

Have your say on future of Thames Estuary flood risk

Londoners and people in north Kent and south Essex are getting the chance to shape the response to increased flood threat as climate change threatens to create higher sea levels.

The Environment Agency and a number of other bodies are looking towards the end of the century to ensure homes, businesses and critical services from Teddington to Sheerness and Southend remain protected by updating the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan.

Dartford Creek Barrier's steel gates lower when flooding is likely

The Environment Agency is calling on communities and organisations to play their part in updating the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan by [giving their views on the new flood risk strategy](#).

Southend Pier reaching out into the Thames – the eight-week public consultation is after views on how to protect this part of south Essex

With more than 3,000 flood defences – including the iconic Thames Barrier – protecting 1.42 million people from flooding in the London area, there is still more to do.

The Environment Agency is updating the plan to increase resilience and still manage flood risk in the most cost-effective way. A review of the latest scientific evidence found that the strategy continued to set out a robust approach to future flood risk.

Baroness Brown DBE FREng FRS, chair of the Climate Change Committee's adaptation committee and chair of the advisory group that reviewed the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan, said:

Significant sea-level rise is now inevitable, and even reaching global net zero – imperative to limit future warming – will not stop this rising tide.

The plan aims to protect communities from flooding while reshaping riversides and enhancing nature.

Only 12 per cent of more than 3,000 flood defences are the responsibility of the Environment Agency, so it is essential that the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan is a team effort, owned by everyone with an interest in our river.

Julie Foley, the Environment Agency's director for flood strategy and national adaptation, said:

We've operated the Thames Barrier to protect London more than 200 times in the past 40 years.

But the climate is changing and causing sea levels to rise. Our evidence shows that could be by more than a metre by 2100.

While we expect the Thames Barrier to continue to protect London until 2070, we need to plan ahead now to keep London protected from storm surges. By 2040 we will make a decision on the preferred option for 2070 and beyond.

Following recent roadshows in Canvey Island and Dartford, three more public events will be held for people to see the updated plans and discuss them with specialists from the Environment Agency and other organisations involved in protecting London, south Essex and north Kent.

The Thames Estuary 2100: Shaping the future of the Thames Estuary:

- Wednesday 5 October: 3pm – 6pm: The Forum at Greenwich, Trafalgar Road, Greenwich SE10 9EQ
- Tuesday 11 October: 4.30pm – 8pm: Thameside Theatre, Orsett Road, Grays RM17 5DX
- Tuesday 25 October: Time TBC: Portsoken Community Centre, Little Somerset Street, London E1 8AA

The consultation is open until 20 November 2022.

Published in 2012, the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan was the first flood risk management strategy to adapt to different climate scenarios. A recent review of the plan showed it was still a robust approach.

The plan covers 2,400km of roads, almost 4,000 electricity substations, 140 mainline and Tube stations and London City Airport and London Heliport.

Experts in flood protection want local people to help update the existing strategy to reduce flood risk, to safeguard communities along the estuary.

The review also found that some tidal defences needed to be raised earlier than originally thought, some within the next 20 years. It's crucial that we act now and work together – no organisation can deliver this ambitious strategy alone.

Paper copies of the consultation can be requested from thamesestuary2100@environment-agency.gov.uk and returned via email or sent to Thames Estuary 2100 Plan consultation, Environment Agency, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF. The questionnaire will close at 11.59pm on 20 November 2022.

You can read the original [Thames Estuary 2100 Plan here](#) along with the [10-](#)

Malaysian social entrepreneur receives the Commonwealth Points of Light award

After conducting research and discovering that thousands of Malaysian girls in rural communities miss an average of 60 days of school a year due to a lack of menstrual products and knowledge, Anja Juliah has embarked on a quest to address the problem. She, and her social enterprise, Athena Holdings, educate girls in rural communities on menstruation and provides reusable sanitary pads, this has helped to ensure that girls can continue with their studies whilst also reducing the number of single-use sanitary pads going to landfill.

Anja Juliah has since extended her work to support girls in indigenous communities in Sabah and Sarawak, benefitting at least 1,600 girls since 2016.

