NHS
Lincolnshire
Integrated Care Board

Adverse Weather Plan

2025 – 2026

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IF YOU HAVE BEEN INFORMED OF AN ALERT / WARNING AND ARE ACTIVATING THIS PLAN – PLEASE NAVIGATE TO THE RELEVANT ALERT / WARNING USING THE CONTENTS PAGE

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1. Introduction

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a statutory duty on Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) to prepare and plan for incidents that may have an adverse effect in the community. Lincolnshire ICB Incident Response Plan (IRP) provides additional information regarding the response to incidents in Lincolnshire.

It is accepted that Lincolnshire will periodically be impacted by adverse or severe weather events, which can threaten lives, damage property and cause disruption. Lincolnshire has previously seen disruptive winter snowfall and some areas have also been affected by localised flooding. As stated within the UKHSA Adverse Weather and Health: Supporting Evidence, there is a positive correlation between adverse weather and an increase in health conditions & mortality. The NHS nationally and locally has a positive obligation to mitigate this risk.

Whilst such incidents are quite rare, climate change experts warn to expect more extreme weather in the years to come. The UK's climate is becoming wetter and the results have been seen by experiencing more frequent extreme rain events leading to disruptive surface water flooding incidents as well as more widespread flooding.

More accurate forecasting and better communication provides the opportunity to be better prepared for adverse/severe weather. Prompt action helps to minimise the impact that Adverse Weather has on the community and maximise the effectiveness of the responding organisations, shortening the recovery process.

Lincolnshire ICB is committed to working with its local partners to prepare for, respond to and recover from adverse weather events. The ICB is an active participant in the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum, which enables joined-up emergency planning among all category 1 & 2 responders.

This Adverse Weather Plan specifies how Lincolnshire ICB will respond to adverse weather events in Lincolnshire. It is however recognised that if adverse weather affected neighbouring areas, there may be a need for Lincolnshire ICB to coordinate mutual aid from providers within its footprint.

This plan has been updated to reflect updates to heat, heatwaves and cold, although will remain an interim plan until flooding aspects have been updated. The action cards within the types of weather should still be utilised and warnings from the National Severe Weather Warning System (NSWWS) should still be responded to where applicable.

This plan will be exercised and tested as stated within the ICB EPRR Policy. The plan will also be reviewed annually, it may be updated more frequently should critical pertinent changes be required. Webinars will be made available to EPRR roles ensure and understanding of risk and relevant arrangements.

2. Objectives

Identify the risks and provide advice and information to communities and individuals to enable them to be prepared for the effects of an adverse weather event.

To provide a clear and concise procedure for the assessment of weather warnings, together with a corresponding escalation procedure and plan activation process.

Agree specific roles, responsibilities, and actions for those involved in the response to an adverse weather event.

Identify key response issues that should be considered at both Strategic and Tactical levels in responding to an adverse weather event.

Determine activities to reduce disruption to communities, utilities, and local health system.

3. Risk

Lincolnshire has been impacted by various adverse weather events over recent years.

In 2019 the River Steeping, Wainfleet burst its bank and residents were evacuated in a multi-agency response. Similarly in 2013 the River Haven, Boston burst its banks following a tidal surge and wide area flooding was seen as a result of Storms Babet (2023) and Henk (2024).

The Lincolnshire coast received the brunt of a polar vortex known as “The Beast from The East” in 2018. Local transport networks were heavily impact with some communities being isolated for several days.

The summer of 2022 was subject to some of the hottest days on record. The highest temperature of 40.3 degrees Celsius was recorded in Lincolnshire.

The following risks, relevant to this plan, form part of the National as Risk Register. These have also been assessed locally through the LHRP Risk Register and are part of a continual review cycle

Risk ID	Outcome Description	Risk Rating
R76 – Drought	Significant diminished water resources in the region over a period of 3-9 months leading to localised poor pressure or loss of supply. Temporary use bans in place for domestic customers and restrictions on non-essential use for commercial customers. Widespread restriction of agricultural water uses unless supported by storage. Reduced crop yields. Temporary damage to water dependent habitats leading to threats to wildlife.	Moderate
R73 – High Temperatures & heatwaves	An extended period of high temperatures affecting 50-70% of the population. Five consecutive days with maximum temperatures exceeding 35°C. Temperatures may approach or exceed 40°C in some places, with this most likely in parts of south-eastern, eastern or central England.	Significant
R74– Low temperatures & snow	Snow falling and lying over multiple regions of the UK and a substantial proportion of the UK population (e.g. South West England, South East England, London and the East of England - approximately 30 million people), including substantial areas of low-lying land (below 300m) for at least one week. After an initial fall of snow, there is further snow fall on and off for at least seven days, with brief periods of freezing rain also possible. Most lowland areas experience some falls in excess of 10cm at a time, a depth of snow in excess of 30cm and a period of at least seven consecutive days with daily mean temperature below minus 3°C. Overnight temperatures would fall below minus 10°C in many areas affected by snow	Significant
R72 – Storms	Storm force winds affecting multiple regions of the UK for at least six hours during a working day. Most inland, lowland areas experience mean (average) wind speeds in excess of 55 mph with gusts in excess of 85 mph.	Moderate

4. Scope

This plan outlines the arrangements for Lincolnshire ICB to prepare and respond to adverse weather events.

These arrangements provide guidance to the ICB when responding as an organisation along with wider coordination arrangements of the local health system. The ICB Incident Response Plan must be activated upon any emergency / incident declaration and the coordination arrangements utilised where applicable.

This plan is thematic for adverse weather, and it is expected that local NHS organisations have their own arrangements which will be specific to their own operations.

The plan should be used in conjunction with other system thematic plans such as, evacuation and shelter, and mass casualty. These plans can be found on the local drive, Resilience Direct and Intranet.

Multi-agency response arrangements are not included, although the mechanisms to access support and represent the local health system are included.

5. Triggers

Triggers for activation will vary depending upon the type of adverse weather, these are detailed within each type of weather.

