



Bradford on Avon Town Council

Kingston House Office, Kingston Road, Bradford on Avon BA15 1ES

Dear Cllr Clewer, Lucy Townsend & Michael Holm,

I am sure you have seen the devastation Storm Bert has caused in Bradford on Avon. Businesses and homes have been severely damaged, and many residents are facing months of clearing up and repairing their properties. In short, this has devastated our town.

With Christmas so close, I fear for our local businesses. The Town Council and the people of Bradford on Avon will, of course, rally around them and support them in any way we're able to.

But frankly, this will only happen again and again unless changes are made to our flood strategy and flood defences.

I understand there is a flood risk management scheme being worked on for Bradford on Avon by the Environment Agency, I would welcome a meeting urgently to discuss the progress of this project. I have spoken with Brian Mathew MP and understand that a meeting is being arranged for next week, and I look forward to hearing more about future plans and on what timelines they can be implemented.

As these events have become more frequent, the town council continues to do everything we can to help our residents. Our town wardens were out from 5.30am on Monday assisting residents and businesses and were left to deal with the brunt of the flooding before Wiltshire Council or Wiltshire Police arrived. We also have a tireless team of volunteers who have worked around the clock to keep residents and properties safe.

I understand resources are stretched - however, this storm had been forecast, with an accurate prediction of the strong winds and the amount of rain. There simply must be a clearer plan for the logistics in the days preceding a flood event like this.

We have seen Bradford on Avon across the regional and national media because of this devastating flood, and in a town that relies so heavily on tourism, the attention this attracts simply cannot be overlooked.

I would welcome an urgent meeting with Wiltshire Council to discuss putting in place a more robust and logical plan to make sure that we will be better prepared next time. Given we're at the start of winter, next time could be next week.

Top priorities are a clearer process for road closures, more immediate help for businesses and residents, and a better understanding of the response we can expect.

I also want to extend an invite to visit Bradford on Avon to see first hand the chaos these flood events cause our town.

I, and the whole Town Council, want to work constructively with Wiltshire Council and the Environment Agency but the town feels let down and left to its own devices when these incidents happen. It cannot continue.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Vittles', written over a horizontal line.

Cllr Jack Vittles
Mayor, Bradford on Avon
On behalf of Bradford on Avon Town Council