In addition to this, Anja has also provided mentorship for women aspiring to become social entrepreneurs, and has previously conducted financial empowerment programmes for young housewives who had never worked before to teach them basic entrepreneurship.

H.E. Charles Hay, the British High Commissioner to Malaysia, said:

Education is the key to a better life. Thanks to the remarkable effort of educating girls in rural communities about menstrual health and providing reusable sanitary pads, Anja Juliah has helped ensure girls remain in schools and get the basic education that they need. I would also like to commend Anja Juliah for empowering young women through her coaching and mentoring work. I hope Anja Juliah's work will inspire other social entrepreneurs to make a difference in their respective communities.

Upon receiving the award, Anja Juliah said:

This award came as an absolute surprise to me. I am deeply humbled and honoured. This journey has never been about me at all. Exactly 10 years ago, I started teaching girls in rural Borneo about menstruation and sponsoring washable sanitary pads to them. As a result, the girls did not have to be absent from school. Education is their pathway to a better life. I am thankful to my family, friends and partners who have supported my mission to empowering

girls and young women in Malaysia. I hope my work will enable girls to pursue their dreams, and inspire them to help others.

The [Commonwealth Points of Light award programme](#) was launched in the UK in 2018 when the UK chaired the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). Following the success of this programme, the late Queen Elizabeth II, as the Head of the Commonwealth, decided to continue this award programme beyond 2018 to recognise good deeds and highlight stories of service to community.

Anja Juliah was delighted to find that the certificate presented to her today was in fact signed by the late Queen Elizabeth II before her passing recently. This made the award even more special and meaningful.

Prior to Anja Juliah, 4 other Malaysians have received the Commonwealth Points of Light award since 2018. They are:

- Dr Madhusudhan who provides free medical treatment to the homeless through his Teddy Mobile Clinics
- Dr Chen Pelf Nyok from the Turtle Conservation Society who protects freshwater turtles in Terengganu
- Khor Sue Yee and Aurora Tin from Zero Waste Malaysia for promoting a zero-waste lifestyle to save the environment
- philanthropist Kuan Chee Heng who is popularly known as Uncle Kentang

[UK wins seat on top UN telecoms council](#)

- The UN agency allocates spectrum, coordinates satellite orbits and develops technical standards for mobile phones, TV and sat-navs
- Election gives UK a major role in promoting a free, open and secure internet and connecting the unconnected

The UK has been elected to the governing council of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the UN agency which enables the world's phone, internet and satellite networks to operate.

The ITU coordinates the global allocation of spectrum, the radio waves used for sending and receiving information. It also oversees the network of orbiting satellites which enable everyday technologies such as mobiles, wifi, terrestrial television, GPS navigation, weather information and online maps to function.

The organisation is behind the technical agreements on country codes (for example +44 in the UK) that make international phone calls possible. Its radio frequency allocations enable people's phones to roam overseas and its

technical standards have helped enable people to stream video on their devices. It also works to widen access to the internet to the 2.7 billion people across the world that aren't connected.

The UK has been an active member of the ITU, one of the oldest international organisations still in existence, for more than 150 years. The council acts as the union's governing body to guide the ITU's work in telecoms and information and communication technology (ICT) policy issues which affect every country in the world.

The UK received the second highest number of votes in the Western Europe group, securing 151 votes out of a possible 179. Technology minister Damian Collins and Foreign Office minister and UK Special Envoy to the ITU Lord Ahmad attended the ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference in Bucharest last week to support the UK's election campaign.

Tech and Digital Economy Minister Damian Collins said:

The UK is a technology superpower and has always played a leading role setting international standards for telecoms and innovations which have improved billions of people's lives across the globe.

With a seat on the ITU's governing council, we will champion tech as a solution to the world's biggest challenges, redouble our efforts to close the divide between those cut off from technology and those in the digital fast lane and make sure the internet remains free and open.

Foreign Office Minister of State and UK Special Representative to the ITU, Lord Ahmad said:

I'm delighted the UK has been selected to help lead the ITU's mission in realising everyone's right to communicate freely and securely, wherever they are in the world.

Through our seat in the governing council, we'll work with all states to ensure the organisation delivers for its members and bridges the digital divide.

