2022: The Year of Climate Adaptation

Thank you for inviting me to speak at this year’s Coastal Futures conference.

In 1953, 307 lives were lost on land and more than 177 people were lost at sea in the east coast surge.

Caused by a mixture of high spring tides, low pressure and strong northerly gales, it led to significant developments in flood protection, forecasting, and warning and informing systems.

The effectiveness of these improvements means that today, many people do not realise they are artificially shielded from disaster.

For instance, halfway through COP26, millions of people were protected from the highest tide of the year because we operated the Boston Barrier, the Hull Barrier and the Thames Barrier.

It’s self-evidently a good thing that people can live without fear.

But, lack of awareness compounds future risks.

Last year, 200 people died in Germany’s floods.

It was reported that people did not know what to do when they heard warnings.

Following that tragedy, we reviewed the situation in England.

Here, 61 percent of people living at flood risk do not understand that they are.

In November, Storm Arwen hit the coast leading to waves over 10 metres tall.

Had these waves coincided with a high or spring tide, impacts could have been worse than in 1953.

We cannot put this down to luck.

At the Environment Agency we analyse the data and see that climate change is making it harder to hold weather-related shocks at arm’s length.

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9,000 kilometres of open English coast is currently at risk from sea flooding, erosion and landslips.

Even if we reach net zero by 2050, sea levels will continue to rise well into the next century.

By 2100, once-a-century sea level events are set to become annual events.

Climate change is taking existing risks and it is increasing their severity, frequency and duration.

In some places, the pace and scale of change means some risk management authorities will need to support communities to move away from the current coastline.

But, it’s in everyone’s interest to make coastal communities more resilient.

The technical, social and economic opportunities – not least in job creation – can help usher in a new era of climate prosperity for the whole country.

Just before COP26, the Environment Agency published our third Adaptation Report under the Climate Change Act, describing the need for a step change in the national approach to adaptation.

COP26 left no doubt about the scale of action needed to tackle the climate emergency globally.

Now, we need more focus on how communities will survive and prosper locally.

With COP27 in Africa this year – a continent with many communities on the “front line” of climate change…

…2022 must become The Year of Climate Adaptation.

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The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction recently said “There is no such thing as a “natural disaster”; “The risk of disaster is more likely as a direct result of human activity.”

For example “failure to implement building codes results in many more deaths from earthquakes” and “the destruction of mangrove forests is making storms more deadly.”

“Good disaster risk governance saves lives, reduces displacement and economic losses” and “That means having a national strategy in place to reduce disaster risk”.

Last week, a report written by Helen Jackson for the think tank Bright Blue, found that since 2007:

- At least 15 hospitals have experienced flooding which caused disruption or imminent risk of disruption to patient services or hospital support services;
- At least 68 schools have experienced flooding which disrupted lessons or school transport;
- There has been flood damage to at least 31 supermarket branches;
- And, at least 12 instances of flooded electricity substations.

This shows that climate change endangers societal as well as environmental risks, increasing the vulnerabilities of schools, hospitals and energy supplies.

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The government has given the Environment Agency a record £5.2 billion capital programme to deliver flood resilience in England.

It will ensure a further 336,000 homes are better protected from flooding and coastal erosion.

And, avoid over £32 billion of further damages.

But, I would like to look at the wider economic context.

The 2021 National Infrastructure and Construction pipeline sets out nearly £650 billion of public and private infrastructure investment by 2030.

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority has analysed over £200 billion of this, up to 2024/25.

This includes national investments in schools, transport and utilities.

Compared to IPA’s overall £200 billion figure, the £3 billion we have for flood and coastal defences by 2024/25 looks like a thin green line of defence.

That is not a criticism of the flood programme, which is significant and ambitious.

Rather, its size, compared to other areas of the infrastructure and construction pipeline, highlights that worryingly few people are considering the impacts of climate change in their investments.

On Monday, the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022 was laid before Parliament.

Informed by the valuation report for the Climate Change Committee’s evidence it estimates that economic damages could exceed many billions of pounds every year by 2050 even under 2 degrees of global heating. It points to other sources of evidence that suggest, by 2045, the cost of climate change to the UK could be at least 1 percent of GDP.

The report said: “The evidence shows that we must do more to build climate change into any decisions that have long-term effects, such as in new housing or infrastructure, to avoid often costly remedial actions in the future.”

Get this right and:

- we’d be better prepared for shocks,
- we’d create jobs,
- we’d level-up, ensuring key industrial areas are at the heart of the transition to net zero,
- and, we’d reverse the decline in nature by 2030.

