

Flooded Isles



A Role-playing game by Gavin Kenny (Gavken)

- Characters' skills / abilities are generated / recorded using a Sudoku or Magic Square style grid.
- Genre Blend – Pirates / Post Apocalypse
- Images
 - Map of UK flooding taken from Scientific research (republished by the BBC)
 - Battleship – Wikimedia commons
 - Photograph of Tewksbury Flood – Available via Creative Commons
- Game contains no random element of any kind.
- The entire game, sans title page, must fit onto a 3 page document (letter sized, minimum font size of 10pts).

In the near future of 2098 the reality of global warming has hit. The British Isles now really is a series of islands and the chaos that this has caused has drastically affected society. Those that could not migrate to the high ground have been forced into boats of all kinds. Much of the population is now living in protected frontier style towns or a pirate life on ships, raiding the mainland where they can to survive. The remnants of Government lie in the British Navy who patrols the waters looking to keep the pirates down, the Scottish Parliament and the King in Wales. Much of England is held by local rule as communication networks are down and beyond repair.

Chapter 1 – The Setting

1.1 Global Warming

The full effects of Global warming were never truly acted upon by nations in the early twenty-first century. Promises made by industrialised nations were broken and the developing world found they could not easily cut back and compete in the modern world. All in all this led to Global Warming hitting much earlier than predicted and countries such as the UK were just underprepared to face the consequences. The ice shelves of Antarctica melted at an alarming rate such that huge swathes of ice dropped into the sea from glaciers in 2031 raising the sea levels to an unprecedented level. The UK responded by building more wind farms, solar panels in housing and tried to build sea defences, but it was too little, too late.

1.2 The Breakdown of Society

Large portions of the UK mainland coast as well as other parts of the world were lost by 2039. The move of people inland was a massive upheaval that led to rioting as well as the relocation of the UK government from London to Birmingham. Troops were sent out to restore order, but the PM at the time, Charles Margram, would not sanction them to fire on their own people, so their usefulness was limited.

The flooded areas blocked road and rail travel and it eventually became increasingly hard to get about the country without a boat.

With Coal and Oil becoming increasingly rare by this time and renewable energy still only accounting for 10% of the people's needs power cuts became more common. Power lines immersed in water started to fail and with increasing rioting in the country repairs became more and more infrequent.

The people furious with the ineptitude of the government and the lack of food rioted in the streets of Birmingham and overthrew the Government in 2038. As communities became more and more isolated they increasingly began to look after themselves first and instituted local laws based around communities. Migrants trying to move from low lying areas were not welcomed in areas that were already suffering from a lack of fresh water and food and communities fought furiously to protect their land.

1.3 The Kingdom of Wales

After the death of his father Charles III in 2027 William V ascended the throne of the United Kingdom. He took a decision in 2031 to relocate himself and his family to Wales, buying the castle at Harlech from Cadw and brought it back up to a habitable status.

As the state in England increasingly collapsed William hesitated to act as he was now technically only a figurehead Monarch. By 2039 though he was forced to act and as Commander in Chief of the armed forces he contacted those Generals that he could and ordered them to Harlech for a summit. With the army greatly reduced and dispersed and most of the airfields under water the Navy took the leading role in the discussions. It was agreed that with the collapse of the elected Government in England that William would take control temporarily to help restore order with the King's Council helping him administer those areas that were still under control.

The English Navy was still in a reasonable state then with many of the ships being Nuclear powered. As a result they were able to patrol the coasts of Wales and enforce law and order. A mixture of conscription and the rump of the army saw that the Kingdom of Wales maintained some order in the ensuing chaos.

Of course not everything was perfect and rationing of both food and electric power was brought in. There were some rebels against the enforced rationing and some looting and plundering occurred. The Kingdom of Wales forces began to use force to maintain control and a 10pm curfew was enforced.

By 2051 a dedicated rebel group called Roundheads (named after the Parliamentarian forces in the Civil War) had formed against the King's rule and an assassin, Karen Prestor, blew herself up next to the King. William's son then took the throne and became King Henry IX ruling with his wife Mary.

The Kingdom remains in a relatively stable state to this day but still suffers from terrorism and pirate attacks. Its infrastructure is starting to fail and the Kingdom is currently seeking more permanent links to stable regimes in Europe.

