

# Landslide Toolkit

Use these tools to help understand landslide risks in our communities, how you can prepare and what to do if a landslide occurs. Help for homeowners, landlords and tenants.

Hastings Borough Council in office hours 01424 451066, outside office hours 01424 451999.

## Be Prepared

### BEFORE, how can we lower risk:

- Learn about landslide risks in your area, especially if you live near a deep cutting, cliff or steep slope. Neighbours or other residents may know about the history of an area, so speaking to them can be useful. If you are a tenant, check with your landlord or registered provider if they are aware of any previous issues.
- Be aware of excess water on the land, this is a major cause of slope instability.
- If you suspect a leak in a water main or main sewage pipe, then contact Southern Water immediately. Tel: **0800 820 999**. If there is a water or sewer leak on your property, this is a homeowner or landlord responsibility and must be dealt with as soon as possible.
- Make sure all surface and foul water outlets from your property are properly connected to the drains and that all drains are watertight. Regularly inspect the condition of drains and any water management items to ensure they remain watertight, and remove blockages as soon as you are aware of them. [www.southernwater.co.uk/help-and-support/i-have-a-blocked-drain/](http://www.southernwater.co.uk/help-and-support/i-have-a-blocked-drain/)
- Check what part of your water pipe you are responsible for - your property will very probably be connected to one of the mains water supplies via a private supply pipe, these are owned by the property owner and are their responsibility to maintain to include leak detection, repairs and replacement where necessary. If you are renting your home, contact your landlord to ensure that they are aware of any private pipes running across their land and that they understand what their responsibilities are. There may also be other 'private pipes' running across your land. [www.ofwat.gov.uk/nonhouseholds/supply-and-standards/responsibility-supply-pipes](http://www.ofwat.gov.uk/nonhouseholds/supply-and-standards/responsibility-supply-pipes)
- Make sure your gutters and downpipes are not overflowing or leaking and use rainwater collected in water butts for watering the garden. When cleaning gutters, remove debris first to prevent it entering the sewer.
- If you suspect a leak in a pond, water feature or swimming pool, repair it at once, take special care in the emptying of pools or ponds ensuring drainage to proper outlets and not directly into the ground and follow installers' guidelines to prevent collapse.

- Landscape your property to prevent water collecting and ensure ditches are kept clear: any work on or adjacent to a watercourse requires Environment Agency approval. Tel. **0800 807060**. <https://slowtheflow.net/you-can-slow-the-flow-at-home>
- Regularly inspect slopes, banks and walls for signs of movement or damage, check drainage holes are clear, and if you think there is a problem seek appropriate professional advice, or, if you are a tenant, speak to your landlord in the first instance. If you are worried about a wall not on your property then contact the council's Building Control team on tel: **01892 602005**.
- If repairs are needed, advice should be sought from a chartered geotechnical engineer or structural engineer on the cause of the problem and the nature of repairs required.
- Avoid putting weight or tipping waste material etc, on and above steep slopes as this may lead to the slope collapsing, potentially damaging any property below. If you do need to do this, then seek professional advice on how this can be done safely. Weight can include plant, vehicles and machinery that will be there temporarily as well as permanent weight.
- Ensure that anyone you employ, for example builders or gardeners, who may be working near to a steep slope, are aware of the risks of ground instability. Show them a copy of this information. Make sure they have appropriate insurance and that your insurer has been informed of the works.
- Avoid the removal of trees and bushes from steep slopes, as in many cases vegetation acts to bind the soil and remove ground water, reducing the likelihood of shallow movements. Trees need to be maintained and checked regularly. If you are concerned about the removal of trees or vegetation, please seek professional advice.
- Avoid the use of artificial grass in gardens – in many cases this can increase water runoff and prevent root networks from forming underneath that can bind soil and naturally manage water.
- If in doubt, check it out – speak to an engineer or other competent person about your project or planned maintenance before you start.

## DURING: what to do to stay safe

- Stay safe! Leave the area immediately if you hear sounds such as trees breaking, or rocks moving or feel movement in the ground.
- **Dial 999**
- If it is safe to leave the building then do, if you are unable to vacate go to the area of the building furthest away from an approaching landslide and await rescue.
- Watch for secondary risks that can follow a landslide such as flooding, fallen power lines, broken gas pipes and damage to structures.

## AFTER:

- Report to Hastings Borough Council **01424 451066** in office hours, **01424 451999** outside office hours.
- Report to your landlord if your home is rented.
- Stay away from the area as the ground is likely to still be unstable.
- Check your own home for any immediate damage or cracks.
- Contact your insurance company as necessary.
- Ensure utilities providers are aware of the situation to check their supply.