But, to realise these benefits, and set goals that are both achievable and ambitious, we need both leadership and legislation.

This needs to be informed with thorough economic projections.

The Treasury commissioned the Dasgupta review to look at the economics of biodiversity.

We need a similar review to assess the true cost of climate impacts and the value of investing in resilience.

The Coalition for Climate Resilient Investment – which I co-Chair – can help.

The CCRI currently has 120 members, featuring both governments and investors, with over $20 trillion in assets.

By pricing climate risks, particularly for infrastructure, and including them in upfront financial decision-making, the CCRI is showing how to incentivise a shift towards greater climate resilience.

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On the coast, the Environment Agency is taking action:

- Shoreline Management Plans offer a framework for adapting to a changing climate over 100 years. By 2024, we will have revised and extended our assessment of risk from coastal erosion to properties and infrastructure.
- Our updated National Coastal Erosion Risk Map will use new research on rainfall, storm surges and the impacts of accelerated sea level rise on erosion rates, and improved monitoring data.
- And, the national Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy sets out how we (alongside risk management authorities, partners and communities) will build up the resilience of millions more homes and businesses.

To deliver this we need to innovate.

In March, we launched the £150 million national Flood & Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme.

What we learn will inform our approach to the climate crisis in the coming decades.

One example will make space for sand dunes on the Cornish coast to defend existing coastal settlements and economies from coastal erosion and sea level rise, delivering planting, saltmarsh restoration and the protection of community infrastructure.

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It’s a good example of how resilience measures in infrastructure create multiple interlocking benefits.

For instance, the saltmarsh habitat that fringes the coast provides over £1 billion in flood defence benefits.

It stores carbon equivalent to nearly 40 million people’s annual domestic emissions.

It also improves water quality, recreation and wellbeing.

With billions spent on seaside visits every year, we know good water quality helps coastal towns prosper.

Yet, over 85 percent of this saltmarsh has been lost since the 1800s.

We are ensuring £120 million is invested over 5 years to compensate habitat losses.

Along with partners we are leading a restoration initiative that aims to restore at least 15 percent of our priority estuarine and coastal habitats by 2043.

The Environment Agency’s River Basin Management Plans show we must do more to prevent deterioration and improve ecological health.

We have proposed a measure in the plans to restore estuarine and coastal habitats.

After listening to stakeholders, we have identified opportunities for better join up and action, but these need the right investment.

While Government can provide some of that funding, we need more investors to see the potential of nature-based projects on the coast.

Those with proven ability to generate revenue can be scaled-up at speed.

You can help by responding to our River Basin Management Plan and Flood Risk Management Plan consultations.

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To conclude:

Prosperity in a maritime nation requires resilient infrastructure on the coast, and that needs long-term investment.

We have come a long way since 1953.

But, climate change should obliterate any sense of complacency.

We must adapt to the present storm as well as those in the offing.

We need to plan, adapt and thrive to save lives and livelihoods.

To ensure the success of the UK’s COP26 Presidency…

…and drive the ambition of the Green Industrial Revolution…

…2022 must become The Year of Climate Adaptation.

Thank you.

Boeing 737-4Q8, G-JMCY Anniversary Statement

News story

Accident to Boeing 737-4Q8 cargo aircraft, registration G-JMCY, at Exeter Airport on 19 January 2021.

This statement provides an update on the AAIB investigation into an accident involving a Boeing 737-4Q8 cargo aircraft, registration G-JMCY, at Exeter Airport on 19 January 2021.

The aircraft suffered a hard landing which resulted in severe damage to the aircraft. The two-flight crew were uninjured. The investigation is nearing completion and the report will shortly be disseminated for consultation. The final report will be published once we have completed the consultation process.

Published 19 January 2022

UK House Price Index for November 2021

Since March 2020 all those involved in the property market have been impacted by the effects of coronavirus (COVID-19); HM Land Registry is no different and as a result, this release of the UK House Price index is not as complete as it could be.

The data is accurate. However, this release may be subject to increased revisions as we add more data over the coming months. See Reducing delays for more information.

The November data shows:

- on average, house prices have risen 1.2% since October 2021
- there has been an annual price rise of 10% which makes the average property in the UK valued at £270,708

England

In England the November data shows, on average, house prices have risen by 1.4% since October 2021. The annual price rise of 9.8% takes the average property value to £288,130.