Each alert / warning level will have associated actions and considerations for both the ICB as an organisation, and for the local health system.

Due to the rurality of Lincolnshire, along with other factors, adverse weather may be experienced in small, localised areas where no alert or warning has been in place. In this instance a pragmatic approach should be applied using the relevant action cards. Any such isolated impact should be communicated across the local system, and if applicable, the wider multi-agency forum via the LRF duty emergency planning officer.

As part of the intelligence gathering process, it may be prudent to ask providers in the event of heat or cold warnings or a national red warning if there any concerns around service delivery / disruptions including areas previously known to causes issues such as cooling systems for IT servers, theatre cooling etc.

6. Activation

Elements of this plan include year-round planning and preparation.

Monday – Friday 0900hrs – 1700hrs (Excl Bank Holidays) the ICB EPRR team will monitor the national severe weather warning service and any other incoming notifications of weather alerts via the ICB Single Point of Contact (SPOC).

If an alert is received out of hours, the ICB tactical on call will activate this plan. Support in this instance in their hours of operation can be provided by the System Coordination Centre. It is however recommended that on call commanders across the local system sign up to alerting services. Met Office Hazard Manager should also be used to support information / intelligence gathering.

7. Alerting Mechanisms

There are several different alerting systems relating to adverse weather. The main two services are below and later detailed.

- National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS)
- UKHSA Weather-Health Alert System

It should be noted that both services may be triggering alerts / warnings concurrently, or in isolation. Commanders and responsible persons should be sensitive to this and their associated actions.

8. The National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS)

The National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS) is provided by the Met Office. The service warns organisations and public about a range of weather impacts

Weather types covered by NSWWS are listed below. Please note where concurrent weather alerts may be in place such as flooding or Weather-Health alerts.

- Snow (Check for UKHSA Cold Health Alert)
- Ice (Check for UKHSA Cold Health Alert)
- Rain (Check for Flood Alerts / Warnings)
- Thunderstorms (Check for Flood Alerts / Warnings)
- Wind
- Lightning
- Fog
- Extreme Heat (Check for UKHSA Heat Health Alert)

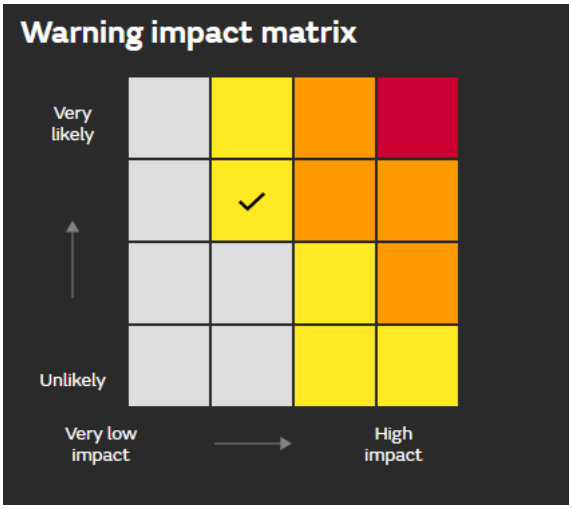


Figure 1 National Severe Weather Warning Service Impact Matrix

The Met Office issues weather warnings, when severe weather has the potential to bring impacts to the UK. These warnings are based on a **combination of the level of impacts** the weather may cause **and the likelihood** of those impacts occurring. Yellow and Amber warnings represent a range of impact levels and likelihoods. This means it is important to read each warning to know what level of impact you can expect for your chosen warning area – and how likely those impacts are to occur.

Met Office provide warnings up to seven days ahead for rain, thunderstorms, wind, snow, lightning, ice, extreme heat and fog.

Each warning will contain the following sections:

Headline – a short weather headline, which states what weather type, is forecast

What to expect – details on the types of impact forecast and an indication of how likely those impacts are

What should I do – this section links to advice and guidance from our partners on how to stay safe in severe weather

Further details – additional information on the forecast weather.

The NSWWS will be the main trigger for any preparedness and response phases. This will contribute to weather specific alerting systems such as heat-health alerting.

9. UKHSA Weather-Health Alert System

The Weather-Health Alert System is a separate alerting system to the NSWWS. This specifically relates to impact on health, compared to the NSWWS which considers impacts on infrastructure etc. Having said this, the warning impact matrix for the two systems are similar. The two alerts may also be in place concurrently e.g. Cold Health Alert in place alongside an Amber Weather Warning for snow.

The heat-health alert (HHA) operates from 1 June to 30 September and the cold-health alert (CHA) operates from 1 November to 30 March. An out of season alert may still be issued if impacts from adverse weather on health (heat and cold) are expected.

Both systems are based on the Met Office forecasts and data. Depending on the level of alert, a response will be triggered to communicate the risk to the NHS England, government, and public health system. Advice and information will be sent for the public and health and social care professionals, particularly those working with at-risk groups, after an alert is issued or updated. This includes both general preparation for hot weather and more specific advice when a severe heatwave has been forecast.

The platform aims to cover the spectrum of action from different groups. In general terms:

• **Green (preparedness)**: No alert will be issued as the conditions are likely to have minimal impact and health; business as usual and summer/winter planning and preparedness activities.

• **Yellow (response):** These alerts cover a range of situations. Yellow alerts may be issued during periods of heat/cold which would be unlikely to impact most people but could impact those who are particularly vulnerable.

• **Amber (enhanced response):** An amber alert indicates that weather impacts are likely to be felt across the whole health service, with potential for the whole population to be at risk. Non-health sectors may also start to observe impacts and a more significant coordinated response may be required.

• **Red (emergency response):** A red alert indicates significant risk to life for even the healthy population.

10. UKHSA & Met Office Weather-Health Alert cascade

Lincolnshire ICB SPOC is registered to receive National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS) warnings along with heat-health alerts. SPOC will cascade these warnings to ICB commanders and partner SPOCs. During out of hours this will be undertaken by the ICB on call to local NHS organisation on call counterparts. It is recommended that on call commanders across the local system sign up to alerting services. Met Office Hazard Manager should also be used to support information / intelligence gathering.

