



PRESS RELEASE

SEVERE WEATHER WARNING

An early warning has been received from the Met Office in relation to heavy rain and high winds which are forecast for Tuesday 24 November 2009 across Dumfries and Galloway, The Borders and Cumbria.

The warning is for heavy and persistent rain which will lead to accumulations of 50 to 75 mm locally, with up to 100mm possible over the Cumbrian fells. This rain will be accompanied by west to southwesterly gales with gusts of up to 65 mph possible. The timescales for this severe weather is 0600 hours through to 2359 hours on Tuesday 24th November.

Following last week's heavy rainfall, the ground is already saturated and rivers are swollen. There is likely to be further flooding across the region. Roads in particular will bear the brunt of this flooding. With some roads in the region still only passable with care, the region is bracing itself for more road closures. While flooding is therefore considered inevitable, the extent of flooding cannot be accurately predicted. Businesses and householders need to be vigilant and aware the situation could change quickly.

Motorists are asked to consider travelling only if necessary and to consider carefully their routes when travelling through the region, and indeed into Cumbria or The Borders. Inspector Neil Hewitson of the Roads Policing Unit says, "We have seen the effects that heavy rain has had on our roads over the past week and we again warn motorists about the dangers of driving in these conditions. Spray from other vehicles and whipped up by these high winds will have the effect of reducing visibility. The added dangers of floods and roads affected by standing water make for dangerous driving conditions. The message is clear. Only travel if you really need to."

In relation to the effects that the recent severe weather has had on Council bridges, culverts and footbridges, as of today DGFirst qualified engineering staff are carrying out inspections of all major structures over principal rivers within the region. This will include for example the bridges in Dumfries Town Centre, Shillahill near Lochmaben and Langholm.

This press release has been prepared in accordance with the Lord Advocate's Guidelines

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