

News story: Committee on Radioactive Waste Management tour of the Dalton Cumbrian Facility

The committee visited the Dalton Cumbrian Facility (DCF) on 19 June. This is a £20 million facility which opened in September 2013 and was jointly funded by the University of Manchester and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. It is a state-of-the-art ion beam and gamma irradiation facility for nuclear research and development and is part of the National Nuclear User Facility (NNUF), the National Ion Beam Centre and Royce Institute for Advanced materials.

The committee was given a tour around the facility, including visits to the ion accelerators and beamlines, gamma irradiator and materials characterisation laboratory. These facilities allow scientists to assess radiation damage in a short period, that would normally occur over longer timescales. The committee gained insight into the cutting-edge research going on at DCF exploring radiation damage in different materials key to the nuclear industry. A large portion of the research activities is dedicated to decommissioning and the safe management and disposal of radioactive waste.

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Press release: £40m extra funding to better protect thousands of homes against flooding

Thousands of properties across England will be better protected against the threat of flooding thanks to a multi-million pound investment by the government, Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey confirmed today (Friday 20 July).

Across the country 13 flood schemes will benefit from £40 million of additional funding which will unlock flood defence schemes and help support economic growth and regeneration in areas that have suffered from flooding in recent years.

The additional funding, first announced in the budget, adds to millions of pounds of government grant-in-aid already allocated to these projects and partnership funding already secured. It will help leverage an additional £24 million from other sources, enabling the flood schemes to go ahead. In total, more than 7,000 properties will be better protected against flooding, including over 5,000 homes. This additional money is part of our £2.6 billion investment from 2015 to 2021 to fund 1,500 flood defence schemes which will better protect 300,000 homes across the country.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

This extra funding for flood defences will unlock schemes that will better protect thousands of homes and businesses against flooding, supporting regeneration in important towns and villages in the north and coastal communities.

It will boost our resilience as a nation and help our communities to grow and prosper.

In the historic English Channel tourist town of Weymouth, £1.2 million will

improve the harbour wall, reducing flood risk to 450 properties and helping to kick start the regeneration of Weymouth town centre.

More than £10 million is also being awarded to a scheme to protect deprived communities in the St. Austell Bay area of Cornwall. The funding will unlock an additional £4.8 million of partnership funding contributions and is additional to £13.4 million of grant-in-aid which has already been allocated to the scheme. The funds will support an integrated regeneration partnership project, which will help to reduce flood risk and develop plans for new housing and community green space.

Five flood schemes in the north of England will receive almost half of the total funding – £17.4 million- in a boost to the Northern Powerhouse. Rochdale in Greater Manchester will receive a total of £5 million to develop one of the largest inland flood schemes in the region. The defences in Rochdale will increase the level of flood protection to 1,000 residential properties as well as critical infrastructure such as the tram network, a bus station, a grid sub-station and a waste water treatment works.

Eight miles to the west, £7 million has been awarded for new flood defence work around the River Irwell in Bury and Radcliffe as a first step towards the development of a new £46 million flood defence scheme, better protecting 870 properties. In addition to raising flood defences at key locations along the river's edge another key aspect of the scheme will be the creation of a wildlife habitat and amenity areas for the public by setting defences further back from the river.

The new funding for flood defences in the north of England adds to the £3.4 billion already invested into the Northern Powerhouse to build a more prosperous and inclusive economy where everybody has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Minister Thérèse Coffey added:

The north of England is a hotbed of culture, innovation and growth and this multi-million investment in flood schemes will help protect more than 2,700 homes and businesses from flooding.

The defences will also enhance the environment and bolster economic growth as part of our commitment to better protect 300,000 homes from flooding by 2021.

Over the past three years, the Environment Agency has completed more than 400 new flood schemes to better protect more than 142,000 homes. In addition to building hard defences, it has improved its response by investing in new technology and equipment like temporary flood barriers, pumps and 6,500 trained staff across the country.

Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive of the Environment Agency, said:

Across the country we are seeing more extreme weather, which makes the Environment Agency's role to protect people, homes and businesses from flooding even more important.

From 2015 to 2021 we will reduce the risk of flooding for at least 300,000 homes so this £40million is another welcome boost to achieving that. It is great news for communities – not only will it help us build flood schemes but it will also help wider economic growth.

Further information:

A table with details of the schemes is below.

Project	Location	Additional funding (£m)	Potential leveraging of partnership funding contributions (£m)
Egremont, Skirting Beck defence improvements	Cumbria	1.60	4
St Austell Bar Resilient Regeneration Project – Par & St Blazey	Cornwall	10.79	4.8
Portreath Flood Alleviation Scheme	Cornwall	1.50	0.5
Paul stream channel/culvert refurbishments	Cornwall	0.68	0.1
Great Yarmouth Flood Defence improvements	Norfolk	5.40	1.5
Wiggenhall, Tidal River Bank improvements – Great Ouse Tidal Embankments	Norfolk	0.20	0.1
River Roch, Rochdale & Littleborough Flood Alleviation Scheme	Greater Manchester	5.00	2.0
Radcliffe & Redvales Flood Risk Management Scheme	Greater Manchester	7.00	2.0
Humber, Winteringham and South Ferriby tidal defence improvements	North Lincolnshire	1.90	5.6
Corbridge Flood Alleviation Scheme	Northumberland	0.14	0.4

Weymouth harbour wall improvement works	Dorset	1.20	Additional contributions being secured as part of the development of the wider strategy to further improve defences.
Fowlea Brook Flood Risk Management Scheme	Staffordshire	0.5	0.5
Holderness Drain Flood Alleviation Scheme & East Hull and Gt Culvert	Yorkshire	3.70	2.6

[Open consultation: Proposals for navigation boat registration charges 2019 to 2021](#)

Updated: Added consultation document.

The current cost of the service we provide across our waterways far exceeds the income we receive from customer charges.

We need to make our waterways more financially sustainable so we are carrying out a full review of navigation charges. We want our charges to be fair, transparent and linked more closely to the cost of the service we provide for boating customers.

This 2-year proposal will allow us time to fully develop our future charging plans and look at new ways to fund the service. We'll use feedback from customers to make our work more financially sustainable, whilst providing customers with greater certainty about the charges they'll need to pay until 2021.