Local organisations include:

- United Lincolnshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (ULTH)
- Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust (LCHS)
- Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT)
- Primary Care Networks (PCNs)
- GP Practices, Community pharmacies, Ophthalmology and Dental Practices
- East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EMAS) (Notified directly by NHS England Region)

On receipt of heat health alerts, ICB commanders must consider the actions applicable to each alert level. This will be supported by ICB teams including EPRR and communications.

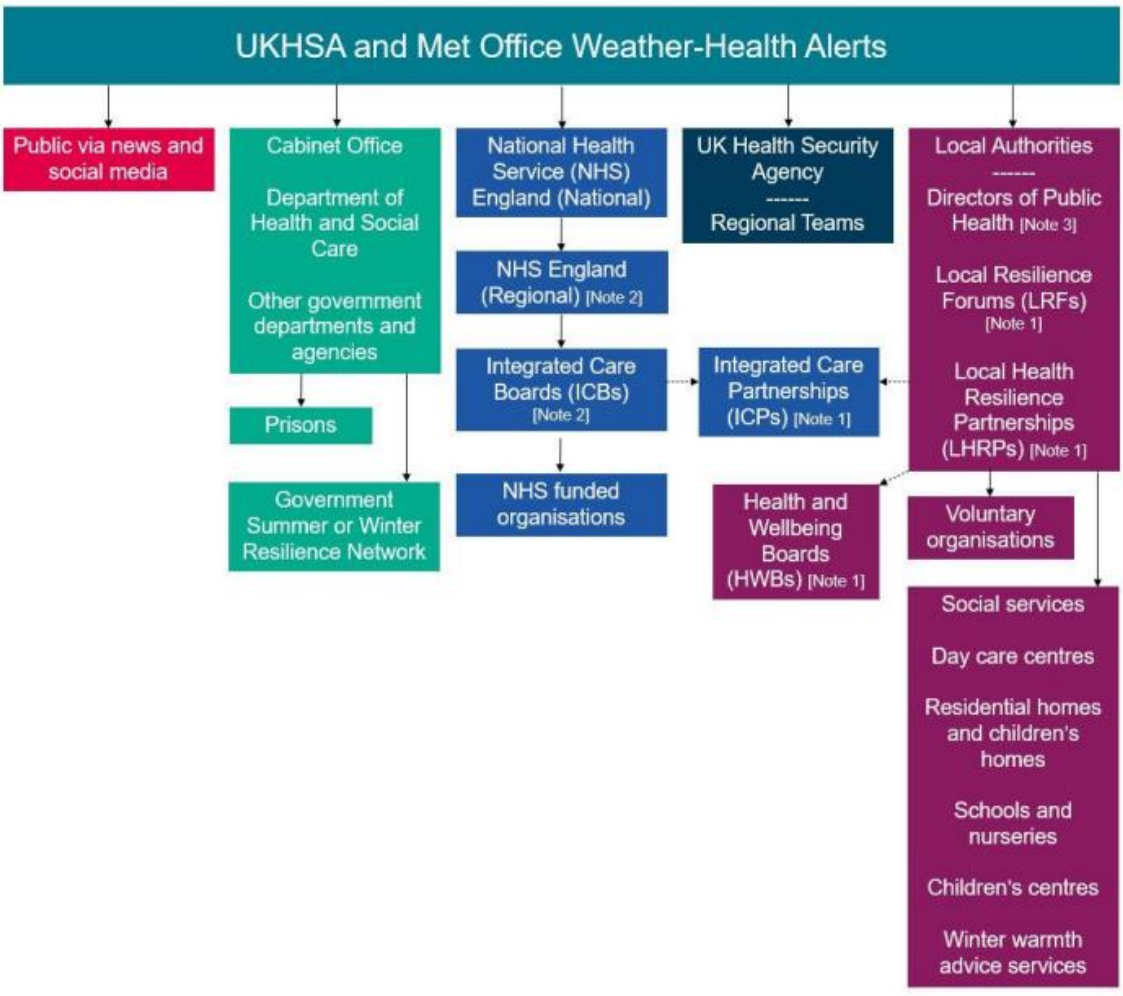


Figure 2 UKHSA & Met Office Weather-Health Alert Cascade

10.1. Cold Weather-Health Alert System

The Cold Weather Alert Service is jointly delivered by The Met Office and UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). The service comprises of 4 levels from winter preparedness to emergency response.

The alert service operates in England from 1 November to 31 March. Should a period of heat or cold occur that meets alerting criteria outside of the core alerting periods, an extraordinary alert will be issued.

Considerations

Whilst exposure to cold can affect anyone, some people are particularly at risk. These include:

- older people (aged 65 and above)
- people with cardiovascular (heart and circulation) conditions
- people with respiratory conditions (in particular chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma)
- people with mental health conditions
- people with learning and/or physical disabilities
- young children (particularly those aged under 5)
- pregnant women
- people on a low income

There are many reasons for the increased risk of ill health in cold weather. These include:

- poor quality housing and particularly cold homes
- the higher frequency of circulating infectious diseases, such as flu and norovirus during the winter months
- physical hazards such as snow and ice

10.2. Cold Health Alert Green (Winter Preparedness)

No alert will be issued as the conditions are likely to have minimal impact on health. However, during periods when the risk is minimal, it is important that organisations ensure that they have plans in place and are prepared to respond should an alert (yellow, amber or red) be issued.

10.3. Cold Health Alert Yellow (Response)

Check for concurrent National Severe Weather Warnings for Snow or Ice

Yellow alerts cover a range of situations in which action is required within the health and social care sector. Yellow CHAs may be issued during periods of cold weather which would be unlikely to impact most people. However, those who are particularly vulnerable (for example older people with multiple health conditions and on multiple medications, or those who are sleeping rough and at greater risk of cold exposure) are likely to struggle to cope in these conditions. A yellow alert may also be issued if the confidence in the weather forecast is low, but there could be more significant impacts if the worst-case scenario is realised. In this situation the alert may be upgraded as the confidence in both the weather forecast and the likelihood of observing those impacts increases.

