

Buckingham Community Flood Response Plan



Buckingham Town Council



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Introduction

Ownership

This document is owned by Buckingham Town Council.

The Buckingham Town Council Community Flood Response Plan outlines the actions and procedures to be coordinated by Buckingham Town Council (BTC) before, during and after any flooding event.

In the event of a flood, the emergency services have overall command. If residents are informed by the Police, Fire and Rescue Service or any other responding agencies to stop their activity or evacuate the area, they should do as instructed. The actions and procedures defined in this plan are intended to be used as a guide, to coordinate the Buckingham Town Council response to any flooding event.

Aims

To ensure Buckingham Town Council play a vital part in the multi-agency response and support Buckingham residents by coordinating the community flood response, ensuring residents are informed and supported before, during and after a flooding event.

Objectives

This plan should achieve the following objectives:

1. To define the roles and responsibilities of all personnel before, during and after a flooding event.
2. To warn and inform the local community and other stakeholders before, during and after a flooding event.
3. To provide support to all town residents, in particular those who are deemed vulnerable, before, during and after a flooding event.
4. To work with Buckinghamshire Council and other agencies, to ensure that Buckingham is represented in the wider multi-agency response to flooding.
5. To work in conjunction with other relevant services. To provide signposting, advice and guidance to all residents and stakeholders in the case of flood events.

Roles and Responsibilities - Individuals

Community Flood Coordinator (CFC)

The CFC has overall responsibility for coordinating the local flood response during office hours. This includes:

- Gathering information regarding the flood alert or warning;
- Liaising with the Buckinghamshire Council, Environment Agency and other organisations (being the point of contact) as necessary;
- Participating in the Buckinghamshire Council IMT (if established);
- Contacting and coordinating Flood Volunteers and advise on actions required;
- Establishing a location as a control point (flood warning only);
- Surveying the affected areas and reporting back to Buckinghamshire Council;
- Ensuring that any communication activity to the affected public is coordinated with Buckinghamshire Council Communications Team;
- Providing updates to Town Council Members of the situation;

This role will be undertaken by the Buckingham Town Council Clerk or in their absence the Deputy Town Clerk or Estates Manager in that descending order. Whilst this role is during office hours, officers of the Town Council may undertake the role outside of office hours. In the extreme situation where an officer of Buckingham Town Council cannot fulfil this role, the role will be undertaken by Buckinghamshire Council Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO).

Community Flood Wardens (CFW)

(This role can be performed by members of BORG if required)

This role is undertaken by members of the community who have volunteered for the role and are not themselves at risk of having their property flooded. They are the primary channel of communication in the event of a community flood response.

- Attending a pre-determined location when notified by the (BTC) Flood Plan (Response) Co-ordinator that they are required to support a flood response;
- Acting in accordance with any instructions provided by the (BTC) Flood Plan (Response) Co-ordinator;
- Deploy to their assigned route and inform the community of the situation and advise them to prepare for flooding;
- If appropriate assist vulnerable residents in putting flood protection measures in place and moving furniture as required but not to the point where this prevents warning other residents on their route;
- Help and advise vulnerable people and/or those requiring assistance and help move them to safety early if required;
- Providing any relevant details and/or information from residents to the (BTC) Flood Plan (Response) Co-ordinator.
- Providing it is safe to do so, surveying the affected areas and reporting back to the (BTC) Flood Plan (Response) Co-ordinator;
- Supporting any recovery activities after the flooding event is over.
- Create photographic/video record and list effected properties.

BTC Communications Lead

A critical part of the response to a flooding event is warning and informing the community providing information, reassurance and guidance to keep them safe. During an emergency the primary role of BTC Communications Officer is to coordinate the release of information to the community with internal and external partners. This may include:

- Liaising with other partner agency's press officers to ensure that the media message is consistent.
- Ensure that timely and consistent community safety messages reach members of the public and other relevant stakeholders in areas of the emergency or major incident, using all available media outlets;
- Communicate with the public all information that can be accurately released without prejudicing the operational response;
- Arrange the dissemination of an extensive and wide-ranging collection of guidance, advice and information bulletins to support and help those affected by the incident.
- Start and maintain a flooding incident log.
- Lead on the co-ordination of information when the response phase is completed and the handover to recovery has been implemented.