1.4 The Scottish Parliament

In the chaos of the 2030's in England the Scottish Nationalist Party (who had made increasing gains in the Scottish Parliament) decided to declare Scotland an independent nation from the English. Much of the early expansion in renewable wind and wave technology was in Scotland and with much of the land in Scotland remaining above sea level this has made Scotland more resilient to the flood.

The Scottish Parliament declared independence in 2033 and immediately the English army launched an invasion to try and force the re-integration. Different regiments in the army reacted very differently however as the Scottish regiments would not fight against their own and indeed many ended up defending their homeland and sabotaging the English efforts. The Scottish War of succession 2033-2037 was disastrous for both sides in the wake of widespread climate changes and a number of important installations were destroyed on both sides.

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The War ended in 2037 after the English Generals recognised that internal rioting and the move of the Government from London to Birmingham were more serious matters than regaining Scotland. The treaty of Inverness 2037 formally recognised Scotland as a separate realm governed by the Scottish Parliament.

The Scottish Parliament quickly passed the Immigration act of 2038 that strictly limited the number of refugees that it would allow into the country. Scotland has since been forced to maintain its borders without the help of the Royal Navy. As a result the implementation of the Scottish Parliament's laws was patchy at best with locals often being forced to fight to maintain their land from pirates and invaders.

The Scottish Parliament's early attempts at creating an army really revolved around creating a militia to protect the new Parliament buildings and the immediate families of the representatives. The collection of taxes had become increasingly problematic so the payment of any larger force was next to impossible. Punitive forces were sent out on occasions to "deal" with invaders but these were largely for show.

In 2065 the Scottish Parliament began to consolidate their hold on the populace by only providing power to those that paid taxes in goods or kind to the centre. Whilst a number of people decided to go back to natural resources, many took up the offer. With regular finances starting to come back in, the Army of Scotland was reformed and a number of Special Operatives recruited to help the Parliament maintain control and administer justice.

1.5 The Royal Navy

The Royal Navy was largely unaffected by the floods and the ships introduced in the early 21st Centaury were still crewed and patrolling the British Waters.



The Navy suffered two issues however. Firstly the lack of authority in the mid 2030's meant that command had to make more independent decisions which ultimately lead to them accepting the King's authority and rule in Wales in 2039. The second issue was supplies from the mainland were becoming increasingly rare and the existing ports were no longer usable. A number of crews mutinied during the late 2030's but most of the Navy kept going and a new port was created in the Rhonda valley for them in 2042.

Although the Navy were given priority on supplies, they have increasingly found it hard to keep the ships repaired and restocked. Although they are some of the most capable ships in the area, they are becoming increasingly tatty. There are increasing number of things

on the ships that "just don't work" and this is increasingly becoming an issue for the Kingdom of Wales.

1.6 The Pirates Life

Fisherman and other boat owners from Luxury Cruisers, Yachts to cruise liners, seeing the destruction of their homes began to increasingly use the seas and waterways. Ships picked up of survivors which lead to whole new communities forming on ships and boats to cope with the change in climate.

To start with the people tried to buy fuel, but when that became increasingly difficult had to go back to using canvas. Additionally food became scare and the people aboard ships began to be turned away from the land and had to resort to piracy to feed and clothe themselves. These makeshift homes made up of rag-tag survivors became communities that relied on raiding the mainland and fishing for their livelihoods.

1.7 The English Isles

England and Northern Ireland were perhaps the worst affected of all by the floods with all but small islands of high ground left for communities to settle. These small communities are isolated except for whatever they can trade via boats and they have increasingly fortified themselves and made use of local militia to defend themselves from pirate attack.

Some of these communities have survived by going back to old ways of living, but many have not survived the ravages of time and weather. There are now some ghost islands in what was England with the only remains of communities being diseased bodies in the streets. Disease is a serious concern for the English Isles and strangers are often checked for it before they are allowed to come onto the island.

1.8 Technology

The only nuclear plant built in the 2020's that is not currently underwater is at Wylfa in the Kingdom of Wales. The remaining plants at Olbury (Gloucestershire), Sizewell (Suffolk), Sellafield (Cumbria), and Hinkley Point (Somerset) are all now underwater and the waste contained within is no longer being processed and contained. These areas are heavily contaminated and both people and animals in the area have dangerous mutations that make them shunned from the population at large.

