

Somerset Levels and Moors – 16 January 2023

Background:

The Somerset Levels & Moors are designed to store flood water when the rivers flowing through them overtop. The recent heavy rain has caused spillways (specifically designed low points in the riverbanks) on the Rivers Tone and Parrett to flow and water is stored on the moors.

Across Somerset, the following flood [alerts](#) and [warnings](#) remain in place including:

- **Curry Moor and Hay Moor**
- **A361 East Lyng to Burrowbridge**
- **Washford River; riverside properties from Kingsbridge to Lower Roadwater**

Current situation:

Overnight up to 20mm rain fell over the catchment, which was more than was expected. As a consequence, rivers remain at full capacity and levels in Currymoor reservoir have risen slightly.

The Sowy has been operated at every opportunity to relieve the Parrett and Tone. Monksleaze Clyde has been kept open today, but levels in the Parrett are rising. We are closely monitoring the situation and will take action if needed. We operate Monksleaze to divert flows out of the Parrett, pumping for longer in high flows at Langport stations, including Currymoor.

Field teams have been working through the night at both Saltmoor and Northmoor to install and monitor additional pumps, and 24-hour operations will continue as needed.

The additional 2.5m³ of pump capacity is operational at Saltmoor, and pump installation is progressing at Northmoor. Water levels at Northmoor remain within the pumping capacity of the permanent pumps, but additional pumps are being installed in case they are needed. The large crane has been installed and has been busy unloading and moving equipment today. Another crane is due to arrive later today. In total the additional pumps at Northmoor will add 10m³ of capacity.

This operation necessitates intermittent disruption to road users, since we have to stop traffic when the crane swings. Traffic will be stopped for up to 15 minutes at a time. This will continue overnight today, tomorrow (Tuesday 17th) and Wednesday. We will endeavour to keep disruption to a minimum, and ask for your patience while these works are carried out. A short road diversion around the station will be in operation once the pipework is in place.

Enabling operations for installation of pumps at Dunball continues. These will be switched on as soon as each one comes online. This will allow us to direct more water down the River Sowy and into King's Sedgemoor drain to help reduce levels in the River Parrett as needed. Minimising levels in the Parrett is important because it means we can operate the Saltmoor and Northmoor pumps earlier.

Temporary pumps are now installed at Currymoor, adding 4m³ of capacity, and are ready to run the moment the level in the Tone recedes sufficiently for us to operate them. Athelney spillway is still running, and given the large volumes of water in the upstream system, the spillway is expected to continue to run for several days, even with dry weather. Priorities at the moment are to reduce pressure on the Tone by maximising the use of Monksleaze Clyse and the Sowy flood relief channel, and maximising the pumping capacity at Northmoor and Saltmoor. Currymoor remains full.

[The A361 remains closed.](#)

Upstream of Langport there is water stored on the moors and storage volumes remain high. All pumping stations are off; when river levels reduce enough, we will need to balance which pumping stations we operate to minimise risk to people or property.

In the Axe/Brue catchments, there is some localised flooding of minor roads and low-lying land, but property flooding is not expected here.

We continue to monitor the situation and have teams on the ground across the area. We are liaising with partners including Somerset County Council, the emergency services and local flood wardens. We are also in contact with and offering advice to a number of residents in isolated low-lying properties that are impacted by flood water.

River-level telemetry data online:

We are aware that some river level telemetry data are not appearing or being updated on the gov.uk website. We are sorry about this and are working hard to resolve this as soon as possible. This fault is not affecting our operational response.

Weather Outlook:

The outlook is currently more settled and the forecast is reasonably dry for the next 5 days. This is an improving picture, however river levels remain high.

Additional Information and advice:

Prepare for flooding in advance and stay up-to-date on weather information and warnings: <https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/plan-ahead-for-flooding>

Follow us on social media:

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Or visit:

[Home - Somerset Rivers Authority](#)

We know that heavy rainfall may trigger feelings of anxiety, fear or worry, particularly for those who have been previously affected by flooding. Mindline is Somerset's emotional support and mental health helpline which is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: 01823 276 892 (local) 0800 138 1692 (freephone).

What to do during a flood

Information to help you on what to do during a flood is on the [Somerset Prepared website](#). Remember: Always stay safe. In an immediate flood emergency or where there is a risk to life, follow the advice of the emergency services.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list for Somerset Levels and Moors updates, please email aceo.wessex@environment-agency.gov.uk