BTC Staff Telephone Volunteers (STV)

- Contact residents via the telephone and advise them to prepare for flooding.
- Give suitable advice
- Keep records of addresses where no contact is made
- Record and refer (to the CFC or emergency services as appropriate) any address where the occupant declares themselves vulnerable or requests help.
- Where required

BTC Green Spaces Team (GST)

- Fit flood defences to BTC properties.
- Where safe make visual assessments/photos/video of key locations along the river.
- Assist with deploying sandbags where appropriate.
- Back up the CFW where required.

BC Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO)

- Gathering information to feedback as necessary;
- Liaison with emergency responders on behalf of Buckinghamshire Council;
- Providing the affected community with an initial point of contact with Buckinghamshire Council and Buckingham Town Council;
- Assessing the wider impact of the incident on both the council and the community;

- In the situation where an officer of Buckingham Town Council cannot fulfil this role, the LALO will take on the role of **Community Flood Coordinator (CFC)**

Roles and Responsibilities - Organisations

Buckingham Town Council

The role of Buckingham Town Council is to coordinate the community flood response, ensuring residents are informed and supported before, during and after in the event of a flooding incident ensuring that Buckingham Town Council plays a vital part in the multi-agency response.

Please note that the officers of Buckingham Town Council do not provide a 24/7 response capability.

Buckinghamshire Council

The role of Buckinghamshire Council during a flooding event is to:

- Support the emergency services, Buckingham Town Council and other agencies involved in the immediate response, including:
 - Assistance in the evacuation of the local community;
 - Provision of rest centres, with food and beverages, beds, and welfare services;
 - Clearance of debris and restoration of roadways, provision of engineering services and emergency signing;
 - Structural advice and guidance, and making safe or demolishing dangerous structures;
 - Communicating with the Public;
 - Re-housing of those made homeless, in both the short and long term;
 - Environmental health management;
 - Participate in any multi-agency structures that are established and representing Buckingham Town Council if required;
- Put in place processes to enable the community to recover and return to normality as soon as possible.

Environment Agency (EA)

The Environment Agency (EA) monitors river levels on main rivers to provide a flood warning service to the public, media and emergency responders. The Environment Agency has a three-level warning system: Flood Alert, Flood Warning, and Severe Flood Warning.

- Flood Alerts are issued for large areas such as an entire river catchment and may include several towns and communities. They usually indicate the initial level of flooding, particularly low-lying land and roads. Flood Warnings are issued for specific areas having an identified flood risk.
- Flood Warnings advise people at risk of flooding to take action to protect their property.

- Severe Flood Warnings indicate a potential danger to life and property and urge people to take immediate action, including possible evacuation. 'Warnings no longer in force' messages will be issued when the risk of further flooding has passed, indicating that floodwaters are receding, and no further flooding is expected.

Warnings can be sent out to individual households in identified flood zones. This is done on an 'opt out' system. Individuals can register to receive flood warnings.

During a flooding incident, the EA

- Prioritise crews to check grilles, culverts etc to maximise flow capacity on vulnerable watercourses.
- Monitor and record flood levels and flows.
- Maintain and operate Environment Agency owned flood defences.
- Provide professional advice as to the likely extent / duration / impact of the flooding.

Property Owners

Responsible for protecting their own property during times of flooding. Local authorities and other agencies may assist depending on resources. Property owners within a flood warning area can receive warnings direct to their home or work through the Environment Agency's Floodline Warning Direct System.

