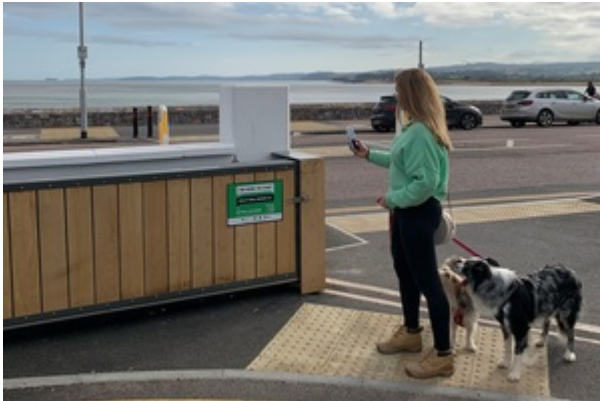


Say 'Hello' to the Exmouth tidal defence scheme

Press release

The Environment Agency has launched a 12-month pilot with Hello Lamp Post to give residents and visitors to Exmouth the opportunity to have a 'conversation' with the Exmouth tidal defence scheme.



Having a 'chat' with the flood gate at Alexandra Terrace, Exmouth

Hello Lamp Post allows people to have 2-way 'chats' with objects in their local environment. QR codes have been attached to parts of the tidal defence around Exmouth; anyone with a smartphone can scan the QR code or text the number on the sign to begin a conversation.

Residents and visitors will be able to find out why the defences are needed and how they can reduce their own flood risk in a digestible, informative and playful way. They'll also be able to give feedback on the Exmouth tidal defence scheme itself.

The first interactive objects are now live at Estuary View car park on Royal Avenue and the flood gate at Alexandra Terrace junction.

Kate Pearson, Flood Resilience Engagement Advisor at The Environment Agency said:

Community engagement is key to our flood defence work. We're always looking for better ways to reach people, to find out what residents want and what they think of the work we're doing.

Hello Lamp Post lets us reach people when they're actually standing next to our defences, they can give us feedback without the need for a physical meeting so it's a really covid secure way to engage with people.

Cllr Geoff Jung, East Devon District Council portfolio holder for Coast, Country and Environment said:

Now the contractors are nearly finished on the Exmouth tidal defence scheme this clever piece of modern technology will explain to people all the whys, the what and the what ifs for this scheme and explains to the user why the scheme was required to help protect the town, its businesses and residents. We are pleased to offer our support for this exciting initiative.

The £12 million Exmouth tidal defence scheme is due to be fully complete later this year. The Environment Agency is working in partnership with East Devon District Council to deliver the scheme which will reduce the risk of tidal flooding to over 1,400 residential and 400 commercial properties.

The Environment Agency say they'll be launching more talking objects around Exmouth in a few weeks' time, so make sure you keep an eye out for the QR codes and say 'Hello'.

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[Footpath temporarily closed as work continues on Lower Otter](#)

Press release

A popular footpath on the lower Otter estuary will be closed for several weeks as vegetation clearance and the creek excavation stage of the work gets underway.



The Lower Otter Restoration Project will see land reclaimed from the sea 200 years ago being returned to floodplain

The work is part of the Lower Otter Restoration Project in Budleigh Salterton, which will see land reclaimed from the sea 200 years ago being returned to floodplain.

Work to excavate creeks on the northern end of the site starts on Tuesday 31 August and will take 5 weeks. On Wednesday 1 September, vegetation clearance will begin and is expected to take 6 to 8 weeks, and is being timed to be after bird nesting and dormice breeding seasons.

In order to keep people safe, the west footpath will be closed from 1 September for 8 weeks. This is the footpath near the top point of Budleigh Salterton Cricket Club's pitch and the first one reached when coming down South Farm Road from East Budleigh Road. The eastern footpath will remain open from South Farm Road to the Lime Kiln car park.

It may also be necessary to prevent access to wildlife viewing platforms for short periods during the work, but marshals will be on hand to let people know if platforms are temporarily closed.

No parking is operating in South Farm Road and at Whitebridge throughout the project works, which will continue until spring 2023 when a new car park will be built off South Farm Road.

The project is part of the €26 million Promoting Adaptation to Changing Coasts project, which also has a similar scheme underway in the Saône Valley in Normandy, France. In Devon it will see current grassland created during historic reclamation work, replaced with 55 hectares of intertidal mudflat and saltmarsh, plus a net gain of more than 2 hectares of broadleaved woodland and 1.5 kilometres of hedgerow.

Notes to editors

The French arm of the project is in the Saône Valley in Normandy and includes building a new water treatment works and moving a campsite at Quebeville.

It is thought that up to 70 estuarine sites in northern France and southern England may benefit from the PACCo project, by following the model being used

on the Lower Otter and Saâne Valley.

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[Warwickshire man who sexually assaulted sleeping woman is handed immediate prison sentence](#)

News story

Joe Holtham has been imprisoned following an intervention by the Solicitor General, the Rt Hon Lucy Frazer QC MP.



A Warwickshire sex offender has been imprisoned following an intervention by the Solicitor General, the Rt Hon Lucy Frazer QC MP.

After attending a wedding on 11 April 2019, Joe Holtham, 33, and a group of friends returned to their hotel where they had booked multiple rooms. The group could not locate two of the room keys and decided to all sleep in the

offender's room.

While one woman was asleep beside him, Holtham sexually assaulted her, causing her to wake up. Once she became aware of what was happening, she tried to wake another guest and fled to the bathroom.

The next day, the missing keys to the hotel rooms were found in Holtham's pocket.

On 7 May 2021, Holtham was convicted of two counts of assault by penetration. On 15 June 2021 he was sentenced to 24 months' imprisonment suspended for 24 months at Gloucester Crown Court.

Following the Court's decision, the Solicitor General referred Holtham's case to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme. On 20 August 2021, the Court found his sentence to be unduly lenient and handed down an immediate term of 3 years and 6 months' imprisonment.

After the hearing at the Court of Appeal the Solicitor General, Rt Hon Lucy Frazer QC MP, said:

This was a shocking assault that has traumatised the victim. I am glad the Court of Appeal has increased his sentence today and I hope this brings the victim some comfort.

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