

[Press release: Environment Agency warns of flood risk in Devon and Cornwall](#)

The Environment Agency is urging people to remain vigilant to potential flooding as a low pressure coastal storm is forecast to hit the south coasts of Cornwall and Devon on Saturday.

Current forecasts show a low pressure storm on Saturday 21 October which, combined with close-to-spring tides, means flood warnings are likely to be issued along the south coasts of Cornwall and Devon and will require the routine closure of flood gates.

On Thursday 19 October the Environment Agency will be deploying temporary flood barriers in Fowey. The temporary barriers are designed to give Fowey better protection from potential coastal flooding. This type of flood defence has been used to prevent flooding from rivers for a number of years but this is the first time they have been used on the Cornish coast.

Environment Agency teams have been mobilised across the area to check on flood defences, clear any river blockages and closely monitor river levels. These teams have been working around the clock to reduce the risk of flooding, and will be out in force over the weekend.

Kevin Ward of the Environment Agency said:

We urge residents to take care on the coast this weekend. Strong winds pose a risk of waves overtopping defences and we advise not to stop and admire the waves or take 'storm selfies'.

Also, avoid exposed coastal areas and do not walk or drive through flood water, which can be dirty and contain hidden debris. Just 30cm of flowing water can move a car and driving through water can also create waves.

The Environment Agency continue to monitor the situation across Devon and Cornwall and will review their plans as the forecasts are updated.

Residents and businesses are encouraged to sign up to [flood warnings on the Environment Agency website](#). People can also call Floodline on 0345 988 1188. Once registered, if a flood warning is issued, they will receive an automatic message by telephone, SMS text message, email and/or fax.

Find out [how to prepare for flooding and if your home is at risk](#).

Press release: Have your say on Alney Island flood defence scheme

The event, which will be held at Riverside Sports Club, St Oswald's Road, Gloucester, GL1 2TF on Monday 30 October from 2pm until 7pm. Attendees can meet the Environment Agency's project team who will be on hand to provide information about the scheme, which will benefit more than 70 properties in the area with an increased level of protection.

Due to the location of Alney Island, the area is at risk from both fluvial and tidal flooding from the River Severn and the Environment Agency has been working closely with consultants, partners and the community on a range of technical options, including raising the existing defence or constructing a new defence. The proposed plans have been created using the latest two-dimensional modelling technique capture more accurate detail of the area.

At the drop in event, members of the local community and other interested parties, will be able to view and discuss the current options.

The area was severely flooded in 2007 following record breaking rainfall across the area, leading the Environment Agency to investigate whether further protection measures could be possible.

Craig Barker, Project Manager at the Environment Agency said:

We have worked closely with our consultants and partners to develop potential options. We are looking forward to hearing what residents and businesses have to say about the proposals at the event on 30 October.

For further information about how to prepare for flooding, sign up for flood warnings and to find out if your home is at risk please visit <https://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-a-flood>

Press release: Flood warning service improvements go live for winter

People who live near the River Foss in York will now be able to benefit from an improved flood warning service from Wednesday, October 18.

After the Boxing Day 2015 floods, one of the recommendations of the York Flood Inquiry report was for the Environment Agency to conduct a review of the flood warnings on the River Ouse and Foss.

The Environment Agency commissioned consultants to review all flood warnings in the city.

Along the River Ouse catchment, the review found the existing service meets the needs of the community.

However, the River Foss flood warnings underwent a thorough review and changes have been made.

A new rain monitoring station is being installed upstream on the Foss in the village of Yearsley, 20 miles north of York, as well as a river level monitoring station near Strensall.

These two monitoring stations will automatically feed information into the Environment Agency's systems and forecasts for the River Foss, supporting a better understanding of the amount of water flowing down the river towards York.

This will help the Environment Agency's flood duty officers to issue flood warnings with more confidence and more accurate information included within the warning messages.

The River Foss catchment area within the City of York boundary previously had six flood warnings, covering the Foss, Tang Hall Beck and Osbaldwick Beck.

As part of the improvements this will increase to ten and include warnings for South Beck and Westfield Beck.

Zoë Pattinson, Environment Agency flood risk officer, said:

Along the River Foss corridor, there is one long warning that is for the properties most at risk from river flooding, and a wider warning that covers the properties at lower risk of flooding.