Riparian Owners (owner of the land adjacent to a watercourse)

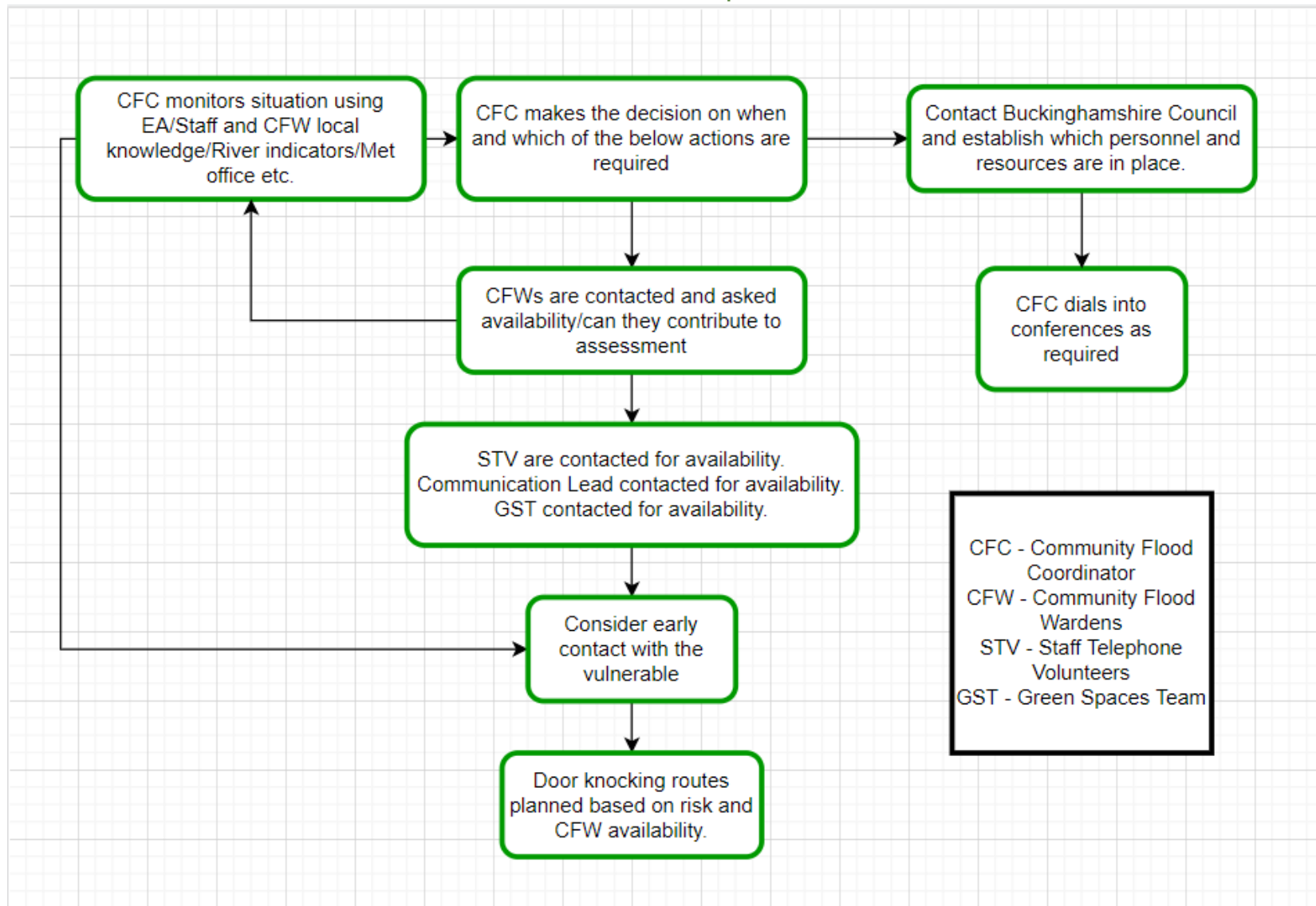
Are responsible for maintaining their section of the watercourse so as to accept flow from the upstream neighbour and pass it on to the downstream neighbour without significant alteration. They are not liable to improve a natural watercourse.

