

Proposed Spelthorne Borough Council Position on Sandbags:

To ensure the sandbag policy reflects best practice and is current. The following is proposed to be Spelthorne Borough Council's sandbag policy:

“Spelthorne Borough Council cannot provide sandbags for all residents at risk of flooding. The Council retains a small reserve of sandbags and in rare instances, the council may exercise discretion in supporting vulnerable residents affected by localised flooding. This will depend on the availability of sandbags, specific flood conditions, and whether using sandbags would be practical, without encouraging unsafe behaviour such as entering floodwaters. Additionally, sandbags will only be supplied if they are likely to be effective in diverting floodwaters.

Those wishing to acquire sandbags are advised to identify alternative sources – such as builders' merchants and local DIY stores may stock sandbags, sand, or hydrosacs.

Residents in areas with a known risk of flooding are encouraged to make their own preparations in advance, ensuring their properties are safeguarded by appropriate flood prevention measures that can be deployed if flooding occurs. Please see below from the Council on measures households could consider taking - <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/16996/Flooding-advice>.

All households across the borough can register for flood alerts and use government guidance on making flood plans at - [Prepare for flooding: Protect yourself from future flooding - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/prepare-for-flooding).

Please note, once issued sandbags become the residents responsibility. The Council will not typically handle or pay for the collection and disposal of sandbags afterward.

Please see below for all the links relating to flooding on the Councils website:

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/17000/Am-I-at-risk-of-flooding>

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/17002/Be-prepared>

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/17004/Flooding-FAQs>

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/17006/Types-of-flooding>

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/17008/Sandbags>

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/17001/Quick-dial-codes>

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/17847/Drains-and-sewers>

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/17005/Watercourses-and-riparian-responsibilities>

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/17007/Insurance>”

This statement would also mirror national government messaging around encouraging residents and businesses in the borough to consider personal planning and resilience in preparing for a flood. Spelthorne Borough Council (through their emergency planners) would also work and direct community flood groups to support such plans. Similar to the previous statement, the council will retain a reserve of sandbags that in rare instances they may distribute.

There are no equality implications arising from this policy, and it underscores the importance of residents and businesses being prepared to protect themselves and their properties proactively.