band of volunteers who have put themselves forward to help with this vital work".

The temporary barrier deployment is also being supported by Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service who is a key partner in the project. Wyre Forest Station Commander, Daryl Justice, said:

Our involvement with the Bewdley Flood Barrier response is new arrangement that will see our Firefighters add even more value to the Wyre Forest community.

When flooding is predicted our on-call firefighters will be given a period of notice which will minimise the impact on their primary employment and, although deployed under the direction of the Environment Agency, they will remain available for life threatening emergencies.

This is one of the first initiatives of its type in the UK and is a great example of how fire crews can add value in other areas. It also supports Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's wider vision of 'Saving More Lives'.

Environment Agency staff and Community Flood Group members will be available during the exercise to provide the public with information about access restrictions, alternative routes and general flood advice. The exercise is likely to conclude around 13:00pm.