The regional data for England indicates that:

- the South West experienced the greatest monthly rise with a movement of 2.5%
- London saw the lowest monthly price growth, with a rise of 0.2%
- the South West experienced the greatest annual price rise, up by 12.9%
- London saw the lowest annual price growth, with a rise of 5.1%

Price change by region for England

Region	Average price November 2021	Annual change % since November 2020	Monthly change % since October 2021
East Midlands	£229,277	10.7	0.4
East of England	£336,937	12.3	2.1
London	£519,934	5.1	0.2
North East	£149,249	8.7	1.8
North West	£197,797	10.8	2.3
South East	£369,093	9.6	0.5
South West	£308,497	12.9	2.5
West Midlands	£230,888	9.8	1.9
Yorkshire and the Humber	£191,036	7.2	1.0

Repossession sales by volume for England

The lowest number of repossession sales in September 2021 was in the East of England.

The highest number of repossession sales in September 2021 was in the South West and Yorkshire and the Humber.

Repossession sales	September 2021
East Midlands	2
East of England	0
London	4
North East	6
North West	4
South East	6
South West	8
West Midlands	5
Yorkshire and the Humber	8
England	43

Average price by property type for England

Property type	November 2021	November 2020	Difference %
Detached	£456,259	£401,047	13.8
Semi-detached	£275,589	£247,478	11.4
Terraced	£231,266	£214,943	7.6
Flat/maisonette	£242,291	£230,585	5.1
All	£288,130	£262,409	9.8

Funding and buyer status for England

Transaction type	Average price November 2021	Annual price change % since November 2020	Monthly price change % since October 2021
Cash	£269,693	9.2	1.2
Mortgage	£297,291	10	1.4
First-time buyer	£238,533	8.9	1.5
Former owner occupier	£331,286	10.7	1.2

Building status for England

Building status*	Average price September 2021	Annual price change % since September 2020	Monthly price change % since August 2021
New build	£384,560	21.8	3.4
Existing resold property	£283,799	11.4	3.9

*Figures for the 2 most recent months are not being published because there are not enough new build transactions to give a meaningful result.

London

London shows, on average, house prices have risen by 0.2% since October 2021. An annual price rise of 5.1% takes the average property value to £519,934.

Average price by property type for London

Property type	November 2021	November 2020	Difference %
Detached	£1,044,251	£959,523	8.8
Semi-detached	£661,506	£616,305	7.3
Terraced	£553,035	£531,341	4.1
Flat/maisonette	£442,689	£422,998	4.7
All	£519,934	£494,552	5.1

Funding and buyer status for London

Transaction type	Average price November 2021	Annual price change % since November 2020	Monthly price change % since October 2021
Cash	£543,208	5.9	0.0
Mortgage	£512,775	5.0	0.2
First-time buyer	£449,235	4.6	0.5
Former owner occupier	£596,815	5.8	-0.3

Building status for London

Building status*	Average price September 2021	Annual price change % since September 2020	Monthly price change % since August 2021
New build	£545,757	9.6	-2.3
Existing resold property	£506,469	2.4	-2.6

*Figures for the 2 most recent months are not being published because there are not enough new build transactions to give a meaningful result.

Wales

Wales shows, on average, house prices have fallen by 0.7% since October 2021. An annual price rise of 12.1% takes the average property value to £199,877.

There were 2 repossession sales for Wales in September 2021.

Average price by property type for Wales

Property type	November 2021	November 2020	Difference %
Detached	£311,760	£270,343	15.3
Semi-detached	£194,988	£172,147	13.3

Property type	November 2021	November 2020	Difference %
Terraced	£152,303	£139,077	9.5
Flat/maisonette	£128,186	£119,895	6.9
All	£199,877	£178,255	12.1

Funding and buyer status for Wales

Transaction type	Average price November 2021	Annual price change % since November 2020	Monthly price change % since October 2021
Cash	£194,184	11.8	-0.4
Mortgage	£203,275	12.3	-0.8
First-time buyer	£171,300	11.5	-0.7
Former owner occupier	£233,710	12.9	-0.8

Building status for Wales

Building status*	Average price September 2021	Annual price change % since September 2020	Monthly price change % since August 2021
New build	£286,569	29.4	3.7
Existing resold property	£195,429	17.0	3.7

*Figures for the 2 most recent months are not being published because there are not enough new build transactions to give a meaningful result.