10.4. Cold Health Alert Amber (Enhanced Response)

Check for concurrent National Severe Weather Warnings for Snow or Ice

An amber CHA represents a situation in which the expected impacts are likely to be felt across the health and social care sectors, with potential for the whole population to be at risk. Other sectors, apart from health and social care (for example transport) may also start to observe impacts, indicating that a coordinated response is required.

In addition, in some circumstances a National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS) warning may be issued for snow, ice or wind in conjunction with and aligned to the CHA. This situation would indicate that significant impacts are expected across multiple sectors.

10.5. Cold Health Alert Red (Emergency Response)

Check for concurrent National Severe Weather Warnings for Snow or Ice

A red CHA would indicate significant risk to life for everyone, including the healthy population. Severe impacts would be expected across all sectors, and a coordinated response is essential. The UK government will declare an emergency if there is severe or prolonged cold weather affecting sectors other than health and social care, and if the conditions require a coordinated multi-agency response.

10.6.Heat Health Alert System

The Heat Health Alert (HHA) primarily targets the health and social care sector and responder community, while the NSWWS has a wider audience that includes the responder community, but also the general public. Due to the fact that the health sector is likely to observe impacts before other sectors, the HHA will issue yellow to red alerts, whereas NSWWS will only issue amber and red alerts for Extreme Heat (EH).

Considerations

Built Environment. A significant number of healthcare facilities are at risk of overheating, even during moderately warm summers. Existing standards for healthcare premises recommend temperatures from 18˚C to 28˚C in general wards and 18˚C to 25˚C for more sensitive areas, such as birthing or recovery rooms. It is recommended that internal intrinsic temperatures are monitored during the early stages of forecast HHA.

Groups at Risk

• older people aged over 65 years and babies and young children under the age of 5 years
• people with underlying health conditions, particularly heart problems, breathing problems, dementia, diabetes, kidney disease, Parkinson’s disease or mobility problems
• people on certain medications
• people with serious mental health problems
• people who are already ill and dehydrated (for example from diarrhoea and vomiting)
• people who experience alcohol or drug dependence
• people who are physically active and spend a lot of time outside such as runners, cyclists and walkers
• people who work in jobs that require manual labour or extensive time outside
• people experiencing homelessness, including rough sleepers and those who are unable to make adaptations to their living accommodation such as sofa surfers or those living in hostels
• people who live alone and may be unable to care for themselves

10.7. Heat Health Alert Green: (Summer Preparedness)

No alert will be issued as the conditions are likely to have minimal impact and health. However, during periods where the risk is minimal it is important that organisations ensure that they have plans in place and are prepared to respond should an alert (yellow, amber or red) be issued.

The AWHP HHA action cards provide information on the strategic year-round actions to address health risks from heat and suggested summer preparedness actions.

10.8. Heat Health Alert Yellow: (Response)

These alerts cover a range of situations. Yellow alerts may be issued during periods of heat in which it would be unlikely to impact most people, however those who are particularly vulnerable (for example the elderly with multiple health conditions and on multiple medications) are likely to struggle to cope, and where action is required within the health and social care sector specifically. A yellow alert may also be issued if the confidence in the weather forecast is low, but there could be more significant impacts if the worst-case scenario is realised. In this situation the alert may be upgraded as the confidence in both the weather forecast and the likelihood of observing those impacts improves.

10.9. Heat Health Alert Amber: (Enhanced Response)

An amber alert would represent a situation in which the expected impacts are likely to be felt across the whole health service, with potential for the whole population to be at risk and where other sectors apart from health may also start to observe impacts, indicating that a coordinated response is required. In addition, in some circumstances a National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS) Extreme Heat (EH) warning may be issued in conjunction with and aligned to the HHA. This situation would indicate that significant impacts are expected across multiple sectors.

10.10. Heat Health Alert Red (Emergency Response)

A red alert would indicate significant risk to life for even the healthy population. A red warning would be issued in conjunction with and aligned to a red NSWWS Extreme Heat warning. Severe impacts would be expected across all sectors with a coordinated response essential.

The decision to go to a red response is made at national level and will be taken following considerations of a cross-government assessment of the weather conditions, coordinated by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (Cabinet Office).

- Continue with amber actions
- Refer to ICB Incident Response Plan (IRP) for coordination arrangements

11. Drought

There is no single definition of drought. All droughts are characterised by some degree of rainfall shortage. Each drought is different, with the nature, timing and impacts varying according to location and which sectors are affected such as public water supply, agriculture, the environment, or industry.

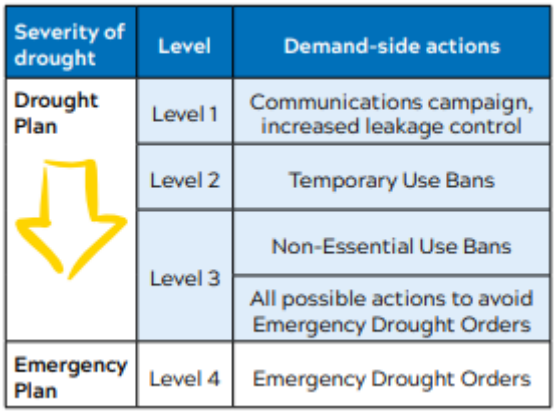
Droughts are not emergencies unless there is a serious threat of restrictions to public water supply using standpipes or rota cuts, or a major environmental or other acute incident requiring activation of multi-agency major incident response arrangements. Water company drought plans cover the actions required up to the classification of an emergency.

At this stage water companies will activate their own emergency plans to deal with a loss of supply and maintaining essential water supplies. The water companies will communicate in advance with local councils, emergency services and local resilience forums about how best this is coordinated in a major drought emergency. This level of detail will not be in their drought plans.

