

[EU Agencies mark Europe Day with new video](#)

On Europe Day (9 May) this week the [Network of EU Agencies](#) is launching a new video highlighting the vital role we play in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of EU citizens.

The video subtitled in all EU languages shows a snapshot of how the Agencies touch our daily lives in many areas – from the medicines we take and the food we eat to our education, working lives, transport and fundamental rights.

[Press release: £7m Lincolnshire coast flood scheme gets underway](#)

Around 400,000 cubic metres of sand are set to be pumped onto Lincolnshire's beaches to reduce flood risk to more than 20,000 homes and businesses, 24,500 static caravans and 35,000 hectares of land in a massive [Environment Agency-led](#) project.

The Lincolnshire Beach Management project involves the raising of beach levels lost naturally to the sea, by dredging sand from the seabed and pumping it onshore. The work forms a key part of the Environment Agency's management strategy for the Lincolnshire coast, which reduces coastal flood risk to thousands of homes, businesses and static caravans as well as agricultural land.

Reducing flood risk

The project started on 30 April at Boygrift. Over the course of the next eight weeks, the dredger will move to Trusthorpe, Mablethorpe, Ingoldmells, Trunch Lane, Wolla Bank, Chapel Six Marshes and Huttoft to complete the project for this year.

The HAM316 dredger, which has the lowest carbon footprint of its class, is operating continuously, delivering approximately 5,000 cubic metres of sand twice a day.

Mark Robinson, senior coastal advisor at the Environment Agency, said:

Our work to restore beach levels is important as it protects our coastal defences, such as sea walls, from the energy of the waves as they impact on the coast.

Our defences along the Lincolnshire coast help us reduce coastal flood risk to tens of thousands of homes and businesses as well as significant areas of agricultural land. By replenishing beaches, we extend the defences' life.

The project also brings value to the bustling tourism economy on Lincolnshire's coast, as without it Lincolnshire's beaches would not be nearly as sandy.

Although the Environment Agency works around the clock to reduce flood risk to Lincolnshire's coastal communities, the risk can never be eliminated completely.

The Environment Agency urges people to [check if they are at risk of flooding and sign up for flood warnings online](#) or by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

Background

- The work to restore beach levels on Lincolnshire's coast is part of the Lincolnshire Beach Management 2018-2021 scheme.
- With storms and flooding becoming more frequent and sea levels rising due to climate change, the Environment Agency has recognised a need to review whether the current coastal flood risk management approach will be sustainable in the long term for Lincolnshire. The agency has therefore been consulting with the public on six coastal flood risk options to work alongside beach nourishment as part of the Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy. This strategy will set out the most sustainable way of managing flood risk on this stretch of coast from 2021 to 2121. A draft strategy will be taken to consultation this summer.
- More details on the strategy and further information regarding times and locations of beach nourishment works are [available online](#)
- The Environment Agency is working to better protect more than 49,000 additional homes and businesses across Lincolnshire with £221m of government investment by 2021.

[West End Community Council Update](#)
[#dundeewestend](#)

Fraser's West End Community Council Update for May 2018

I have today launched my May 2018 Update to West End Community Council. Subjects covered include:

- Roads and pavements improvements 2018/19
- Graffiti vandalism tackled

The Community Council meets this evening at Logie St John's (Cross) Church Hall at 7pm – all residents welcome. You can [download](#) my Update [here](#).

The agenda for tonight's meeting is as follows :

**WEST END COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 8th MAY 2018 AT 7.00PM
LOGIE AND ST JOHN'S (CROSS) PARISH CHURCH HALL
(ENTER FROM SHAFTESBURY TERRACE – OFF BLACKNESS AVENUE)**

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES
2. MINUTE OF MEETING 10th APRIL 2018 AND MATTERS ARISING
3. CORRESPONDENCE
4. POLICE SCOTLAND UPDATE
5. PERTH ROAD UPDATE
6. WECC HIT LIST
7. PLANNING UPDATE
8. OTHER MEETINGS ATTENDED ON BEHALF OF WECC
9. AOCB – MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC INPUT
10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 12th June 2018

Government accountability

Recent events have turned the spotlight on Ministerial accountability, leading some to explore what responsibility if any unelected officials have for mistakes in government. The failure over some ten years to send out the right reminders for breast cancer screening follows hard on the heels of a longer time period of failure to equip Windrush arrivals with proper papers as British citizens. We have seen rail franchises collapse, and other contractors of government get into financial trouble after bidding for government contracts.