UK house prices

UK house prices increased by 10% in the year to November 2021, up from 9.8% in October 2021. On a non-seasonally adjusted basis, average house prices in the UK increased by 1.2% between October and November 2021, compared with an increase of 1% during the same period a year earlier (October and November 2020).

The UK Property Transactions Statistics showed that in November 2021, on a seasonally adjusted basis, the estimated number of transactions of residential properties with a value of £40,000 or greater was 96,290. This is 16.4% lower than a year ago. Between October and November 2021, UK transactions increased by 24.3% on a seasonally adjusted basis, following a large increase in the month prior.

House price growth was strongest in Wales where prices increased by 12.1% in the year to November 2021. The lowest annual growth was in London, where prices increased by 5.1% in the year to November 2021.

See the economic statement.

The UK HPI is based on completed housing transactions. Typically, a house purchase can take 6 to 8 weeks to reach completion. The price data feeding into the November 2021 UK HPI will mainly reflect those agreements that occurred after the government measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 took hold.

Reducing delays

Our absolute top priority is to reduce any delays, both those caused by the pandemic and those existing beforehand. To deliver our services while promoting public health, we are:

- adjusting our resources where necessary
- introducing automation where practical
- recruiting and training more than 500 new staff

Background

1. We publish the UK House Price Index (HPI) on the second or third Wednesday of each month with Northern Ireland figures updated quarterly. We will publish the December 2021 UK HPI at 9:30am on Wednesday 16 February 2022. See calendar of release dates.

2. We have made some changes to improve the accuracy of the UK HPI. We are not publishing average price and percentage change for new builds and existing resold property as done previously because there are not currently enough new build transactions to provide a reliable result. This means that in this month’s UK HPI reports, new builds and existing resold property are reported in line with the sales volumes currently available.

3. The UK HPI revision period has been extended to 13 months, following a review of the revision policy (see calculating the UK HPI section 4.4). This ensures the data used is more comprehensive.

4. Sales volume data is available by property status (new build and existing property) and funding status (cash and mortgage) in our downloadable data tables. Transactions that require us to create a new register, such as new builds, are more complex and require more time to process. Read revisions to the UK HPI data.

5. Revision tables are available for England and Wales within the downloadable data in CSV format. See about the UK HPI for more information.

6. HM Land Registry, Registers of Scotland, Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and the Valuation Office Agency supply data for the UK HPI.

7. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency calculate the UK HPI. It applies a hedonic regression model that uses the various sources of data on property price, including HM Land Registry’s Price Paid Dataset, and attributes to produce estimates of the change in house prices each month. Find out more about the methodology used from the ONS and Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency.

8. We take the UK Property Transaction statistics from the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) monthly estimates of the number of residential and non-residential property transactions in the UK and its constituent countries. The number of property transactions in the UK is highly seasonal, with more activity in the summer months and less in the winter. This regular annual pattern can sometimes mask the underlying movements and trends in the data series. HMRC presents the UK aggregate transaction figures on a seasonally adjusted basis. We make adjustments for both the time of year and the construction of the calendar, including corrections for the position of Easter and the number of trading days in a particular month.

9. UK HPI seasonally adjusted series are calculated at regional and national levels only. See data tables.

10. The first estimate for new build average price (April 2016 report) was based on a small sample which can cause volatility. A three-month moving average has been applied to the latest estimate to remove some of this volatility.

11. The UK HPI reflects the final transaction price for sales of residential property. Using the geometric mean, it covers purchases at market value for owner-occupation and buy-to-let, excluding those purchases not at market value (such as re-mortgages), where the ‘price’ represents a valuation.

12. HM Land Registry provides information on residential property transactions for England and Wales, collected as part of the official registration process for properties that are sold for full market value.

13. The HM Land Registry dataset contains the sale price of the property, the date when the sale was completed, full address details, the type of property (detached, semi-detached, terraced or flat), if it is a newly built property or an established residential building and a variable to indicate if the property has been purchased as a financed transaction (using a mortgage) or as a non-financed transaction (cash purchase).

14. Repossession sales data is based on the number of transactions lodged

with HM Land Registry by lenders exercising their power of sale.

15. For England, we show repossession sales volume recorded by government office region. For Wales, we provide repossession sales volume for the number of repossession sales.

16. Repossession sales data is available from April 2016 in CSV format. Find out more information about [repossession sales].

17. We publish CSV files of the raw and cleansed aggregated data every month for England, Scotland and Wales. We publish Northern Ireland data on a quarterly basis. They are available for free use and re-use under the Open Government Licence.