Anglian Water are the water company that supplies the area containing Lincolnshire ICB. Their drought plan can be accessed here.

It is also prudent to note that if a drought does occur, flash or surface water flooding is more likely in the wake of a sudden downpour, due to run-off on dry catchments.

Figure 3 shows the four stages of Anglian Water drought response. ICB will work with multiagency partners to support any actions applicable to the local health system including water saving advice. Any communications must always be signed off by ICB strategic command.



Severity of drought	Level	Demand-side actions
Drought Plan	Level 1	Communications campaign, increased leakage control
	Level 2	Temporary Use Bans
	Level 3	Non-Essential Use Bans
		All possible actions to avoid Emergency Drought Orders
Emergency Plan	Level 4	Emergency Drought Orders

Figure 3 Anglian Water Drought Response Levels

12. Storms and Gales

Impacts from thunderstorms can occur at any time of the year and are most common during the summer months – when areas of intense thunderstorms can move across the UK and heighten the risk of disruption to transport networks and damage property.

One of the most notable aspects of thunderstorms can be the localised nature of the impacts they could bring. This can be the case with rainfall amounts, with big differences in amounts that fall from one place to another – and over only a very short distance.

Strong winds and storms often result in tree damage and trees being brought down. Where trees fall is critical to the type and severity of the impact caused. A single tree falling across a road, railway or falling onto property can have a very different level of impact - compared to several trees falling in remote countryside. Lightning strikes may also cause damage to telecommunications equipment creating communications vulnerabilities.

The National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS) should be reviewed alongside the ICB as an organisation and local communities.

13. Flooding

Lincolnshire has a large fluvial and tidal floodplain, covering almost 40% of the county. Almost all this floodplain relies on manmade flood defences, such as walls, embankments and pumping stations to reduce the risk of flooding.

Flooding is identified on the Lincolnshire Community Risk Register and Local Health Resilience Partnership Risk Register. Lincolnshire LRF have a suite of plans for flooding which are contained within LRF Resilience Direct page.

These arrangements include

LRF Severe Weather Plan
LRF Inland Flood Response Plan
LRF Strategic Coastal Flood Plan for Lincolnshire and specifically in relation to the early escalation of a response, the *LRF Low Level Flooding / Adverse Weather Procedure*.

This document is a thematic plan and local NHS organisations are expected to have specific plans for their organisation.

There are 6 types of flooding:

- **River Flooding** - River flooding, or fluvial flooding, is a very common type of flooding in the UK. This is where a river's flow will exceed the bank sides and cause damage or obstruction to a nearby area. Homes and businesses located near streams and rivers should always check their flood risk, to see if they should be worried about river flooding.

- **Coastal Flooding** - Coastal flooding is a type of flooding that affects communities situated close to the sea. With high tides, stormy weather, and climate change all contributing to an increased risk of coastal flooding, this is a major hazard for many areas of the UK. Seawater over topping coastal defences can cause significant damage and disruption to communities, often requiring retreat further inland. With the added problem of salt in the seawater damaging buildings, coastal flooding is a serious issue and should be addressed with appropriate flood protection

- **Surface Water Flooding** - Surface water (also known as pluvial) flooding can affect people all around the country. Even if you are not situated near to a river or the sea, you may still be at risk of this type of flooding. Surface water flooding occurs after periods of heavy rainfall where excess water cannot drain away. This may be due to a range of reasons including blocked drains or even rainwater running off roads. This water will then collect in an area it cannot drain away from and can cause serious damage. Surface water flood maps are currently available in the UK, but as areas change and develop, this may change where water could collect. Just because your home or business has not flooded before, does not mean that it may not flood in the future.

- **Groundwater Flooding** - Groundwater flooding can affect homes and businesses in the UK although this is not the most common type of flooding. For groundwater flooding to occur, the water table in an area must rise as a result of increased rain. When this water table rises up through a slope, there may be a point at which the water table is above the ground level. If this happens, the water will flow over the surface as it cannot seep into the ground – this is groundwater flooding. Unlike other types of flooding, groundwater flooding may require you to consider measures to protect your home that will prevent water from rising up from below your building – such as a floor membrane.

- **Sewer Flooding** - Sewage flooding rarely affects homes and gardens in the United Kingdom. Sewage flooding however is extremely unpleasant and can be a dangerous type of flood in the UK due to the high levels of bacteria that can spread. The risk of sewage flooding is low in the UK due to both private companies, and local councils putting flood prevention systems in place. The most common cause of sewage flooding is a blockage in the sewage pipe.

- **Reservoir Flooding** - Reservoir flooding is extremely rare in the UK due to very strict regulations and mandatory assessments. However, it is still essential to be aware of the risk of reservoir flooding. Reservoir flooding will cause very fast flowing water to flow down the natural water path in large quantities.

13.1. Flood Warnings Guide

There are three types of warning issued by the Met Office / Environment Agency (EA) when flooding is forecast. These warnings are flood alerts, flood warnings and severe flood warnings

Flood Alert	Flooding is possible, be prepared	
Flood Warning	Flooding is expected, immediate action required	
Severe Flood Warning	Severe flooding, danger to life	

13.2. Flood Guidance Statements

The Flood Guidance Statement (FGS) provides a daily flood risk forecast for the UK Government and category 1 & 2 responders to assist with strategic, tactical, and operational planning decisions. This assessment is shown by county boundaries.

FGS are issued by the Flood Forecasting Centre (FFC) every day at 10:30am and at other times, day, or night, if the flood assessment changes. These statements will be monitored by the ICB EPRR team during office hours and communicated to ICB commanders / provider EPRR leads through the ICB SPOC.

