

[Research and analysis: Particles in the Environment Annual Report](#)

Updated: Body text amended

Particles in the Environment – Quarterly updates.

These reports are quarterly updates on the particles in the environment programme.

- [Particles in the Environment Quarterly Update](#)

[Press release: £200 million boost for rural England](#)

Funding for rural businesses that will generate thousands of jobs and provide new support to expand and improve their premises has been announced as part of a £200million grant offer.

Announcing the latest round of [Rural Development Programme](#) funding, Lord Gardiner confirmed that for the first time under the current scheme specific funding will be available to support new rural broadband projects, and provide significant amounts of funding to on-farm businesses to invest in new infrastructure such as new buildings and machinery.

The current Rural Development Programme for England is expected to generate 6,750 new jobs. Already more than 1,400 projects have been agreed which are expected to create over 2,300 jobs.

The grants will also fund landowners to improve farm productivity and invest in rural tourism opportunities.

Rural Affairs Minister Lord Gardiner said:

One in three businesses in this country are based in the countryside, and this government is committed to providing the support they need to create a strong and prosperous rural economy.

This funding will make sure businesses in remote locations can get online, help farmers install cutting-edge technology, create new tourist hotspots and bring high quality jobs to rural communities across the country.

This round of funding will include:

- £30m to improve rural broadband – the grants available will encourage growth by helping provide broadband services at speeds of 30Mbps or faster where this is not available or planned. It will supplement existing [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) investment in rural broadband.
- £45m to help rural businesses grow and invest in new equipment – rural businesses, including those engaged in tourism and food production, can apply for funding to invest in their company, helping them to expand, diversify, and invest in new technology.
- £120m for projects that improve farm productivity – this money will help farmers, foresters and landowners manage their land more effectively. Funding will be available for a wide range of purposes, including woodland management equipment, creating on-farm reservoirs and using water more efficiently.

Lord Gardiner made the announcement during a visit to the Suffolk Cookhouse project in Ipswich, which received £422,000 in 2012 to open a new food hall. The hall is now one of the biggest tourism hubs in the region, bringing together local artists and food producers, and creating 45 jobs.

The first grant funding that will become available will be for reservoirs and forestry equipment and these are expected to be open for applications from Monday, while funding for broadband, rural business support, on-farm food processing, arable and horticultural productivity and resource efficiency will be made available later in the year. A further £6.6m will be available for animal health and welfare projects.

This funding is part of planned investment of at least £3.5 billion into our rural economies by 2020 under RDPE, supporting the third of businesses in the UK which are based in the countryside. All projects agreed before we leave the EU will be guaranteed for their lifetime – providing stability and certainty while future support for farmers and rural communities is developed.

Further information

- Today's announcement supports the manifesto commitment to bring sustainable growth to rural economies, entrepreneurs, farmers and landowners.
- The [RDPE Growth Programme](#) provides funding for projects in England which create jobs and growth in the rural economy. Under the RDPE Growth Programme, there are currently calls for projects open for: business

development, food processing and rural rural tourism infrastructure.

- [Countryside Productivity](#) aims to improve productivity of farm and forestry businesses by making targeted investments to encourage best practice and innovation.

[Research and analysis: UK Science & Innovation Contributes to Global Ocean Security](#)

Together with the University of North Carolina Wilmington and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, SIN Boston convened a meeting of leading scientists from the UK and USA to develop a joint deep-sea coral research programme. This work, catalyzed in 2008, has evolved into the €9.3 million ATLAS project, which supports UN Sustainable Development Goal 14 to “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources.”

[News story: Master of vessel pleads guilty to fishing over quota limits](#)

The master of the fishing vessel Ocean Rover (SN2) pleaded guilty to 3 offences of fishing over quota limits and 2 offences of being present in a real time closure area at a speed of less than 6 knots.

Newcastle Crown Court heard on 25 July 2017 that marine officers from the MMO used sales note data to prove that the Ocean Rover, skippered by Gerry Lafferty, had landed in excess of its monthly quota allocations in 2015.

In January 2015 the vessel landed 510kg of whiting in excess of its quota and 10,214kg of plaice. Between July and September 2015 it landed 7,272kg of nephrops over quota. The total value of catch which was not within quota limits for 2015 is £23,274.

