

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

UNITED KINGDOM: FLOODS

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 185 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the situation and the information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The Situation

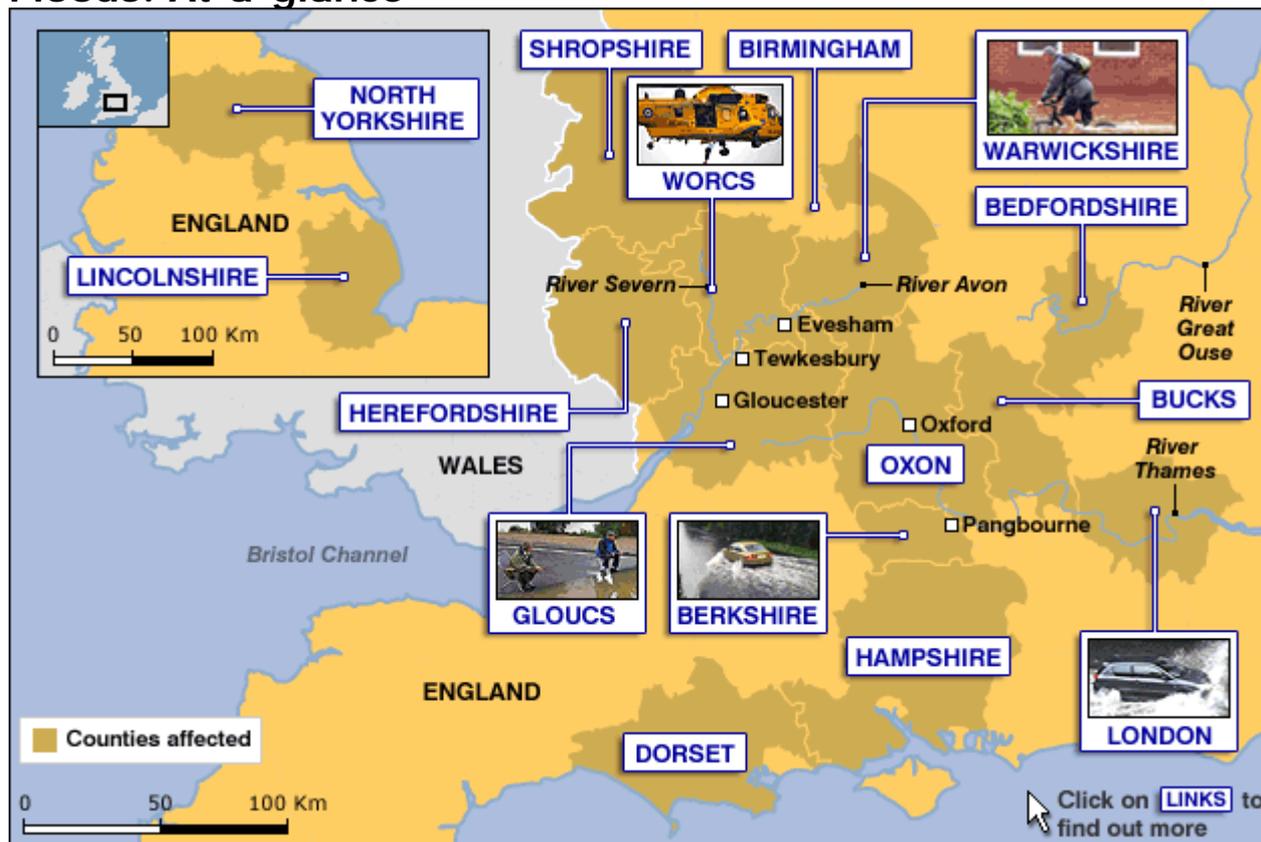
A prolonged period of heavy rain has provoked severe flooding in central and western England, leaving at least 350,000 homes without running water and 50,000 without power. The Severn, Avon, Thames, and Great Ouse are the major rivers, among others, that have either reached (or are expected to reach) critical levels. The situation is evolving, and while recent reports indicate that water levels may be receding, there remains a considerable threat that adverse weather may continue to exacerbate the flood situation, forcing more people to evacuate their homes and preventing the repair of major services such as water and electricity.

(Photo: The Red Cross has set up rest centres for people evacuated from their homes. Volunteers have been distributing food, drinks, toiletries and other items to evacuees. Beds, blankets, pillows, duvets and sleeping bags are provided by the Red Cross in the rest centres, as well as psychological support, especially for elderly people evacuated from residential homes.



The map below (courtesy of the BBC) identifies the hardest hit areas:

Floods: At-a-glance



Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The British Red Cross Society (BRCS) has responded to the needs by releasing resources from its Disaster Fund, and has launched a national appeal (on 24 July) to immediately assist those in need. Since the start of the floods, and in collaboration with United Kingdom (UK) Government agencies and authorities, the BRCS emergency response volunteers have helped, and are continuing to help, hundreds of people across England and Wales who have been affected by the torrential rain and flooding over the weekend. Activities are focused on evacuation, the provision of bottled water, emergency rest centre support (practical and emotional), and other assistance.

As the UK's leading voluntary organization for emergency response, the BRCS has thousands of specially trained volunteers who provide a range of services to people in emergencies, including practical and emotional support and first aid services. The BRCS also has well-equipped Fire and Emergency Support Service (FESS) vehicles which play a vital role in supporting local fire and ambulance services.

BRCS volunteers have been supporting several rest centres in Oxford, Buckingham, west Berkshire, Henley-on-Arden, Stratford-upon-Avon, and Wellsborne in Warwickshire. The BRCS rest centre in Oxford had around 150 evacuees overnight, including people stranded when train services were cancelled at the railway station and several elderly people from an evacuated care home. BRCS volunteers provided practical and emotional support, and medical equipment (including wheel chairs).

Elsewhere, BRCS FESS vehicles and crews have helped people in Hemldon in Northamptonshire, Tilehurst in Berkshire, Barry in south Wales, and Wellsborne where a FESS crew and first aid team helped people at a triage and treatment centre set up at the local fire station. Red Cross ambulances provided support to local ambulance services in Sussex, Berkshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, and Birmingham.

In addition, the BRCS has provided medical equipment and bedding to several areas in England. Birmingham City Council received 200 beds, 400 blankets, and 200 pillows for a rest centre. Warwickshire received 250 beds, 500 blankets, and 250 pillows, and the Red Cross sent 80 duvets and 16 sleeping bags to Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, at the request of the local authority.

Red Cross emergency response volunteers were also on call and ready to respond in many areas. Ambulance crews were on stand-by in Kent, Sussex, and Wiltshire, volunteers set up a rest centre in Reading for an anticipated 200-300 people, and an emergency response team was put on standby in south Wales.

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