

# Press release: Step up to the challenge as the South West flood committee's new chair

The successful candidate will play a pivotal role in flood and coastal risk management across Devon and Cornwall, heading up a committee that works closely with other public bodies and interest groups.

In addition to leadership skills, the chair must be able to provide strategic direction, stimulate discussion and be an effective networker and influencer. He or she will also be required to work with other flood committee chairs and develop a good understanding of government priorities for flood management.

Ben Johnstone, Area Flood and Coastal Risk Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

This is a great role, working to reduce the risk of flooding and coastal erosion in one of the most beautiful parts of our country. The challenges are varied and will become more significant as our climate changes. We have a huge exposed coastline, rapid responding catchments, river and surface water flooding, not just in urban areas, but spread all across hundreds of rural communities.

How we think about managing risks is changing. We need to design to work with and co-exist with nature. As the committee chair you will be instrumental in making this happen.

The South West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee is one of 12 committees across the country that make key decisions on local priorities for flood and coastal risk management.

The committee is made up of members appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and independent members with relevant experience and sets out to achieve the following goals:

- ensuring suitable plans are in place for identifying, communicating and managing flood and coastal erosion risks across catchments and shorelines
- encouraging the appropriate level of investment in flood and coastal risk management that provides value for money and benefits local communities.
- providing a link between the Environment Agency, LLFAs, other risk management authorities and relevant bodies to increase understanding of flood and coastal erosion risks in its area

People from a wide range of backgrounds are invited to apply for this post, especially those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and women who are

currently under-represented on regional flood and coastal committees.

Further information is available from the [Cabinet Office](#). The closing date for applications is 20 March 2017.