Health & Safety

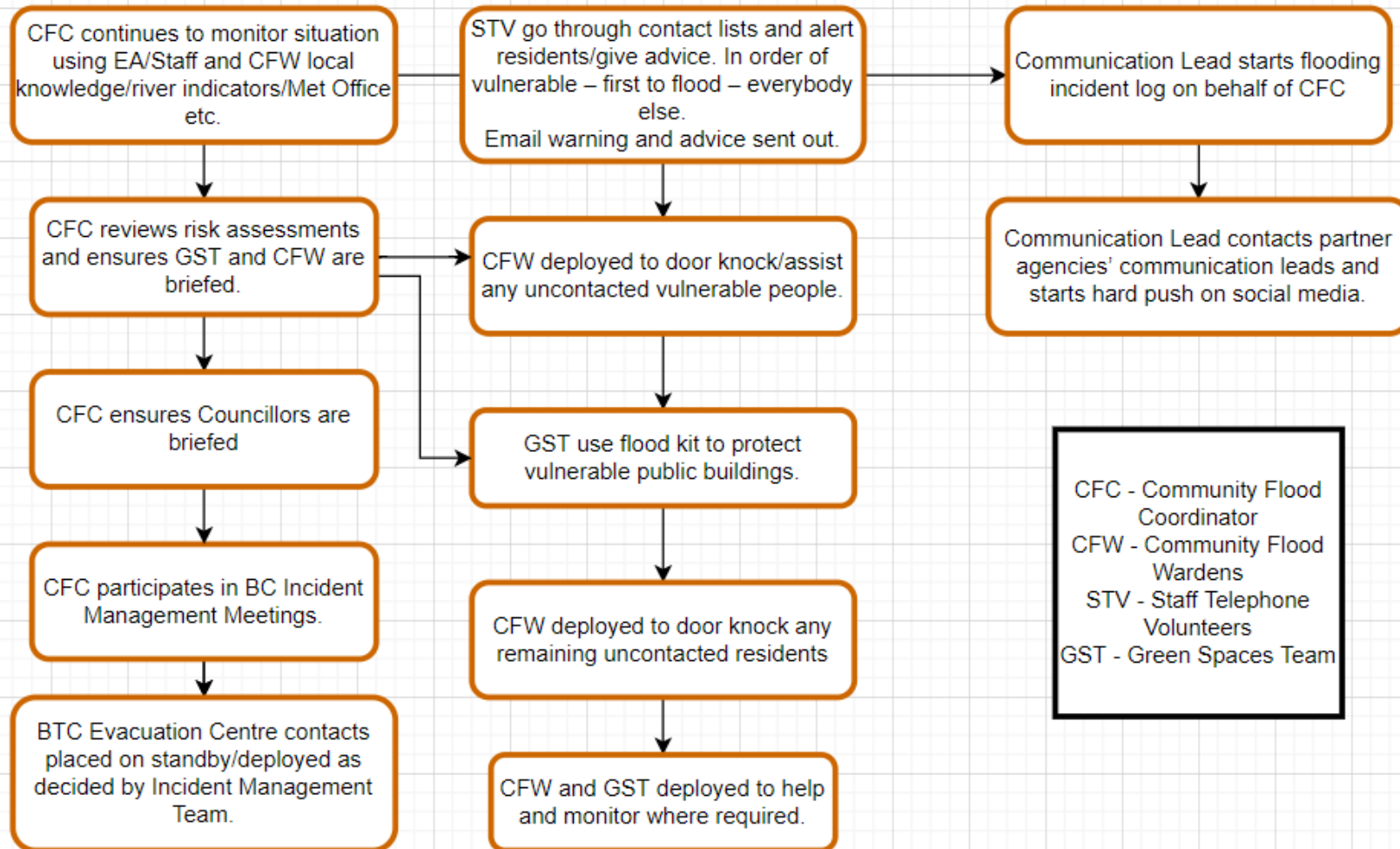
Buckingham Town Council has a duty of care to ensure the health and safety of its employees and volunteers in the event this plan is activated. All employees and volunteers must have read and be familiar with the Buckingham Town Council Health & Safety Policy, the arrangements thereunder and have undertaken training appropriate to their role.