18. HM Land Registry's mission is to guarantee and protect property rights in England and Wales.

19. HM Land Registry is a government department created in 1862. Its ambition is to become the world's leading land registry for speed, simplicity and an open approach to data.

20. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth in excess of £7 trillion, including over £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains more than 26 million titles showing evidence of ownership for some 87% of the land mass of England and Wales.

21. For further information about HM Land Registry visit www.gov.uk/land-registry.

22. Follow us on Twitter, our blog, LinkedIn and Facebook.

Care leavers feel they left care too early, Ofsted finds

The report, 'Ready or not: care leavers' views of preparing to leave care', brings to light the lack of choice many care leavers experienced: some felt they had to leave care 'whether they were ready or not'. Local authorities are required to prepare children for leaving care but today's report finds that care leavers' experiences of this preparation have been varied, and many were unaware of the support they are entitled to.

Statutory guidance requires children in care to be introduced to their personal advisor (PA) from age 16 to support them as they leave care. However, over a quarter did not meet their PA until they were 18 or older, and a fifth of care leavers said they met their PA too late.

In a nationwide survey and follow-up interviews, many care leavers said they were not aware of the different kinds of support they are entitled to. Only around half remembered being told about the help available to them in their local area. A similar proportion reported being told how to complain about the support, or lack of, they received. Even fewer were told how to get advocacy support.

Many care leavers also told us about feeling isolated and not knowing who to turn to for help after leaving care. A third (32%) of respondents said that they did not know who to contact in an emergency, and a quarter (24%) said they had to find out on their own. Worrying about money was the most common reason young people felt unsafe after leaving care, and several attributed money-related problems in later life to a lack of financial preparation. As one care leaver put it:

> I had little help in learning the financial side of things; I am in years of debt with council tax and water rates due to this.

The picture is slightly more positive for those children in care currently. The majority reported that they were getting help with their money skills.

However, overall the report suggests that there is more for corporate parents to do to give children leaving care the support and help they need.

Yvette Stanley, Ofsted’s National Director for Social Care, said:

> The transition out of care can be a daunting prospect for many. It’s so important that children feel prepared with the skills they need to live independently and a support network there to help them if they need it. Unfortunately, many of the young people we spoke to felt they left care before they were ready and didn’t know where to turn to for help.
>
> The insights these young people have shared with us strike a powerful chord and are valuable in identifying how things can be improved for care leavers. We will continue to draw on these findings in our future research and as we make improvements to our inspection work so that it always reflects what matters most to children in care and care leavers.

This research only reports on care leavers’ perceptions of the preparation they received. What they told us is not necessarily representative of all care leavers’ experiences.

The report is part of a wider project looking at local authority decision-making for children in care, children on the edge of care and care leavers in England. Our next report will look at sufficiency of accommodation for children in care and care leavers.

[Wide-ranging support boost for military families]

News story

The Family Strategy, a new 10-year plan recognising the unique nature of military life and setting out bespoke support for service families, has been published today.

The strategy will deliver lasting, cultural change over the next decade as it brings together innovative policies on health and wellbeing, education and career support.

Improving access to childcare is one of the main workstreams within the Family Strategy, with Wraparound Childcare pilot sites expanding to include Woolwich and Lincolnshire. This means an additional 500 children are now benefitting from the scheme, bringing the total number of children with access to childcare before and after school to 1,500.

The work is part of a drive by defence to better support service personnel and their families and ensure our people can have more fulfilling careers in the Armed Forces.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Leo Docherty MP said:

> Armed Forces families are at the heart of the Defence community and play a key role in the protection of the UK at home and abroad. The

> strategy seeks to offer choice and flexibility to allow personnel to serve their nation and raise a family at the same time.
>
> Today’s announcements cover childcare education, healthcare and much more to demonstrate our commitment to being a mode modern and inclusive employer – flexible to the needs of our people.

The Family Strategy recognises the exceptional demands placed upon the UK Armed Forces and their families and focuses on health and wellbeing, learning and childcare, developing partners’ careers alongside the serviceperson and career management sensitive to the needs of the family. It is based on recommendations made in a report by Andrew Selous MP titled “Living in our Shoes: Understanding the needs of UK Armed Forces families” published last year.

The Wraparound Childcare scheme funds before and after school childcare for service children in the UK aged 4 to 11, for up to 20 hours per week. The expansion of this scheme brings the total number of sites to 10 across 5 clusters and is an answer to the demand in those areas. The eligibility will match that of the Government’s tax-free childcare policy.

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