The court also heard that vessel monitoring system data had shown that the

vessel, on two occasions in 2015 had been present in real time closure areas travelling at less than six knots, contrary to conditions in the vessel's licence

Sentencing Lafferty, Her Honour Judge Rippon said:

"These are serious offences and you understand better than most that the regulations are in place to protect the integrity of fish stocks. If they are not enforced this will present difficulties for future generations."

Accepting that the defendant was of very limited means, the judge imposed a sentence of a conditional discharge of 24 months.

Press release: Louth and Horncastle flood alleviation schemes formally opened

Two Flood Alleviation Schemes (FASs) in Louth and Horncastle which collectively reduce flood risk to over 350 properties have been formally opened on 28 July, following successful completion of the projects.

Construction on the £6.5m Louth scheme and the £8.1m Horncastle scheme started in summer 2015, and were finalised this month. The two projects were delivered in a partnership of the Environment Agency, Lincolnshire County Council, East Lindsey District Council, Anglian Water and the Lindsey Marsh and Witham Third Internal Drainage Boards. Louth and Horncastle Town Councils will fund ongoing maintenance on the schemes. The development of the two schemes was led by the Environment Agency, with construction being carried out by its contractors.

Communities in Louth and Horncastle were significantly affected by the floods of summer 2007, when over 200 properties in the area were flooded. Close partnership working has since helped fund and made the two Flood Alleviation Schemes possible.

The Horncastle Flood Alleviation Scheme consists of a single flood storage reservoir on the River Bain, upstream of the town of Horncastle. As part of this scheme, a number of residents whose homes are at risk of flooding from the river Waring were offered property-level flood protection, such as air brick covers and flood doors. The Louth Flood Alleviation Scheme consists of a flood storage reservoir on the Northern branch of the River Lud, and one on the Southern branch of the river.

In addition to reducing flood risk to hundreds of properties in Louth and Horncastle, the two schemes also deliver benefits to the environment. In

Horncastle, partners have created a large lake and wetland area which will provide a habitat for water voles. At the reservoirs in Louth, additional water vole habitat will also be created.

Floods Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

These flood schemes are fantastic news for Lincolnshire, giving hundreds of people in Louth and Horncastle precious peace of mind. And there is more development to come across the county, with £160 million planned investment here over the next four years to better protect around 30,000 homes.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

I am delighted that our partnership work with the community and local authorities in Louth and Horncastle will reduce flood risk to over 350 properties and support wildlife.

People here understand the devastating impact of flooding and the tenth anniversary of the 2007 floods is a timely reminder of the real threat posed by severe weather. I ask everyone to check their flood risk, sign up for free flood warnings and look for advice about flooding on GOV.uk.

Councillor Colin Davie, Executive Member for Economy and Place at Lincolnshire County Council, said:

One of the council's top priorities is protecting our residents from flooding. That's why we're working hard with our partners to do everything we can to reduce the risk to Lincolnshire homes. The opening of these new defences is a testament to the hard work of all involved, and will make a significant difference to the lives of people living in these communities. I'm delighted we've been able to make this happen.

Cllr Eddy Poll, Executive Member for Environmental Management at Lincolnshire County Council and Chairman of the Anglian Northern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, said:

We all know the kind of devastation flooding can cause within a community – that's why projects like this are so vital. These new defences will protect hundreds of local families from the misery and disruption that flooding brings. It's impossible to prevent flooding entirely, but we'll continue to work with our partners to ensure that local communities are as well-defended and well-prepared as possible.

The Leader of the East Lindsey District Council, Councillor Craig Leyland said:

This is an important milestone in the work of the Environment Agency jointly with other authorities and we have been extremely pleased to have contributed £1million to these essential schemes to help reduce the risk of flooding to our residents and businesses. After the devastating flooding that we have seen in 2007, we hope that these schemes will give residents greater peace of mind and protection from the risk and threat of flooding in the future.

The Mayor of Louth, Councillor Pauline Watson said:

Louth is celebrating the increased flood protection for the town which is the culmination of ten years of heartfelt campaigning and unprecedented partnership working, both between statutory bodies and ordinary townsfolk.