The CFC should ensure that the generic Community Flood Plan Risk Assessment is read and understood prior to deploying any volunteers. A Dynamic Risk Assessment template should be completed by the CFC prior to deployment to ensure that any, additional risks specific to the flooding event have been considered. The CFC must ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of the hazards and control measures in place.

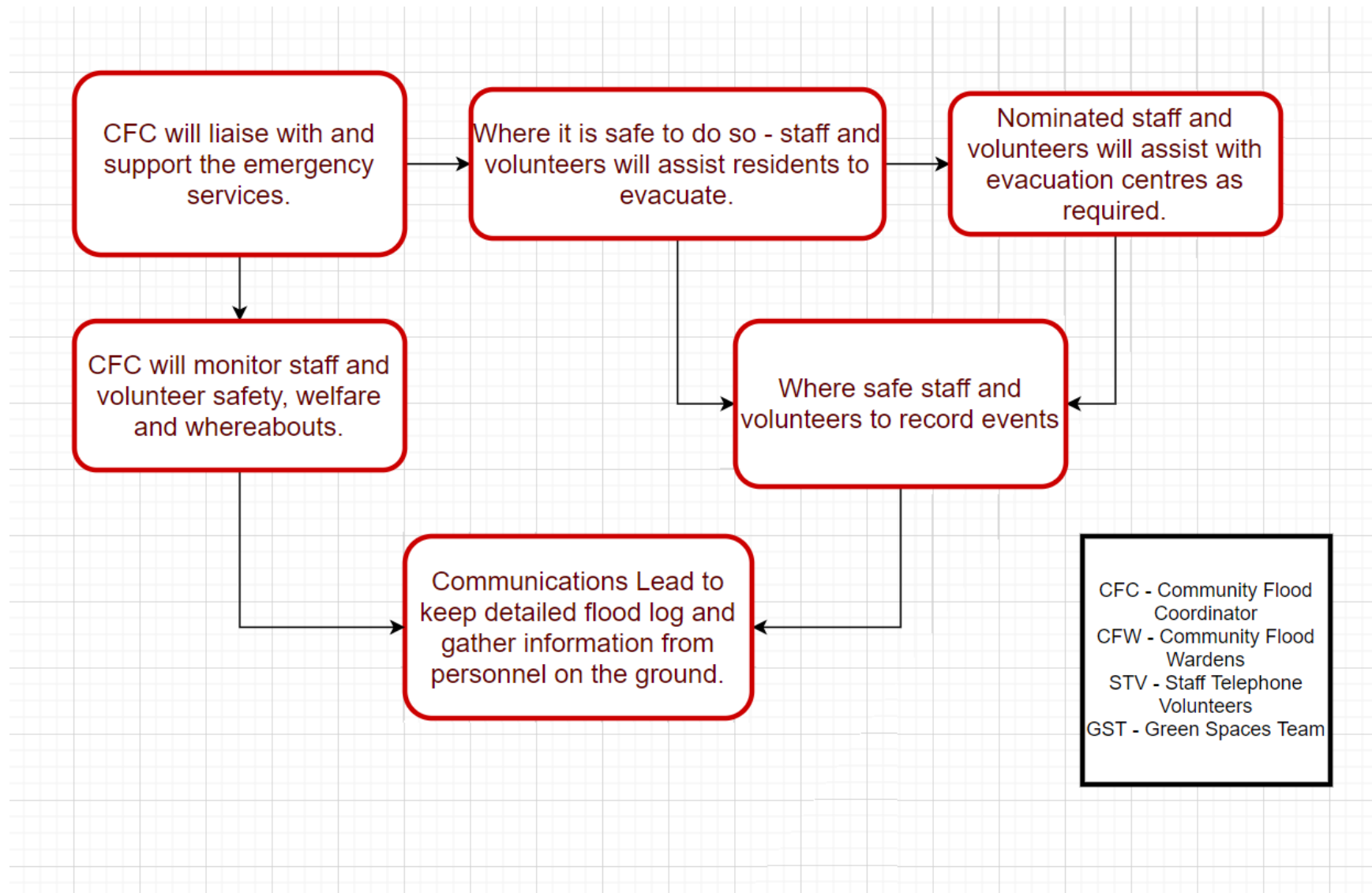
Flood Alert Response.