The Environment Agency also worked with members the River Foss Society in redesigning the flood warning boundaries and trigger levels.

The Foss Society and local residents have provided valuable input into the review of the flood warning service for the River Foss community.

She continued:

Local community input is important because it gives us an insight from those who have seen how the river and catchment behaves in heavy rainfall. It also helps raise awareness of our flood warning

service.

John Millett, chairman of the River Foss Society, said:

The River Foss Society supports and fully endorses the work the Environment Agency is doing to improve the flood warnings that are being introduced to protect the City of York and neighbouring areas and their residents and businesses along both the River Ouse and the River Foss corridors.

People who are already signed up the flood warning service will automatically be transferred to the new relevant flood warning area that covers their property. If you want to register to receive free Environment Agency flood warnings then you can either at [flood warnings](#) or call on Floodline 0345 988 1188.

Press release: Waste criminal pays up after Proceeds of Crime confiscation order

A man who ran an illegal waste site for 15 months has been forced to sell his home to pay towards the clean-up of land off the A38 at Eggington near Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

The Environment Agency took confiscation proceedings under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 against Robert Murphy, 49, of Carver Road, Burton-on-Trent.

This follows a hearing in May 2015 at Stafford Crown Court when he was sentenced to 7 months imprisonment for operating a site he did not own or have an environmental permit for.

As part of his sentence, a Confiscation Order was made, requiring him to pay compensation of £20,793 to the landowner. The Environment Agency were also awarded prosecution costs of £10,000. Murphy failed to make any payments.

He has since served an additional 12 month default sentence for his failure to comply with the Confiscation Order.

It was necessary for the Environment Agency to enforce compliance with the Order to recover compensation for the landowner who is faced with the costs of site clearance.

This required attendance at further enforcement hearings at Birmingham

Magistrates Court. The Confiscation Order and order for costs has now been settled in full.

Between 3 January 2013 and 28 June 2014, Murphy used the land which belonged to a vulnerable and elderly couple to deposit, store and burn large quantities of mixed waste including metal, wood, electrical items and construction and demolition waste.

An Environment Agency officer involved in the case said:

This has been a long and involved case but it demonstrates that the Environment Agency is determined to tackle waste crime.

We hope this case serves as a message to those involved that we won't stop the fight against this blight, and that it acts as a deterrent against those who undermine legitimate businesses within the industry.

This is a serious issue diverting as much as £1 billion per annum from legitimate business and treasury. Since April 2011 the Environment Agency has invested £65.2 million in tackling it.

We urge any landowners, farmers, members of the public who find these sites to call us immediately on our 24-hour free incident hotline number 0800 80 70 60 or make an anonymous report to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Press release: Improvements breathe new life into north east park

A partnership project has breathed new life into a local north east park.

The Wear Rivers Trust and Environment Agency have worked together to make improvements to Memorial Park near Stanley.

In the 1950s, Stanley Burn, which flows through South Moor Memorial Park, was diverted into a culvert to make way for a communal paddling pool, which was used for around 15 years and then buried and forgotten.

This new project has now removed the paddling pool and returned the river to its natural channel, creating new high quality habitat for fish and invertebrates while also slowing the flow of the watercourse and increasing flood storage.

Nearby residents of Stanley are also enjoying improved year-round access with

a new 300m footpath and two new footbridges. And work is planned in early 2018 to further improve the instream habitat for fish and to naturalise the bankside habitat.

Steve Hudson of Wear Rivers Trust said:

It's great to be involved in a project which offers so many benefits to the local community. By working alongside multiple partners through the Greening the Twizell Partnership, we have managed to improve instream habitat, reduce flood risk and provide new all ability access routes for everyone to enjoy this previously difficult to reach woodland park area.

The project has cost more than £90,000 and is made up of funding from the Environment Agency, Stanley Town Council, Durham County Council and Stanley Area Action Partnership. It's one part of a four-part project in the area which has also included wetland and pond creation and natural flood management measures.

Karen Fisher, Biodiversity Technical Officer with the Environment Agency in the North East, added:

The project has been delivered with Wear Rivers Trust and is an excellent example of partnership working that has delivered multiple benefits.

This includes habitat creation, lengthening the watercourse, new bridges and a seating area, creating a green area for the local community to use.