

CASE STUDY

Flood Defence

Monmouth Prep School

Protecting a primary school:
how we provided an early flood
warning system to keep kids safe



After a prestigious prep school in Wales suffered extensive damage following flooding from a nearby river, we installed our market-leading early warning system, FloodAlert®, to prevent future devastation.

In 2020 the banks of the River Wye broke its banks and flooded nearby Monmouth Prep School in Wales causing severe damage to the entire ground floor of the Prep School, playground and surrounding fields.



The devastating floods of 2020

According to the latest reports on the impacts of climate change, flooding caused by severe and frequent rainstorms is the UK's most pressing climate-change risk and could affect millions of people causing extensive damage, disruption and loss. So, once the school was back on its feet, we were delighted to work with their insurer, Hettle Andrews, to make sure the property was protected against future flooding.

Monmouth Prep School, Monmouth

Monmouth Prep School is a fully co-educational Prep School in Wales for children aged three to 11-years-old. The independent school is one of Wales' leading prep schools and offers boarding and day attendance to pupils in modern and contemporary teaching spaces which encapsulate the very best of traditional, independent education.

We worked with the school's insurer, Hettle Andrews, who facilitated the project. Hettle Andrews works primarily with schools, universities, colleges and charities.

Working with **HETTLE ANDREWS** | chartered insurance broker

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The challenge

The school had previously had minor issues with flooding as the River Wye is situated at the bottom of its garden. However, the flood of 2020 was the most devastating.

The river broke its banks and flowed into and through the school to the dual carriageway situated on the other side.

The flood damaged the entire ground floor of the school, the playground and surrounding fields and the whole school had to be urgently evacuated.

No warning: the school is surrounded by a flood bank and had flood gates installed in 2002 however there was no early warning system in place to get the flood gates closed in time.

Extensive damage: the 200-year-old school building sustained catastrophic damage and needed large-scale structural repairs to be restored.

Sanitation issues: the waste from the surrounding farmlands was washed into the school along with the floodwater, mud and debris causing not only damage but also sanitation issues.

Inconvenience: the clear-up process included using five 40 foot skips which were filled with damaged items such as furniture, clothing, educational equipment and floating debris.

Disruption: the school had to close for nearly seven months to clear the debris, remove all the damaged school equipment, clean the entire premises, sanitise and eventually re-build.

The solution – Andel FloodAlert

Andel's FloodAlert® – one of our innovative, industry-unique flood defence solutions which provides an early flood warning for properties not covered by the Environment Agency flood warning service.

FloodAlert® provides real-time information on rising water levels and automatically sends out early warnings.

The robust and reliable system is easy to install and set up and once in, tracks surface water levels for up to 15km from a gateway.



FloodAlert® installation

This means the school now has:

- A cost-effective, real-time local flood alert system with three alert levels
- A sensor which sends SMS and email alerts to give them time to take action to protect their pupils and the school
- Live monitoring on a cloud-based portal, via any device with internet connectivity
- A system that can communicate with an unlimited number of designated users
- Communication via a low-power LoRaWAN network.

The results

Early warning: the school now has an effective early warning system for rising and escaping water.

Safety first: the school now has safety measures in place to protect its pupils aged three to 11-years-old.

Confidence: the early warning system gives the school staff around six hours from the first notification of rising waters to close the flood gates allowing plenty of time to evacuate the children as well as any equipment.

Peace of mind: the staff at the school feel relieved knowing the water levels are constantly being monitored at the property especially because they are so close to the banks of the River Wye.

Community: we are always quick to try and accommodate schools that require our services as we know they are the centre of the community and provide safe havens to many.

We are proud to have been able to install our FloodAlert product on a site with such a rich history and provide them with an effective early warning system plus peace of mind.

What our client said

“The 2020 floods were devastating and left us with the fear that it could happen again.

Having such little children on site, it was very stressful knowing there was no early warning system in place.

Now we have a good five or six hours from the first notification of rising waters to close the flood gates, evacuate the children safely, and make the necessary arrangements to protect the building.

With all these flood defence measures in place, we hope to never have a repeat of the destruction and school closure of 2020.”

Rob Alexander, Caretaker, Monmouth Prep School



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