

# Press release: East coast surge prompts people to sign up for flood warnings

More than 2,000 people in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire signed up for flood warnings in just two days when flooding threatened the east coast in January.

The number of local registrations jumped by 7 per cent, Environment Agency figures have shown.

Nearly all the new sign-ups occurred on Thursday 12th and Friday 13th January 2017 when forecasters predicted that high tides combined with weather conditions could cause widespread coastal flooding.

Fortunately the event passed without flooding any homes in either county, but the Environment Agency is reminding everyone to sign up, as figures show that only 18 per cent of the total number of properties at risk in the area are fully registered.

Anyone can check whether they are at risk and register for warnings by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188. You can also make sure your contact details are up-to-date and choose how you'd prefer to be contacted – by mobile, text, landline or email – if flooding was expected.

Ben Thornely, Area Incident Manager, said:

We're glad to see people listened to our advice during the surge. It means another 2,000 families will have early warning should flooding be expected – early warning that could give them extra time to protect themselves and their homes.

That's why we're encouraging everyone to sign up now – before the next surge or storm.

The service is free, and it's the most simple, specific and timely way to find out when you're at risk. You can tell us how best to reach you with vital information that's updated every 15 minutes.

All it takes is a simple phone call or you can visit [www.gov.uk/flood](http://www.gov.uk/flood) to find out more.

Notes for editors:

- In January, the amount of fully-registered properties increased by 7 per cent, from 28,500 to 30,500.

- However, only 18% (30,500) of the 169,500 of properties at flood risk in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire are registered with Floodline.
  - People who proactively contact Floodline to provide their contact details and preferred method of contact are considered to be fully-registered.
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## Press release: International Women's Day

The last few years have seen a lot of progress for women and girls.

We have seen the gender pay gap in the UK fall to its lowest level, and got more women sitting on the boards of Britain's top businesses than ever before. We have pledged to eliminate all violence against women and girls, backed by £80m funding across Government. And in 2014, as the then Development Secretary, I held the first ever Girls Summit to push for an end to the brutal practices of female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

The Westminster political scene has seen progress on gender equality. We have our second female Prime Minister. Women now make up an unprecedented third of the House of Commons, as well as a third of the Cabinet. And there are a number of cross-party campaigns encouraging women to get into politics so that, increasingly, women can directly shape the policies affecting our country.

This International Women's Day there is much to celebrate – but we have to continue to be bold if we are to deliver real change for women around the world.

The UK's role as a world leader on gender equality is a personal priority for me and I am very proud to be a founding member of the United Nations' first High Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment.

Economic empowerment for women is not just about pursuing gender equality. It is also actually in everyone's long term economic interests. A report by McKinsey Global Institute report estimated that if women in every country played an identical role in markets to men, \$28 TRILLION could be added to the global economy by 2025.

That figure represents millions of potential female entrepreneurs, inventors and business leaders who are currently being airbrushed out of the picture. No woman should be held back from fulfilling their ambitions in life.

So we can't just wait for equality to happen – we need to keep pushing for

it.

That is why I am also proud that the UK is leading by example, and becoming one of the first countries to introduce gender pay gap reporting requirements. This law will mean all large employers have to publish their GPG figure, shining a light on where women are being held back.

This extra transparency on data will mean employers can take action to address their pay gap. That could mean helping women return to work after they have started a family, or traditionally male-dominated industries doing more to attract women into their professions.

I am confident that British employers will embrace gender pay gap reporting and, more importantly, will deliver positive change for their female employees as a result.

So there is a lot to be proud of, but there is still a lot of work left to do. We need to pick up the pace as we approach this year's International Women's Day, but I remain convinced we can rise to the challenge, and create a world where women and girls can achieve anything.

This message from Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities Justine Greening first appeared in [Politics Home](#).

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## [RAF Sportswomen Top of Their Game](#)

### **RAF SPORTSWOMEN TOP OF THEIR GAMES**

Wales-based RAF servicewomen are competing at the top levels in a range of sports, either representing the Service, civilian teams and even their countries.

SAC Sian Williams, 26, serves as a Logistics Mover at MOD St Athan. For the majority of the time, however, she trains and plays for the senior women's Welsh international rugby team and RAF Women's Rugby. She has 25 caps for Wales and is currently training for Women's Rugby World Cup in 2017, a tournament she has fond memories of.



"The highlight of my career so far has definitely been playing against New Zealand in the 2013 World Cup," said Sian. "It was a privilege to represent Wales and play against the best."

SAC Catherine Sharples, 43, is a reservist with Number 614 (County of Glamorgan) Squadron, where she serves as a photographer. She plays for Newport County's women's football team and is a regular goalscorer. She has played football for over twenty years and credits the RAF with helping to keep her fit enough to play alongside colleagues less than half her age. She said:

"One of the reasons I became a reservist is the military's emphasis on fitness. I was already fit when I joined, scoring light blue on the fitness test, but over two years of service now see me regularly achieve dark blue scores, which has only helped my speed and endurance on the pitch."



LAC Olivia Blok, 27, is a civil engineer in civilian life but serves in personnel support in the RAF Reserves. She has been a triathlon and duathlon competitor for the past four years and puts in between 10-15 hours a week training in swimming, cycling and running. She enjoys the emphasis that the RAF puts on fitness and competition and hopes to represent the Service in the near future.



"That's definitely something I'm working towards if the opportunity is there," said Olivia. "I was honoured to represent the United Kingdom in my age group at the European Duathlon Championships in 2014 and it would be great to do so for the RAF or UK again."

