

Exmouth tidal defence test a great success

Press release

The Environment Agency was joined by East Devon District Council and local volunteers to test the procedure for closing the flood gates.



A resident of Morton Crescent, Exmouth, tests the flood gate protecting his property

The Exmouth tidal defence scheme reached an important milestone today.

The £12 million Exmouth tidal defence scheme includes 27 new flood gates. These specially made gates will spend most of their lives open, but will need to be closed when flooding is predicted to reduce the risk to local homes and businesses. The floodgates can be closed in minutes and create a barrier to protect the town from floodwater.

Today's successful trial demonstrates that Exmouth tidal defence scheme is now functional with only landscaping work to carry out before it is truly complete.

The Environment Agency worked 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.

One of the bigger flood gates along Exmouth sea front

Ben Johnstone, Environment Agency Area Flood and Coastal Erosion Manager, said:

We are delighted that today's exercise was a success and hope that it gives reassurance to residents in Exmouth. I'd like to thank the

volunteers who make operation of the gates possible. We train all year round with our partner agencies to make sure we are equipped to respond to incidents, at this time of year with an increase in flood risk it's vital we make sure we are prepared.

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

With all the talk of global warming and rising sea levels, it is great to see this £12 million scheme operational which will protect many vulnerable properties and businesses in Exmouth. We are working on other schemes ourselves and with partners throughout the district to protect properties and businesses which are vulnerable from the sea level rise and increased storm events.

Some of the bigger gates along the seafront, such as those that cross roads, require traffic management. They will result in temporary road closures when flooding is expected. Occasional road closures may impact on travel around Exmouth. The Environment Agency recommends you sign up for free coastal flood warnings for Exmouth, to help you plan your journey. Call 0345 9881188 or sign up online: <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>.

Published 15 November 2021