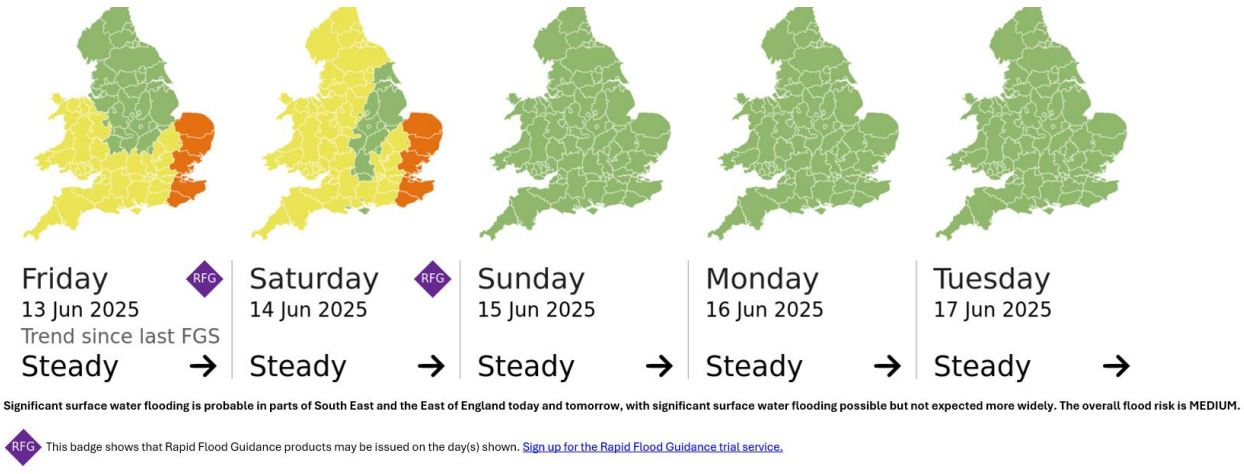


Figure 4 Flood Guidance Statement Overview

ICB commanders may access FGS along with other weather warnings via the Met Office Hazard Manager. The ICB EPRR team will support commanders in accessing this platform.

The risk matrix, a combination of likelihood and impact, will result in a colour coded alert or warning correlating with the flood warnings guide.

As can be seen on Figure 4 above, an update to the service includes identification of areas that are at risk of rapid flooding from extreme rainfall events. This comes in the form of surface water flooding with the Rapid Flood Guidance product being issued on heightened risk days. *Figure 5* shows an example of the FGS map and matrix. Further details on the matrix can be found within the Flood Guidance Statement User Guide.

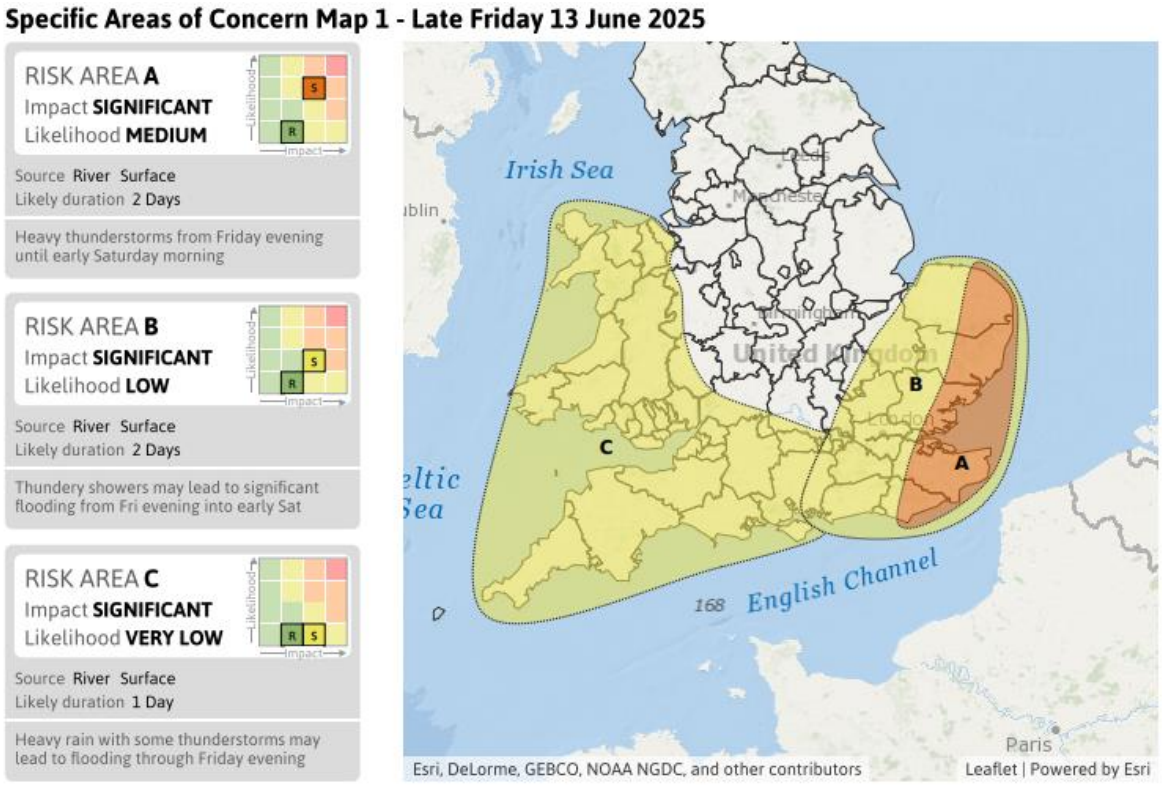


Figure 5 Flood Guidance Statement map and matrix example

13.3. Early Warning Phase

The early warning phase forms the initial trigger for the consideration of activation of this plan. This will be the generation of a Flood Guidance Statement (FGS) which will be received into the ICB. The FGS should be shared with ICB commanders and NHS organisations via SPOC or on-call mechanisms.

13.4. Assessment Phase

This phase is triggered by the convening of a Flood Advisory Service (FAS) teleconference or Hazard Assessment Teleconference (HAT) if the threshold for a FAS isn't met or concurrent needs were assessed as requiring initial coordination. Partners who join this teleconference include local authority, Met office and Environment Agency. This will determine if any further LRF co-operation action is needed.