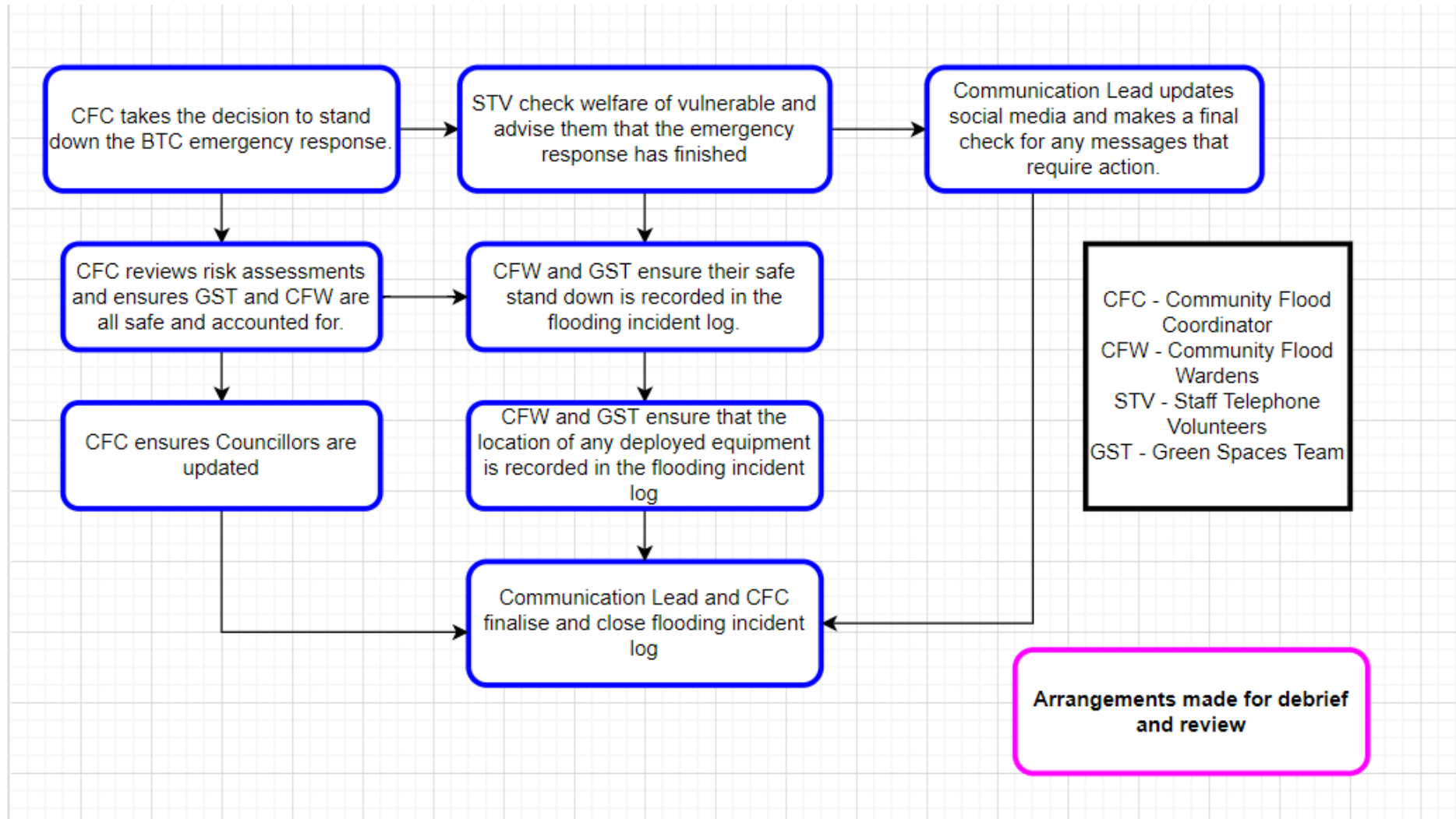
Flood Warning Response (To be implemented after flood alert actions)



