



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NEWSLETTER

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STORM GORETTI – A REMINDER FOR COMMUNITIES TO BE PREPARED

Cornwall faced one of its worst storms when Storm Gorette hit the southwest. It brought strong winds, caused a lot of damage, led to power outages, and resulted in the loss of life. This storm combined wind, rain, and dangerous seas. Communities, especially in coastal and rural areas, need to prepare for extreme weather.

Record wind speeds hit Cornwall hard. In the west of Cornwall, Culdrose saw winds reach 90mph, while Camborne experienced gusts of 80mph.

RED ALERT

The National Alert System warned us about the Met Office's rare red weather warning. The authorities issue the alert when conditions threaten life. It forecast:

- Flying debris,
- Home damage,
- Coastal flooding and large waves.
- Transport shutdowns.

The warnings were right. The storm's winds struck Cornwall, toppling trees and damaging buildings. Travel became risky.



Storm Gorette also caused serious damage to Cornwall's infrastructure:

- Over 40,000 homes lost power.
- Some communities had water supply problems because storms damaged local treatment plants.
- Fallen trees blocked roads and damaged buildings. This prompted a quick response from Cornwall Highways.
- Severe winds suspended all train services.
- Schools closed early or remained shut after the storm.

The storm showed how interconnected Cornwall's infrastructure is. One extreme event disrupted electricity, water, transport, telephony, and essential services. Residents reported destruction, fallen trees, damaged roofs, and communities in darkness. Recovery needed round-the-clock coordination between Cornwall Council, emergency services, utilities, and local volunteers.

Storm Gorette highlights that extreme weather is becoming more severe and unpredictable. Cornwall's rugged coastline, rural areas, and vulnerable infrastructure increase these risks.

Key Lessons

1. Severe weather can intensify in a short period. Storm Gorette deepened with surprising intensity, becoming a "weather bomb." Residents had only hours between warnings and peak danger.

2. Red weather warnings need immediate action. Met Office red alerts signal life-threatening conditions. Ignoring these warnings by travelling or delaying preparations puts lives at risk.

3. Communities must expect multi-system failures. The storm disrupted:

- Electricity, water supply and digital communications
- Transport networks
- **Healthcare access:** preparedness must consider cascading failures, not only isolated hazards.

4. Local knowledge and community networks save lives. Early school closures, neighbour check-ins, and local volunteers helped protect vulnerable residents. Whole society resilience is as crucial as government response.

5. Coastal regions must regard wave and tide risks with seriousness. Large waves and coastal debris present severe dangers. Authorities warned residents against "wave-watching."

HOW COMMUNITIES CAN PREPARE

Have a Community Emergency Plan - [Community Emergency Plan Toolkit - Cornwall Council](#)

Strengthen awareness and communication:

- Sign up for [Met Office alerts](#).
- Speak to your gas, energy or water supplier to find out if you are eligible to sign up to providers' **Priority Service Registers** – by signing up to the register, you can let your supplier know that you need additional support, including when there is an interruption to your supply.
- Follow updates from [Cornwall Council](#) and the [emergency services](#).
- Ensure alternative communication tools (battery or wind-up radios, power banks).

Prepare homes and property:

- Secure loose garden items (bins, furniture, trampolines).
- Keep emergency kits with torches, spare batteries, medical supplies, and non-perishable food.

Plan for power and water interruptions:

- Charge devices ahead of storms.
- Store bottled water.
- Know how to contact utility providers.

Telecommunication outages: Many people need power for calls and internet access, but a big change is coming in 2027. You can get more information and join community workshop at [Telecommunications Resilience - Cornwall Council](#)

Check on vulnerable neighbours. Community support networks are vital for isolated or at-risk residents. Prepare for [Evacuation](#) and identify suitable [Community Emergency Hubs](#)

Avoid unnecessary travel. Cornwall Council and emergency services warned that travel during Storm Goretta was risky. This was due to fallen trees and problems with infrastructure. For more information go to [Prepare - Prepare](#)

CONCLUSION

Storm Goretta was a key event for Cornwall, bringing some of the worst weather in years. The storm's strong winds caused outages and transport shutdowns. This showed us how important it is for the community to prepare.

Cornwall's experience shows that resilience is essential. Communities must prepare for severe storms. They should prioritise clear communication and build strong local networks. Quick action and community support are vital for future storms.