The local FAS teleconference within Lincolnshire will be triggered by a FGS **Amber** flood risk assessment. The FAS telecon will provide more detailed likelihood and impact analysis.

Irrespective of the FAS and/or its outcome, ICB commanders should assess all alerts /

warnings and be prepared for isolated impacts due to the rurality of Lincolnshire. A list of NHS estates is held by the ICB EPRR team and is available on Resilience Direct Mapping.

Organisations should undertake their own flood risk assessments in relation to their property and assets.

During the assessment phase, collaborative use of Resilience Direct (RD) may be used to map property / assets alongside those areas at risk.

13.5. Preparedness Phase

This phase offers opportunity to prepare and implement arrangements prior to the impact phase. Flood alerting is generally issued between 2 hours and 2 days in advance of flooding, depending on the type of flooding. Strategic / Tactical coordinating groups may be stood up at this stage, depending on the FAS/HAT outcome.

The latest UKHSA flood specific guidance can be found using the following links

Flooding Advice for members of public

Flooding Guidance for frontline responders

The ICB EPRR team will ensure that all local NHS organisations are aware of the threat and the requirement to prepare for flooding impact. This will be communicated via system SPOCs, or on-call commanders if out of hours.

13.6. Impact phase

The impact phase relates directly to response to flooding as it emerges and is reported via individual agencies and services.

At this stage, organisations and services should utilise business continuity plans, and the ICB Incident Response Plan (IRP) should be used for system coordination arrangements.

Severe flooding may require evacuation and shelter of patients and communities within Lincolnshire and in extraordinary circumstances mutual aid may be requested from other areas.

13.7. Recovery Phase

The immediate dangers to physical health from flooding events are highly visible; however, the majority of impacts on health in England are associated with mental rather than physical health.

There are multiple stressors which are associated with poorer mental health. It is vital that early consideration is given to proactive mental health support. Health related recovery guidance can be found within the UKHSA Flooding and health: advice for frontline responders

The mental health response to a flood can be described as a phased approach. Individuals may not always progress between the tiers and some people with pre-existing or complex mental health needs may require specialist support more immediately. This plan should be

used in conjunction with the LRF Psychosocial Support plan found on Resilience Direct. Within this plan there is signposting to Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust (LPFT) resources which can also he accessed through any Incident Management Team set up.

Tier 1: immediate response

This should include addressing the immediate practical needs of those affected. Commander should

- Ensure immediate dangers are addressed and offer practical support.
- Ensure help reaches people and psychological resilience is supported.
- Support public mental health Communications – these should focus on validating the feelings that people may have and normalizing the stress and anxiety.
- Ensure communications are tailored and the relevant materials are accessible for the whole population.

Tier 2: Interventions

For the majority of individuals affected by flooding, psychological impacts can be managed through “light touch support” by appropriately trained responders. The following should be focused by commanders.

- delivering evidence-based psychosocial support such as psychological first aid involving suitably trained responders
- offering short-term one-to-one support where needed – developing an active monitoring support system, either face to face or by phone
- involving voluntary and community sector organisations
- continuing to offer practical measures to support flood recovery

Tier 3: Interventions

Tiers 3 and 4 represent increasing levels of support, for those with psychological needs that cannot be met by general responders and need specialist support provided by a health professional.

Within this tier, commanders should focus on:

- providing active monitoring and seeking to identify and support individuals with more acute psychological support needs
- recognising the specific needs of children through an active screening programme for those exposed, and providing mental health support as appropriate

Tier 4: Interventions

In the medium to longer term recovery phase following a flood, people experiencing more severe or prolonged mental health symptoms may or may not seek help with their mental health needs or may seek help from informal sources. It is therefore likely there is a significant unrecognised burden of mental health within communities after flooding occurs.

Within this tier commanders should focus on

- advising individuals with severe or long-lasting symptom on how to access psychological support – referrals should be made to specialist clinical teams, ensuring support is given as soon as possible.
- ensuring that mental health and social care specialists continue to offer advice to responder organisations.

14. Dust and Sandstorms

Sand and Dust may be carried to the UK when the upper part of the atmosphere is blowing north.

Saharan dust is relatively common in the UK often happening several times a year when big dust storms in the Sahara coincide with southerly wind patterns.

Dust can affect air pollution and pollution levels. Intelligence will be received from the Met Office and action should be taken to protect those at risk, especially those with respiratory problems. Consideration should be given to local communication to the public around options to protect themselves

15. Wildfires

The Met Office provides a Fire Severity Index (FSI), this is an assessment of how severe a fire could become if one were start. It is not an assessment of the risk of wildfires occurring. The index values are from 1 to 5, which represents an increasing degree of fire severity as follows:

- FSI level 1 = low fire severity
- FSI level 2 = moderate fire severity
- FSI level 3 = high fire severity
- FSI level 4 = very high fire severity
- FSI level 5 = exceptional fire severity

This index is provided daily and can be accessed online via the Met Office website.

There is usually little risk of significant grass fires over the winter period. The most common period for grassland wildfires is in springtime when conditions are warming up, with a dry brisk wind. As grass dies off through the summer the risk then increases.

During periods of risk, organisations should minimise any presence of ignition where possible. This includes items such as litter and glass.

Evacuation & Shelter plans should be agile to respond to any extreme escalation in wildfire.

Fire & Rescue Services should be contacted immediately if a wildfire is discovered. The EPRR team will support commanders in responding to large scale wildfires with multi agency partners.

16. Incident Response Roles

Strategic Commander

The ICB maintains a 24/7 Strategic command capability. In the context of adverse weather, strategic commanders will

- Consider adverse weather assessments and incorporate into strategic intent & objectives.
- Ensure vulnerable person groups are considered within strategy.
- Identification of vulnerable areas/services requiring additional support.