Severe Warning Response (To be implemented after flood warning actions)



Stand Down Procedure



Flood Warden Door-Knock Script.

Hello,

I am a Flood Warden from Buckingham Town Council. The Environment Agency has issued an alert/warning/severe warning of flooding in this area.

Have you received the alert/warning and do you understand what it means?

Use the appropriate flood warning advice on pages 13-15 to explain what it means and how they should prepare.

Is anyone in the property vulnerable? If yes take details and make the CFC aware.

Do you believe any of your neighbours to be vulnerable? If yes take details and make the CFC aware.

Telephone Volunteer Script

Hello,

I am calling from Buckingham Town Council. The Environment Agency has issued an alert/warning/severe warning of flooding in this area.

Have you received the alert/warning and do you understand what it means?

Use the appropriate flood advice on pages 11-13 to explain what it means and how they should prepare.

Is anyone in the property vulnerable? If yes take details and make the CFC aware.

Do you believe any of your neighbours to be vulnerable? If yes take details and make the CFC aware.



What to do if you get a flood alert

A flood alert means you need to prepare: **flooding is possible.**

If you haven't already done so, you should:

Check your flood risk and sign up for flood warnings - <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk> OR call Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

Keep up to date with the latest situation - check Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or follow @EnvAgency and #floodaware on Twitter for the latest flood updates.

Read the EA's - What to do in a flood - guide at <https://tinyurl.com/crjvf2a3>

Have a bag ready with vital items like insurance documents and medications in case you need to leave your home

Check you know how to turn off your gas, electricity and water mains supplies

Plan how you'll move family and pets to safety.



What to do if you get a flood warning

A flood warning means you need to act: **flooding is expected**. You should do all the actions for a flood alert but also:

Move vehicles to higher ground if it's safe to do so

Move family and pets to safety

Move important items upstairs or to a safe place in your property, starting with cherished items and valuables, then furniture and furnishings

Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies if it's safe to do so; never touch an electrical switch if you're standing in water

If you have property protection products such as flood barriers, or air brick covers, use them now

Keep track of the latest situation



What to do if you get a severe flood warning

A severe flood warning means **there is danger to life: you must act now.**

Call 999 if you're in immediate danger

Follow advice from the emergency services and evacuate if you're told to do so

Make sure you have an emergency kit including a torch, spare batteries, mobile phone and charger, warm clothes, important numbers like your home insurance, water, food, first aid kit and any medicines and baby care items you may need

Alert neighbours and offer help if it's safe to do so

Avoid driving or walking through flood water: just 30cm (1 foot) of fast flowing water could move your car and even shallow moving water can knock you off your feet

Keep your family and pets away from floodwater – it may contain heavy debris, sharp objects, open manhole covers, sewage and chemicals

Wash your hands if you've been in contact with flood water which may contain toxic substances

Useful Contacts

Floodline - 0345 988 1188

Buckingham Town Council – 01280 816426

Buckinghamshire Council -0300 131 6000

National Flood Forum – 01299 403055

Buckingham Citizen's Advice – 01280 816787

Environment Agency 03708 506 506

Anglian Water 03457 145 145