Finally, Kate Gale, 24, is a reservist soon to become a regular as she is about to start Initial Officer Training. She plays for Cardiff City women's basketball and after seeing a poster for RAF ladies team, she signed up and hasn't looked back. In the course of a year, she has made fast friends and has been selected to play for the RAF at the inter-services tournament in May.



"I've always taken my fitness and sports seriously as a reservist," said Kate. "But playing competitive basketball for the RAF has taken my motivation to another level. The training days can be long and intense but are all the more enjoyable for it, and in a funny way will help prepare me for officer training. I'm really looking forward to continuing RAF basketball as a regular."

**Images by SAC Cathy Sharples**

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## Speech: Celebrating International Women's Day in Tanzania

On behalf of British High Commission (BHC), Department for International Development (DFID) and British Council, I would like to welcome you all to this event to mark the celebration of International Women's Day that is celebrated every 8 March each year.

It is a pleasure to be here this morning and I'd like to thank everyone for their contributions to making the event such a success. Particular thanks to Inspector Komba for her inspirational speech and to the wonderful MUDA Dance Group. You are a hard act to follow!

International Women's Day is an important day in my calendar.

Across the globe, women are constantly achieving new firsts: running multinational corporations, becoming heads of state, even exploring space.

And yet, although the equal rights of women are enshrined in international law, no country in the world has achieved gender equality.

This is not only morally wrong; it obstructs achievement of a more secure and prosperous world.

Addressing inequality is not a "nice to have", or an "add on" to our core work; it is firmly in all our collective interests.

Empowering women and girls improves peace and stability, good governance, economic growth and reduces poverty.

Gender equality is at the heart of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development: which is why we are seeking a Planet 50-50 by 2030.

I am really proud that the UK's Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, recently pledged to make UK foreign policy consciously and consistently deliver for women and girls.

He has also appointed our first ever Special Envoy for Gender Equality. She will help drive and install gender equality and women's issues in our foreign policy.

As you know this year's theme for IWD is Gender Equality in the Work Place. This is an issue which definitely needs attention. The World Economic Forum estimates that the gender Pay Gap won't close until 2186. This is too long wait!

With this in mind, I am proud to be the THIRD consecutive female British High Commissioner to represent the UK in Tanzania. There are now around 50 female British Ambassadors and High Commissioners around the world, 14 of us based in Africa. In Britain we have a woman Prime Minister and a female head of state in Her Majesty the Queen.

And we have more women in work and more women-led businesses than ever before. And we've more than doubled women's representation on the boards of our biggest companies since 2011.

But there is still more to do.

Tanzania too has made good progress in addressing gender inequality. Important policy and legal reforms are helping to empower women and girls. These include the commitment to universal education and commitments to tackle violence against women and girls

But despite the achievements, the majority of women in Tanzania, just as in many countries, still face inequality. They have longer working hours, and receive less education than men. Women find it more difficult than men to access resources such as land and finance. And, unfortunately, violence against women and girls also still remains a big issue.

So, that is why I am proud that my government is putting women and girls at the centre of our development efforts both here in Tanzania and around the world.

And I also want to do my bit personally. The theme for this year's International Women's Day is Gender Equality in the Work Place. One of the challenges that women face is that they don't know where to go for advice and support about their careers. I've been fortunate to have found two excellent mentors, who have supported me to get to where I am today.

So, I'm announcing today that I am offering to mentor one young Tanzanian women (under 25 years of age) for a 6 month period, every 6 months. She will have the opportunity to shadow me for a day and have monthly meetings over the 6 month period. Details of how to apply are on the UK in Tanzania website.

The UK believes girls and women everywhere should have voice, choice and control over their own lives. And unlocking the potential of half the world's population is in everyone's interest.

So here's to a future that belongs to all of us, where gender will no longer be a barrier to success. Happy International Women's Day to you all! Let's #Be Bold for Change together.

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# Company fined after worker's foot was exposed to machinery

A company that produces and supplies wood shavings for use as horse bedding has been fined after a worker suffered a serious foot injury at its site in Andover, Hampshire.

Basingstoke Magistrates' Court heard that Bedmax Limited failed to protect its employee from dangerous parts of machinery. On 26 October 2015 Philip Evers was operating the log deck, which is part of a machine that shreds trees, when his foot slipped and became lodged in a gap exposing him to the wheels of the machine which conveyed the logs. The severity of the injuries to his toes meant his big toe was cut back several times, his other four were fractured and eventually reconstructive surgery was required.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found that a panel that would have prevented access had been removed and not replaced where the employee was working.

Bedmax Limited, whose office is in Belford, Northumberland, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 11(1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. The court heard on 8 March 2017 that the company was fined £17,293.60 and ordered to pay costs of £623.60.

Speaking after the judge passed sentence, HSE Inspector Andrew Johnson said: "Bedmax fell below the expected standard. The necessary panel that would have prevented the incident was missing, rendering the man vulnerable as soon as he took to his task. This was a fundamental and basic health and safety failing which should have been easily avoided."

## **Notes to Editors:**

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. It aims to reduce work-related death, injury and ill health. It does so through research, information and advice, promoting training; new or revised regulations and codes of practice, and working with local authority partners by inspection, investigation and enforcement. [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)<sup>[1][1]</sup> <sup>[1]</sup>
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [www.legislation.gov.uk/](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/) <sup>[2][2][2]</sup>
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk><sup>[3]</sup>