Becoming a member of the ITU's Council will bolster UK efforts to promote collaboration and consensus among the ITU's 193 member states to tackle some of the biggest issues affecting the technology, telecoms and space sectors.

Issues include the growing demand for radio spectrum caused by the growth of new wireless technologies and the ITU's mission to 'connect the world' – bridging the global digital divide and increasing prosperity in developing countries by boosting digital inclusion and people's skills.

The UK will also use its membership to ensure the ITU focuses on keeping

information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the hands of industry and the free market and making sure they remain interoperable – benefiting UK technology businesses through access to the biggest possible global market.

The UK's success comes as US candidate Doreen Bogdan-Martin was elected on Thursday as the first female Secretary General of the ITU, defeating Russia's Rashid Ismailov. The result was welcomed by the UK as a significant win for the efforts of western democracies to block attempts by authoritarian regimes to put greater government controls on the internet.

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The ITU – The International Telecommunication Union – is one of many “specialised” agencies of the United Nations.

It was established in 1865 as the International Telegraph Union, making it one of the oldest international organisations still in existence today.

As the name suggests, it was first established to coordinate the telegram industry. Methods of communication have clearly evolved since then, and as has the mandate of the ITU. The ITU, quite simply, aims to connect the world.

Today, the ITU is responsible for three key areas:

- **Standardisation:** The ITU standardisation sector creates technical standards (called Recommendations) which facilitate everyday activities such as making phone calls and accessing mobile networks.
- **Radio-communication:** This includes things like facilitating international cooperation in assigning radio-frequency spectrum and satellite orbits. Today there are billions of wireless devices using radio-spectrum and thousands of communications satellites circulating around earth. These satellites provide services to billions of people – watching live sport, using online maps and accessing mobile broadband are all made possible by coordination of radio-spectrum and satellites at the ITU.
- **Development:** This means striving to improve access to telecommunications and information communication technologies to underserved communities worldwide.

Our architects – helping build success

Architects see buildings in a different way.

The earlier they are involved in a project, the more value they can bring. This can be anything from the most effective use of space to access or the fundamental issues around building regulations.

There are currently five chartered architects working within the business,

working in project teams to deliver the complex facilities needed to handle our waste.

These buildings include:

Our Silos Maintenance Facility (SMF) provides maintenance and operational support for the Magnox Swarf Storage Silo retrievals.

Architectural input into this vital facility has ensured this striking building offers users a pleasant working environment. Colour has been used to guide people around the workspace, and it has specially placed windows to allow in natural light – a first for a building in this nuclear category.

Our Replacement Analytical Project (RAP) will be the new home to laboratories that analyse materials from across the Sellafield site. It is being built on the side of the existing National Nuclear Laboratory central laboratory facility, on the northern edge of the Sellafield site.

This complex project, being built onto the side of an existing building on a limited patch of land, needed architectural input to ensure that it didn't expand from four storeys to six.

Profile: Jason Boyle

Lead architect Jason Boyle has worked at Sellafield for 14 years, based in our Warrington offices. He's currently working on our Replacement Analytical Project (RAP).

Jason said: "I found out about the role and applied through the Royal Institute of British Architects. I began working on projects like the flask replacement facility (studies phase) and the existing building's spray booth modification, while I trained to become a responsible engineer. I then left capability to work on the Silos Maintenance Facility as the civil structural and architectural responsible engineer for eight years. Following the delivery of this project I went on to become lead architect on RAP where I am today.

"I'm really proud that I was able to bring Building Information Modelling (BIM) to the SMF Project. It meant we were involved in Sellafield's early BIM adoption which led to me being the youngest recipient of Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

"Architecture is important. No other discipline understands how to design a building like we do. Architects understand the macro and micro of buildings and are trained to co-ordinate with all other design disciplines. Architects play a vital role in nuclear design – we start with building flow diagrams, radiological classification of areas, material and people flow which are then turned into the design basis for a building's layout. Architects understand Building and Planning Regulations but also provide expertise on fire safety in design and specialist finishes. We also take a lead role in sustainable design and specification of Sellafield's buildings.

