

Press release: Work completed at Tetney Haven to reduce flood risk and benefit the environment

The Environment Agency has de-silted a section of the Tetney Haven, helping reduce flood risk and boosting the area's ecology.

The work, part of the EA's regular maintenance programme, saw excess silt removed from approximately a kilometre of the Louth Canal and from around the sluice gates at Tetney Lock.

Silt builds up naturally at the sluice as it settles when the flowing water in the channel loses momentum at the sluice gates. Removing it means water can continue to flow easily from the canal into the Haven.

Along with other routine maintenance on the channel, removing the silt helped reduce flood risk to approximately 500 local homes and businesses.

The nutrient-rich silt was then spread on the salt marsh adjoining the banks of the channel, and work was also done to improve drainage on the salt marsh. These improvements help the natural wetting and draining cycles of the soil that encourage vegetation to grow.

The plants help prevent erosion and stabilise land which serves as a front line of flood defence by absorbing much of the force of tidal waves.

This work has also helped improve, preserve and extend the salt marsh's ecology, made up of salt-tolerant plants and up to 300 species of invertebrates, half of which are unique to this environment. These conditions, in turn, provide valuable habitat for migrating birds, some of which are endangered.

Andy Charlesworth, Asset Performance Advisor with the Environment Agency, said:

This is a perfect example of how we aim for the most benefit for people and the environment from everything we do.

We have a regular programme of inspection and maintenance on our flood defences, and we're always looking for ways to achieve extra benefits at the same time. In this case, while we had our equipment on-site, we were able to use it in another way to give a boost to ecological conditions in the surrounding area at no extra cost.

De-silting Tetney Haven took just over seven weeks and cost £127k. It was last de-silted 10 years ago, and the Environment Agency's modelling shows it is unlikely to be needed again for another decade.

De-silting is not always the best solution for reducing flood risk; we carefully consider each situation on a case-by-case basis to determine whether de-silting is cost-effective and will have the desired result of reducing risk.

In the next financial year, the Environment Agency will spend approximately £12m on flood defence maintenance to reduce risk to local communities.

Although the Environment Agency continually invests in maintaining and improving flood defences, no defence can ever completely remove the risk of flooding; therefore we'd encourage people to sign up for our free flood warnings by calling 0345 988 1188 or visiting www.gov.uk/flood.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- The Environment Agency is required to prioritise funding for asset maintenance and repair where it will have the most benefit in reducing flood risk.
- Saltmarsh provides vital habitat including food and roosting opportunities for over-wintering birds such as seed-eating twites, which are on the [Birds of Conservation Concern 'red list'](#), and waders such as redshank. Saltmarshes support around half of the UK's breeding redshank population.

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[These statistics demonstrate the total failure of Tories' punitive social security regime – Debbie Abrahams](#)

Debbie

Abrahams MP, Labour's Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, commenting on the Social Security and Child Support tribunal statistics, said:

"These statistics show that two thirds of contested PIP and ESA assessment decisions are being overturned by the courts, demonstrating the total failure of the Tories' punitive social security regime.

"This follows the news last week that the Government is ignoring a court ruling and denying 160,000 disabled people the support they need.

"We cannot allow disabled people to bear the brunt of failing Tory austerity. Labour will transform the social security system to ensure that, like the NHS, it is there for us all in our time of need."

[News story: Fisherman and owner fined £38,201 for fisheries offences](#)

Klaas Kramer and Island Fishing Company Limited (master and owner of the vessel Eben Haezer GY57) pleaded guilty to breaching fisheries regulations at

North Tyneside Magistrates Court.

The court heard how between November 2015 and January 2016 the vessel repeatedly fished in the North Sea 'Cod Recovery Zone' despite having exceeded the maximum number of days at sea which the vessel was allowed to spend in that area with regulated fishing gear under the regulations. Investigations by the MMO found that the vessel exceeded the 200 day limit by over 37 days over eight separate fishing trips, contrary to section 4(9) of the Sea Fish (Conservation) Act 1967. The MMO had sent the vessel owners a letter reminding them that they were within 1 day of the limit in November 2015, but the vessel continued to fish, which resulted in the prosecution.

Mr Kramer was fined £3,200 with a victim surcharge of £120 for his role as master of the vessel on seven of the trips.

Island Fishing Company (of which Mr Kramer is a Director and shareholder) was fined an initial £9,200, with an additional fine of £24,000 which the magistrates indicated represented the net profit of the illegal fishing, costs of £1,561 and a victim surcharge of £120.

A spokesman for the MMO said:

"The fines issued by the magistrates in this case send a clear message to the small minority of fishermen who seek to put profit first by failing to comply with the regulations. By issuing an additional fine of £24,000, which the bench indicated that they felt represented the profit from the illegal fishing in this case, the court has made it clear that sentences for unlawful behaviour should deprive offenders of the economic benefit of offending.

The MMO is clear that the vast majority of fishermen operate lawfully and in compliance with regulations which exist to protect fisheries from overfishing and are in place to ensure healthy, sustainable fisheries for this and future generations of fishermen. In the rare instances that non-compliance is detected, MMO uses a risk-based enforcement strategy and operates a graduated and proportionate system of sanctions, with prosecution reserved for the most serious offences."

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