Tactical Commander

The ICB maintains a 24/7 dual tier tactical command capability. In the context of adverse weather, tactical commanders will

- Develop a suitable tactical plan which satisfies strategic objectives and intent
- Attend Tactical Coordination Group (TCG) if activated

System Coordination Centre (SCC)

The System Coordination Centre (SCC) are well placed to identify early impact of adverse weather within the local health system.

Should adverse weather alerts/warnings be in place, or isolated impacted reported. The SCC Duty manager should undertake the following.

- Monitor impact reported through the SCC
- Capture and record related information & intelligence.
- Achieve shared situational awareness by using the joint command log
- Ensure any requests for system support are gathered in detail with rationale
- Ensure any active alerts/warnings are included within system coordination calls or briefings.
- Consider associated increase in service demand. The nature of presentation and acuity may vary depending on the alert/waning. E.g. Extreme Heat is associated with increased mortality amongst vulnerable persons.
- Consider delayed responses amongst community services depending on the adverse weather
- Consider patients inability to access routine or unscheduled appointments depending on the adverse weather.

EPRR Advisor

The ICB has a number of individuals who are able to provide an EPRR Advisor capability. This is not able to be accessed 24/7 and is only rostered 0900-1700hrs Monday to Friday (excl Bank Holidays).

In the context of adverse weather, the Duty EPRR Advisor will

- Undertake forward look and assessment of weather alerting
- Develop briefings to other roles including command, SCC and communications

- Represent at multi agency assessment teleconferences
- EPRR Advice to ICB command

17. Communications

As a category 1 responder under the CCA, the ICB has a responsibility to maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency. As well as the public, the ICB will warn & inform staff and other local NHS organisations.

This plan should be used in conjunction with the ICB Communications Response Plan which can be found on the local drive, Resilience Direct and Intranet.

The key messages communicated to both public and staff will vary depending on the type of adverse weather being experienced. The ICB communications team will monitor and liaise will the relevant agencies e.g. NHS England Regional Comms, UKHSA, Environment Agency and Met Office, to ensure the correct messaging takes place.

The communications team will use delivery methods that ensure vulnerable, isolated, and high-risk patients receive appropriate warning & informing during an adverse weather event.

Advice can also be sort from the Gov.uk website on cold and hot weather risks.

Cold weather plan action cards

Beat the heat: hot weather advice - GOV.UK

18. Multi Agency Assessment & Response

Any warning which is Amber or greater should trigger a Hazard Assessment Teleconference (HAT) to assess the local risk and determine coordination requirements. The secretariat function for this will be undertaken by the Lincolnshire County Council Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Team.

The aim of this teleconference is to establish that key agencies have a clear understanding of both the potential impacts and current actions being taken and discuss what additional coordinated actions could be taken to both warn and assist the communities at risk.

During these initial conversations consideration will be given to vulnerable people who may struggle to obtain food and or medication, people who may live in remote areas and are unable to receive deliveries of fuel, transport disruptions and other business continuity issues. The HAT call may recommend that escalation to a Declared Emergency is appropriate or precautionary Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG).

The ICB EPRR team, SCC or Tactical Commander will attend any assessment. An internal brief to strategic / tactical command will then take place. The coordination options for multi-agency response include Precautionary SCG, SCG, and TCG.

It is recommended that local NHS organisations join the initial assessment teleconferences to ensure operational impacts are reported in a timely manner. If multi agency coordination is activated, then the ICB will represent the NHS.

19. Climate Change Adaptation

It is recognised that under all projected emissions scenarios, climate temperatures will continue to rise into the mid-century. Due to this, there is a need for adaptation efforts to reduce the harm from warming that is already guaranteed.

In order to truly understand risk and respond appropriately, overheating events that trigger a risk assessment should be routinely recorded and reported via the Estates Record Information Collection (ERIC). Any declared incidents where heat is considered a contributing factor will also be reported to NHSE (Midlands) via standard situation reporting.

The Strategic Health Asset Planning and Evaluation (SHAPE) tool supports planning for healthcare services. Using the SHAPE tool in conjunction with meteorological forecasts, will enable national and local responders to identify sites at risk of flooding, and ensure long-term adaptation interventions are in place to protect buildings from damage, and support the continuity of clinical services.

The *Health and Care adaptation report (2021)* outlines the climate change hazards which can impact people and built environments (figure 6).

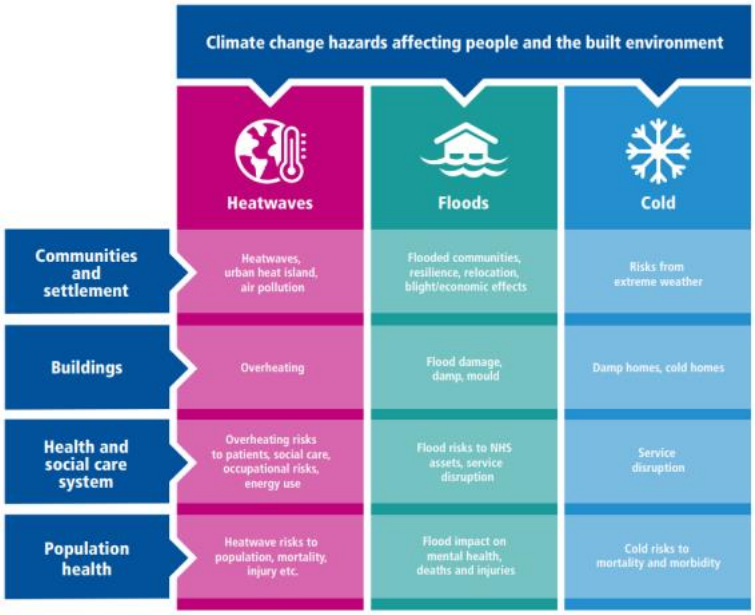


Figure 6 Climate Change hazards affecting people and the built environment.

Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response (EPRR) teams rely on UKHSA's early warning systems to monitor and reduce risk to NHS facilities. Risk assessments relating to heatwave, prolonged periods of flooding and cold weather should also be incorporated into Business Continuity Management Systems, specifically Business Impact Assessments.