Since electricity is largely unavailable in most of England communities there must rely on animal power, wind power, solar power (if they have it locally) to supply small amounts of energy for essential needs. Oil based generators are largely useless now since there is no fuel for them. Fixing broken technology is becoming a skilled art that is valued and passed down to the next generation.

The internet as a phenomenon now largely does not exist any more. Nowhere can afford the power to keep large scale computing running and as a result computers

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(if they have any power) are only used briefly for essential use. Whatever books have survived the flood are now even more valuable. Radio survives in a more modest form with broadcasts of information taking place once a day for half an hour from Midday each day.

1.9 Set-up Ideas

There are a number of different ways that a game of Flooded Isles could be set up and this section gives a few of the ideas as well as plot ideas that could be linked with them.

Pirates

The players are all pirates aboard the same board, determined to fight to stay alive. This setup has scope for a wide variety of adventures, including ...

- a) Being hunted by the Royal Navy and doing everything possible to shake them off.
- b) Searching for treasure buried beneath the sunken parts of England. This involves navigating through the treacherous low lying waters and trying to find all those things that were lost – guns, machinery and even knowledge.
- c) Good old fashioned looting of poorly protected settlements just to get food to survive.
- d) A rivalry with another ship, perhaps caused by a feud that occurred in a hidden pirate enclave.

Royal Navy Special Team

Instead of being pirates the players could be members of an elite Royal Navy team assigned to various missions from their aging naval ship. Some ideas for missions are:-

- a) Investigate mysterious disappearances of the coast of Sellafield. Has the leaked radiation from the nuclear plant really created a monster?
- b) After all these years a beacon is emitting from what was London. The main ship cannot go in as it would run aground, so the team are sent in to investigate the source of the beacon.
- c) Pirates have been raiding the coastline of the Kingdom of Wales. Your team has been assigned to find them and neutralise them.
- d) A French Naval vessel from the remnants of the French Navy has been spotted entering our waters. Are they an official delegation, and if so what do they want. Your team is assigned to make first contact.

Scottish Parliament Special Operations

The players are all loyal members of the Scottish parliamentary forces and are assigned to deal with problems. Some issues they might deal with

- a) Border dispute between two neighbouring settlements over access to fresh water. The one downstream is complaining that those upstream are polluting the water. Those upstream need to use the water for their livelihood. How will they

deal with the rival claimants and sort out the problem?

- b) A group of Scandinavian settlers has set up a new settlement along the coast. This contravenes the Parliament's strict act to limit refugees settling the area. What will the Special Forces do about this?
- c) An area in the highlands has developed the plague. The Special Forces have been assigned to prevent it spreading across the north.
- d) A new charismatic English leader has started to rally people to his cause in the remains of the North of England. He is telling the people of untold riches in Scotland and that they should rise up and take it. The Special Forces have been sent to neutralise the threat of this new leader.



English Survivors

The players are the second generation of survivors of a settlement on the high ground. They have some crude defences around their island home but they always need more for the people to survive. The youngsters are recruited to help sort out their problems.

- a) The current years crops have failed. Without more food soon the colony will starve. With no authorities out there to help the youngsters have been sent out to look for more supplies.
- b) The pirate attacks have been getting worse. Many of the elders have been killed and one of the guns and the dwindling supply of bullets have been passed onto you to help defend the colony.
- c) A strange ship has been run aground a short way from the settlement. Are they occupant's pirates or something else? The youngsters are sent out to scout and find out before it is too late.
- d) The Wind Farm has failed due to a broken capacitor. Without power the colony will be much worse off. There are rumours of an old Wind Farm that was in the lowlands (and now underwater) years ago that might have spare parts. Problem is it is close to another colony known to be hostile. The youngsters will be sent to try and recover the part without getting themselves killed.
- e) Pirates have kidnapped two of the young women of the Colony for breeding stock whilst they were outside the compound walls. The young men of the Colony will be sent out in the only boat to try and get them back.

Chapter 2 – Character Generation

2.1 Abilities and Skills

Characters in Flooded Isles have abilities that are generated around a Suduko square. At the top of the Suduko square the character has three columns titled “Physical”, “Mental” and “Social / Senses”. These columns will be used depending on how the characters other abilities are to be used. For instance if the character is using an ability titled “Hunter” then shooting an arrow would have the value in the intersection of the Hunter and Physical box. If the character was tracking an animal then this would be the intersection of the Hunter “Social / Senses” box.

