

ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL - LEAD COUNCILLORS REPORT

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FLOOD PANEL – REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL 2/03/2026

Introduction

This report provides an update on recent partnership activity with Severn Trent Water (STW) and the Environment Agency (EA), progress on the Flood Watcher Scheme, and local flood-mitigation developments. It also outlines plans for the coming months.

Engagement with Severn Trent Water

The first in a planned series of regular meetings with the STW Community Flooding Officer took place on 13 January. The meeting provided a constructive opportunity to review Alcester Town Council's Flood Watcher Scheme and explore areas for joint working to reduce flood risk across the town.

- ATC requested updates on the following points at the next scheduled meeting on 17th March:
 - Feasibility of discharging clean water retained in the large tank directly into the river rather than into the drainage system.
 - Clarification on the ownership and status of the Victorian drain running from Stratford Road, including whether it has been abandoned or is simply not an STW asset.
 - Improved mapping and observation of drainage connectivity, specifically the interaction between foul, storm, and combined drainage systems.

Environment Agency Flood Modelling and Asset Discussions

- ATC received the updated Environment Agency flood-modelling report in late January. The CRFP submitted a series of technical questions on 4 February 2026 and is awaiting a formal response.
- A joint meeting was held on 2 February with the EA Lead on Asset Management and STW Community Flooding Team to improve understanding of how assets operate collectively to mitigate flood risk. Key points included:
 - The EA confirmed that Alcester remains an area of particular concern due to deficiencies in sections of the flood bund behind School Road. As a precautionary measure, EA teams will deploy sandbags stored at the allotment site to raise the height of the eroded and subsided sections when necessary.
 - Potential funding may be available to the EA to undertake a full survey of existing flood defences before the end of March. Confirmation is awaited.
 - A joint walkaround of EA bund defences and associated EA/STW assets was undertaken to support shared understanding of current conditions.
 - The EA advised that it does not hold any flood-mitigation assets in the Oversley Mill Park area, despite regular flooding events there.

Flood Watcher Scheme

Membership of the Flood Watcher Scheme has increased by four since the last report, bringing the total to eight volunteers, most have undertaken the online flood awareness training. The outreach for potential volunteers has been expanded with the recent introduction of the Flood Watchers Facebook page which has been the source of additional expressions of interest which are being followed up.

Cherry Trees Flood-Mitigation Activity

Discussions have taken place with the Management and Property Team at Cherry Trees Care Home regarding measures implemented to prevent flooding of the road in front of the property. Significant investment by the company has been made in on-site drainage, and the adjoining farmland has been excavated to create a deep trench leading to a purpose-built pond beyond the extent of the Cherry Trees building. This intervention appears to have reduced the risk of surface water flowing onto the public highway.

Future Plans

The following activities are planned for the coming months:

1. Coordination with County Councillor James Norris to facilitate High Street drain cleaning during the extended road closure for the 2027 Pancake Races.
2. Development of a flood-awareness plan for businesses in Swan Street, High Street, and Bulls Head Yard.
3. Assessment of current personal protective equipment for Flood Watcher use.
4. Exploration of community-based leaf-gathering solutions to reduce autumn drain blockages.
5. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Flood Watcher protocol in July 2026.
6. Develop further with the Court Leet their plans for a river clean activity in May and September 2026.