Under our system Ministers take responsibility for anything government does

wrongly or fails to do. This is based on ultimate policy authority resting with them, and the fact that they are the public voice and face of their departments. Officials are not normally allowed public voice and can usually expect Ministers to take the rap, in return for sharing with Ministers what is happening and seeking Ministerial approval for policies.

This traditional model has been subject to amendments in recent decades. The idea behind the Next Steps Agencies and their Labour successors was to split policy from implementation. Executive Agencies to implement environmental controls or to build and maintain highways were established, with accountable officials as CEOs. They directly answer to Parliamentary Committees and are responsible for spending money, reporting to the PAC where necessary. The idea was to make the professionals and experts responsible for executing policy, and to distance Ministers from writing and letting contracts and from judging complex technical issues like railway safety features or highways design.

There was always in the traditional model a separate line of accountability and responsibility for proper spending through the Permanent Secretary as Accounting Officer to the PAC, in parallel to the Minister's responsibility for budget choices and overall adequacy.

These latest debates do require further exploration of how much the Minister is to blame for problems that go back years, and for matters which have rested entirely or largely with officials. Ministers had always said the Windrush arrivals were British, and had said they wanted women up to 70 to have breast screening. The policy was the one Parliament wanted. The issue is why was it not seen through?

More difficult is the situation over Brexit customs policy. I read that some officials think we cannot be ready for 2019 or 2021 for exit with smooth operation of the borders. yet Ministers have asked the civil service to make sure we are ready, and Ministers and senior officials who have been asked by Parliamentary Committees have assured us they will be ready for any eventuality over the talks. This kind of noise off, and selective leaks of official papers that Ministers do not agree with, is not part of the deal between Ministers and officials. If Ministers are to defend officials, they should expect officials to put their concerns to Ministers and then to stick to the agreed line when decisions are made.

[First European Citizens' Panel took steps to enable citizens to contribute](#)

to the creation of the future of Europe

On 5-6 May, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) hosted the first [European Citizens' Panel](#), which was convened to prepare a public consultation on the Future of Europe. A group of 80 European citizens from 27 Member States came to the EESC premises in Brussels to work together and draft a 12-question online consultation. The Citizens' Consultation, initiated by the French president Emmanuel Macron, is organized for the first time in the history of the EU.

Europe must act now before it is too late

The EESC president **Luca Jahier**, who opened the Citizens' Panel, acknowledged that the EU is currently facing hardships. "I can assure you that I am not blind to these challenges," said Mr Jahier, naming issues such as widening inequalities between EU countries, worryingly low levels of trust in democratic institutions, a migration crisis, and environmental challenges.

Mr Jahier stressed that today too many people feel that their opinions are not taken on board. "If this feeling persists, our democratic system will risk collapsing, and so will our project of peace, in which I believe from the very bottom of my heart."

The president drew attention to the efforts of previous generations who restored peace in Europe after the war and emphasized that everything that has been done cannot be swept away. "We get to work now, before it is too late," Mr Jahier said.

12 questions for the future of Europe

Following the series of workshops, where participants discussed the most vital issues concerning the future of the EU, 12 tangible questions for online consultation were presented in the last panel. On 9 May, the Commission will launch in all EU languages the online public consultation co-created by the Citizens' Panel. The Commission will inform the Member States on the results from the first six months of the consultation at the December European Council and will present a final report at the first EU 27 Summit in Sibiu, Romania, on 9 May 2019.

Crucial time to hear the voice of the EU citizens

Addressing the concerns, **Timo Pesonen**, EC Director General for Communication, emphasized in his final remarks that apart from being published online, the questionnaire will be presented in all activities of the Commission. "It is essential to outreach the whole Europe with these questions in order to have an open debate and listen for citizens' concerns on the future of Europe ahead of the European Parliament elections in May 2019."

The EESC member **Thierry Libaert** noted that the first Citizens' Panel was a

historic event and it produced solid and groundbreaking results. "We will ensure that this whole process that begun today will be carried forward," stressed Mr Libaert.

Background: Last March, while attending the EESC plenary session, Nathalie Loiseau, The French Minister for European Affairs, presented the European consultation process put forward by president Emmanuel Macron. In light of this, Georges Dassis (the former EESC president) and Luca Jahier (the new EESC president) proposed that the Committee be actively and closely involved. In 2017, the Committee successfully organized consultations on the Future of Europe in the Member States, in the framework of the White Paper by Jean Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission.