

Buckingham Flooding – July 2007

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On the evening of Friday 20th July 2007 BORG received a request from Buckinghamshire Council for assistance in Buckingham due to the impending arrival of floodwater from the Great Ouse. Conveniently a number of the response team were marshals on the off road course at the Land Rover show held at Billing Aquadrome in Northampton, only 45 minutes away. A team were soon on their way, and despite flooding on the approach roads (where two vehicles had already come to grief and were being recovered) the vehicles greater ground clearance and drivers skills ensured the convoy was soon at the rendezvous point in Buckingham town centre.

Almost immediately the first task was started, that of unloading several hundred sandbags from three trucks for local residents to collect, this was followed by re-loading them onto smaller trucks which the council with our assistance used for distribution around the narrow back streets. Meanwhile The Buckinghamshire & The Midshires Search And Rescue groups used their skills to locate vulnerable people in case evacuation was required as well as leaflet dropping to the potentially affected buildings. Once the supply of sandbags had been used our team split in two, one half set off to the local depot to fill some more while the other took advantage of the hospitality offered by the local fire station, our grateful thanks to them!

Information coming in to the Emergency Planning Officer on site about the state of the river upstream was at times vague and so two of the vehicles that were best equipped for wading (driving through deep water) headed off to the crossings upstream where we were able to provide more up to date and accurate information as to the state of the river and how much water was on its way down. In one case the river rose nearly two feet in twenty minutes!

Once the last of the 2700 sandbags had been distributed (about 3am) the team headed back to the fire station for two hours rest before returning to site. On our return the centre of Buckingham had been transformed, no longer just a large puddle in the car park but a flooded road in places 2-3 feet deep. The fire brigade were already evacuating people with their boat and a ladder, our team assisted with moving some people with mobility problems and some further leafleting before being relieved by some more members of the response team. It is fair to say that the Little Chef on the way home was somewhat overwhelmed by the sudden large number of orders for Olympic Breakfasts! By Saturday afternoon the overnight team were back marshalling the off road course as if nothing had happened.....

A report has since appeared in the local paper, it can be read [here](#)

There follows some pictures, all from the next morning as we were somewhat busy on the night for making a photographic record.



The view down the road, sandbags from the night before are visible against the doors of the properties on the left



The car park in front of the flats, the flats are built high enough that they were not directly affected, but the car in the centre of the picture (itself on a high spot) gives an idea of the depth of water



Another car where the owners could not be contacted



Buckingham Pier! Well, if Wigan can have one, why not Buckingham? This was hastily constructed from the sandbag pallets and sandbags to enable the Fire and Rescue service boat to “dock” to unload evacuees without them getting their feet wet.



As the overnight team left the waters were already starting to recede



The team get ready to go home