

[Press release: Work on Northumberland flood defence complete](#)

Work on a new £65,000 flood embankment which protects homes in Hexham from flooding is complete.

Storm Desmond saw flooding to 15 properties at Tyne Green, Hexham, on 5 December 2015.

Properties flooded as a result of water from the River Tyne flowing through an underpass beneath the Newcastle-Carlisle railway line near to Tyne Green Golf Course.

The Environment Agency prioritises delivery of new and improved flood defences using government funding over a rolling six year programme, to schemes which provide the greatest benefits to protect properties from flooding.

Due to the small number of properties that would benefit, against the cost of delivering a flood scheme at Tyne Green, the Environment Agency had been unable to deliver new flood defences in the area.

Funded by residents

The new flood bank has been uniquely funded by residents who pooled individual government grants made available to them following flooding over the winter period of 2015/16.

The Environment Agency and Northumberland County Council worked closely with Tyne Green residents, Northumbrian Water and Network Rail to provide a creative solution.

The work started on 11 June and was finished this week. Some fencing still needs to be put in place and this will take place early in July.

The flood embankment, built by Breheny Civil Engineering, has been designed to protect against a flood event similar to that experienced by Tyne Green residents during Storm Desmond. Chris Hood, Project Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

I'm delighted we've been able to complete this flood defence which is great news for the residents of Tyne Green.

They have been on a long and difficult journey and ultimately used their initiative and all worked together to pool their grants which has allowed us to build this new flood defence.

I'd like to thank them for their support and continued patience while we have worked together with Network Rail and others to find

the best and most cost-effective solution at Tyne Green.

We hope this protection afforded by the new defence will now provide local residents with peace of mind when bad weather threatens in the future.

Agencies working together

Northumberland County Councillor Glen Sanderson, Cabinet member for Environment and Local Services, said:

This is another fine example of agencies working with local communities to find innovative solutions to improve their areas and prevent flooding events damaging their homes in the future.

County Councillor for Hexham Central with Acomb Trevor Cessford added:

This is great news for local residents and should hopefully provide peace of mind and security for the future.

I would also like to say a huge thanks to all the residents for their patience and understanding in this drawn out matter and for the selfless financial contributions they themselves have made towards the project.”

The Environment Agency is urging people to ‘Prepare, Act, Survive’ by visiting the Floods Destroy website and do three things to prepare for flooding.

- check your postcode and find out if you are at risk of flooding
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[Press release: UK Hydrographic Office supports G7 Healthy Oceans commitments](#)

Ocean plastics, coastal resilience and the Blue Economy were high on the agenda at the G7 summit in Canada earlier this month, where a commitment to support and drive ocean science and sustainability was signed. The Charlevoix Blueprint for Healthy Oceans, Seas and Resilient Coastal Communities sets out G7 commitments on ocean plastics, and creates a blueprint for the development of a more sustainable and climate-resilient future for oceans and coastal communities, with a focus on ocean science and effective, transparent data gathering and utilisation.

As a leading maritime nation, the UK is well placed to support many of the goals set out in the Blueprint and is ready to spearhead the expansion of global interest in ocean data. Through the UK Hydrographic Office's (UKHO) marine geospatial expertise, the organisation is well placed to support the delivery of many of the commitments set out in the Blueprint. Marine geospatial information provides the foundations for critical decisions affecting trade, maritime safety and security decision-making, the sustainable use of marine resources and development of marine infrastructure, as well as protecting habitats and ensuring resilience against forces of nature.

As well as supporting the UK's position as a great maritime nation, the UKHO is also the Primary Charting Authority for 71 coastal states around the world, and supports safe navigation globally through the provision of nautical charts, publications and services to over 90% of ships trading internationally. In addition, the UKHO is currently working with partners on two programmes across the globe to support emergency preparedness and recovery, support the management of coastal zones, expand ocean data observation and seabed mapping, and manage fisheries and marine protected areas (MPAs) – all initiatives identified by the Blueprint as priorities for healthy oceans and economies globally.

The UKHO is contributing to projects across 31 coastal states. The Overseas Territories Seabed Mapping Programme, funded by the UK Government's Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) and co-ordinated by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), is focused on undertaking seabed mapping in territories under the jurisdiction and sovereignty of the UK, such as Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands (BVI), the Cayman Islands and Montserrat. Furthermore, the UKHO also plays a leading role in the FCO's Commonwealth Marine Economies (CME) Programme, alongside the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) and the National Oceanography Centre (NOC). The CME Programme aims to unlock over £2bn return for the economies of 17 Small Island Developing States (SIDS), some of which are the most economically vulnerable states in the world, through a range of

Blue Economy developmental work.

John Humphrey, Chief Executive of the UKHO, commented:

We worked long and hard with our partners across Government to underpin the development of effective global goals for healthy oceans and sustainable Blue Economy growth in advance of the G7 summit.

It is extremely gratifying to see this global coalition of leaders commit to ocean goals that the UKHO knows from experience have a direct benefit on individuals and economies in coastal communities and nations around the world.

For example, we are continually building our capacity and understanding of how best to support emergency preparedness and recovery efforts. Meanwhile, we have also seen first-hand how accurate and up-to-date seabed mapping can contribute to dual aims of marine protection and the development of the Blue Economy. The associated positive economic benefits of hydrography are clear: with the average return of approximately £7.50 for every £1.00 spent. However, this ratio can exceed 1:250 for more remote, more geographically challenged and less developed nations.

As a world leading marine geospatial data agency, we look forward to continuing to support our partners achieve the goals of the Charlevoix Blueprint for Healthy Oceans, Seas and Resilient Coastal Communities signed at the G7 summit earlier this month.

Recognising the importance oceans play in the global climate system, supporting communities, jobs and livelihoods, food security, human health, biodiversity, economic prosperity and way of life, the Blueprint commits the G7 to:

1. Support better adaptation planning, emergency preparedness and recovery
2. Support innovative financing for coastal resilience
3. Launch a joint G7 initiative to deploy Earth observation technologies and related applications to scale up capacities for the integrated management of coastal zones
4. Increase the availability and sharing of science and data
5. Address Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and other drivers of over-exploitation of fish stocks
6. Support strategies to effectively protect and manage vulnerable areas of our oceans
7. Take a lifecycle approach to plastics stewardship on land and at sea, moving towards the more resource efficient and sustainable management of plastics

The UKHO is continuing to invest in its technology, staff and facilities in its office in Taunton, to ensure they can continue to provide leading global marine information for decision makers across the globe. The UKHO is

expanding marine geospatial capabilities through data science and software development and will be working with government partners to support active strategies to achieve the G7 Blueprint.