

Environment Agency flood defences now talk back

Press release

Flood defences in Devon and Cornwall are becoming chattier than ever, engaging passersby in conversations about flood risk and plastic pollution.



Learn more about flood defences when visiting the beach this summer by scanning QR codes

Text message conversations can be struck up with flood defences and other assets by scanning QR codes. The QR code is mounted on them or nearby in 4 locations, with a fifth to be added later this year.

Liz Taylor, flood resilience engagement advisor, said:

Finding new and interesting ways to engage people is key. And using Hello Lamp Post technology will help make us more relevant to a newer audience who prefer texting.

But the advice being shared through our growing network is relevant to everyone. How to stay safe in a flood. How defences work. And ways to start making lifestyle changes to cut down on plastic waste from our in-house team of experts.

We also hope to add advice on saving water from South West Water in the future. If you see one of QR codes during the school holiday, try it.

Interactive objects can be found at:

- Bude where signs give information about the flood risk in the area and the changing coast line, as well as a fun plastics quiz;
- Dartmoor which has signs in Buckfastleigh and on Dartmoor so people can

find out more about how working with natural processes on the moor can reduce the impact of flooding on communities;

- Exmouth where people can learn more about the recently completed tidal defence scheme and plastic pollution;
- Truro which is a terrific location to learn what the tidal gate does and how to prepare for a flood.

Jessica Hickie, plastics and sustainability programme manager, said:

Be part of the solution during Plastic Free July 2022. Chat with the signs at Exmouth. Learn the simple actions you could take to tackle plastic pollution in your day to day life and protect our wildlife.

The actions include a simple litter pick, kitchen refills and finding out about a hard-to-recycle item. They have been put together by the Environment Agency on behalf of the [Interreg Preventing Plastic Pollution](#). The project which aims to understand and reduce the impacts of plastic pollution in river and marine environments via behaviour change, targeting hotspots and finding effective solutions.

Editor's notes

Across Devon and Cornwall there are 45 signs. Since they have been installed the number of interactions is the equivalent of holding around 40 public engagement events. They have helped us save nearly 5 tonnes of carbon.

The next location to be added is East Budleigh where people can find out more about the Lower Otter Restoration Project.

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