A character in Flooded Isles is defined by five core abilities that represent what they are. These abilities could relate to their job, skills they have or encapsulate them as a person and are recorded at the left and right side of the Suduko square. You need to explain to the GM what the keyword is, how it is likely to be used so that they can give you the go-ahead to use the ability. Each character has a sixth standard ability called Resilience that determines how much damage the character takes when they are hit. This is always the bottom left ability on the characters square.

2.2 Filling in the Suduko Square

The characters starting ability scores are to be filled out on a Suduko grid like the example given below. Like all Suduko all rows and columns must add up to 15 and each number from 1-9 can only be used once. These are the initial ability scores that your character will have and will regain every time the grid is reset.

	P H Y	M E N	S O C	
Hunter	9	2	4	Swimmer
Iron Will	1	6	8	Bargainer
Resilience	5	7	3	Naturalist

Once the grid has been set put cardboard markers on the squares marked 2-9. The square marked 1 is initially left blank.

2.3 Wound Chart

All characters have a 10 point wound track that they mark off when they are wounded.



2.4 Resets

During the course of a session a character is allowed 3 ability resets. These resets restore the character’s Suduko

grid to the initial positions. This can be done any time before an ability is used, and its use is marked off on the character sheet.

2.5 Special Abilities

Each character may choose one special ability from the list below that they can initially only use once per session. This is marked off in a similar way to the resets that a character gets.

Reverse the Polarity – They may backtrack their ability score to the previous position when an ability is used.

Fast Thinker – They may move the grid on twice when using a mental ability.

Fast Reflexes – They may move the grid on twice when using a physical ability.

Eagle Eyed – Character can add two to their score when using a sense based ability.

Jack of all Trades – If a character does not have an appropriate ability they use a score of 2 rather than 1.

Gift of Tongues – They may add two to their score for a social ability involving talking.

Got the Edge – Where an ability conflict is tied this character can use this ability to win the tie.

Hardy – The character may use this ability to prevent 2 points of damage from one source of damage.

Hot Shot – Add two to an ability that involves firing a gun or missile weapon.

Swashbuckler – Add two to an ability that involves using a hand to hand weapon.

Action Man – Add two to a non combat physical ability or three if it is particularly cinematic.

Heavy Hitter – Character deals an additional box of damage.

2.6 Money & Possessions

You should detail your current possessions on your character sheet. Any more unusual requests for possessions should be cleared with the GM first. The economy is largely barter since civilisation has collapsed in the Flooded Isles, thus characters start with no “money” but may have a number of possessions.

2.7 Background

The final thing the player needs to do is write a brief background for the character. This does not need to be long and complex, but should say who they are, what they have done in the past and what motivates them.

Chapter 3 – Running the Game

3.1 Using Abilities

When using an ability the player announces what they are attempting to do and which of their abilities they think is relevant. The GM will determine if that ability is relevant and if it is will compare the ability against either the target difficulty (as given on the chart below) or against the competing character's ability. Where the GM rules the character has no relevant ability they will have an ability score of 1.

TN	Difficulty	TN	Difficulty
1	Very Easy	6	Very Hard
2	Easy	7	Difficult
3	Simple	8	Very Difficult
4	Average	9	Heroic
5	Hard	10+	Impossible

If the character has the higher ability they will get to do the action they wanted. If it is a tie or the defending character (or target difficulty) wins then the character does not succeed.

Once the ability has been used the player moves one of their markers into the space on their Suduko grid. This will leave a space behind it with the starting value in it. You cannot move the marker back where it came from on the following skill use unless you use a special power.

When using social abilities to persuade another character a player should say what it is they are saying. A good in character argument will generate a bonus of 1 to the character's ability. A very good argument will generate a bonus of 2 to the character's ability.

3.2 Combat

Combat is resolved in the same way as above with the characters involved using their relevant combat skill in the Physical column.

The only exception to this is that ties do not result in either side winning the test. Combat is simultaneous with neither side being defined as the attacker / defender. The winner of an individual combat round is the one with the higher score.

Damage in boxes is then assigned according to the following difference in scores and resilience of the character being hit.

Diff/Resilience	1-3	4-6	7-8	9+
1-3	2	1	1	0
4-5	4	3	2	1
6-7	6	4	3	2
8 or more	8	6	4	3

If a character ticks off all their damage boxes then they are dead.

3.3 Close / Ranged Combat

All combat takes place simultaneously so all characters whether firing at range or battling at close quarters will get to attack before they receive any wound penalties.

Characters with an active ability to dodge ranged weapons (which is extremely rare) may use that to defend against missile weapons. All other characters defend against missile attacks using a standard defence of 3 (even if they are in close combat). If the character is not aware of the shot then they will have a standard defence of 1. Ranged penalties given below apply to any shots and the character should keep count how many bullets / arrows they have left as bullets are in short supply.

Projectile weapons are rare and normally have a rate of fire of 1 bullet per round but a submachine gun can fire up to 3 bullets in a burst which if used will move the damage difference row down one row. Crossbows and slings require 1 round to reload.

The following range in feet applies to common missile weapon types.

Ranged Weapon	Bullets	Short	Medium	Long
Pistol	6	100	200	300
Rifle	6	220	440	660
Submachine Gun	24	60	120	180
Bow	1	70	140	210
Crossbow	1	120	240	360
Sling	1	25	50	75

3.4 Combat Modifiers

There are a number of factors that can modify a characters combat score depending on the environment and other things. These are detailed in the table below.

Environmental Factor	Modifier
Low Light	-1
Darkness	-3
Underwater	-3
Attacking Above	+1
Attacking from below	-1
Attacking on Horseback	-1
Short Range missile fire	0
Medium Range missile fire	-2
Long Range missile file	-3
Wounded (5 boxes)	-1
Target in Partial Cover	-2
Target in Heavy Cover	-4
Seriously wounded (8 boxes)	-2
Each additional attacker	-1 per attacker

3.5 Healing & Medicine

Characters will naturally heal at a rate of 1 box per session. Whilst medical science has gone backwards in the past decades the knowledge of what to do is still around.

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A character receiving a successful first aid soon after an injury will heal an additional 1 box of damage.

A character using surgery will compare their ability (Physical) against the difficulty of the number of wound boxes. A success will give 2 wound boxes back. A success of 3 greater than the difficulty will give 3 wound boxes back. A success 5 or greater than the difficulty will give 4 wound boxes back. Any character having had surgery will require three to five days to recover after the operation. In addition if the operation was conducted in a non cleansed environment then the person healed must make a resilience check to avoid an infection.

3.6 Experience

The GM should award experience points for role-playing within the session. The GM should award 1 point for role-playing, 1 point for the players achieving their goal and 1 point for the player participating. Players can use 12 experience points to gain either an additional use of a special ability, an additional reset or gain a new special ability.

3.7 NPC's

There are three different levels of NPCs that the GM can use in the game which are described below.

Mooks

Mooks are the followers of a group. Not powerful individually but as a group can be a real threat. Rather than having a full Suduko grid for each Mook, they are assumed to have 4 for all their ability scores. Mooks have no resets, special abilities and only 5 wound boxes. For a greater or lesser challenge the GM can make Mooks with 3 or 5 for their ability score.

Leaders


Leaders are often the leaders of a group of Mooks or sub commanders. Whereas Mooks are generic pirates, sailors and community member, the leaders are pirate Captains, Royal Navy Commanders and Community Headmen. A leader has a full Suduko ability board like a character, have 10 wound boxes, a special ability but have no resets.

Main Villains

Main Villains are the ones directing the action and are often in charge or are controlling those who are in charge of the main threat. Main Villains have a full Suduko board, have resets, 10 wound boxes and up to 3 special abilities. Main Villains are dangerous and for added threat the GM can give them a global bonus of 1-3 to all their abilities if they want to make them really dangerous.

3.8 Character Sheet and Tokens

A blank character sheet and tokens that can be used for the Suduko ability board are available to the right to be used with the game.



Name _____ Sex _____

Occupation _____ Age _____

	P H Y	M E N	S O C	
Resilience				

Wounds ○○○○○○○○○○○○

Resets ○○○○○○○○○○○○

Special Abilities

_____ ○○○○○○○○○○○○

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Possessions

Background

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