“We offer a different aspect to design by thinking about the environment the workers will be working in. And because we are in this unique position, architects at Sellafield can also offer vital expertise and advice to architectural colleagues in the supply chain. We have experience of dealing with both complex projects and nuclear, a real rarity in our world.”

Profile: Mark Alty

Mark is Sellafield’s design capability lead for architecture. He has worked for Sellafield Ltd for the past 14 years and is currently engaged with our Main Site Command Facility project.

He is based at Hinton House in Warrington.

Mark said: “Having worked as an architect across a number of different sectors including private and public housing, education, leisure, civic buildings and student accommodation I joined Sellafield Ltd as a senior architect in 2008.

“Although I have worked on numerous projects, including the Pile Fuel Cladding Silo control room building and Windscale pile chimney decommissioning project, my main role has been providing architectural assurance across the Sellafield security enhancement projects programme. I have also delivered the civil structural and architectural (CS&A) responsible engineer role supporting the provision of unified command and control on site for emergency response in the Main Site Command Facility.

“In 2016 my role broadened and I was appointed to the design capability Lead for architecture role, within CS&A capability, and together with managing a small architectural delivery team provide architectural assurance across a variety of design portfolios.

“The training, qualifications and experience of an architect provide the business with the assurance that building design or modification will be delivered in accordance with current standards and legislation, will be coordinated, safe, secure and sustainable.”

Profile: Certina Chan

Certina has been working for Sellafield Ltd for the past year as an architectural graduate. She is currently supplying architectural input to the Civil Nuclear Constabulary Operational Unit project.

She is the company’s first architectural graduate and is working out of Hinton House in Warrington.

Her first year with us has already provided opportunities to work across a wide range of projects including the CNC OU, Main Site Command Facility, building regulation regularisation and undertaking a fire safety review of the recent Hinton House refurbishment.

Certina said: “As an architectural graduate within the team, I am accountable

for producing design deliverables including but not limited to—3D models, 2D drawing packages, written specifications, and project documentations.

“I am proud of the prudence and attentiveness that we uphold towards both conventional and nuclear safety. Architects and architectural technologists at Sellafeld Ltd celebrate ‘Safety by Design’ in every project, for every practice, and at any scale. By creating evidence-based solutions that safeguard nuclear decommissioning, we contribute to creating a safe and secure environment for both public and our workforce. We always remind ourselves of the collective responsibility for current end-users and future generation, which is in resonance with this year’s theme of the World Architecture Day—‘Architecture for well-being’. We provide this by adhering to design standards, legal specifications, and site license conditions.

“From a sustainability point of view, architects play a critical role to Sellafeld. From study to concept, from spatial coordination to technical design, from construction to handover, from operation to maintenance, from retrofitting to demolition....architects and architectural technologists make informed decisions in every aspect of the building life cycle from cradle to grave, which is essential to the reduction of embodied carbon and clean decommissioning of our nuclear site.”

Violence affects women and girls everywhere: UK statement to the OSCE

Thank you, Mr Convenor.

[Global estimates](#) show that 1 in 3 women will experience physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetimes. Violence affects women and girls everywhere.

Gender equality and fighting all forms of violence against women and girls are crucial to the OSCE’s comprehensive concept of security and stability and the UK commends the work of the OSCE executive structures in implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

I’d like to highlight the utility and value of two OSCE sponsored toolkits. Firstly, the toolkit for [“Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes”](#), a valuable resource for conflict mediation in all OSCE conflicts. And, secondly, the [Gender and Security toolkit](#), which provides practical policy and programmatic guidance for governments, for regional and international organisations and for justice institutions.

I’d like to thank all those who have contributed to advancing gender equality and the Women, Peace and Security agenda at the OSCE.

We know that violence against women and girls further escalates in scale and severity in conflict and crisis, and this has been seen in the detrimental impact that Russia's invasion of Ukraine has had on women and girls.

We welcomed the publication of the OSCE's Moscow Mechanism reports, which help expose the truth of Putin's illegal war in Ukraine. We remain deeply concerned about rising reports of gender-based violence, including horrific acts of sexual violence, with most cases committed in areas controlled by Russian armed forces.

In April, the UK launched the [Murad Code](#), a code of conduct for documenting the experiences of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in a way that upholds survivors' rights. We are now urging governments, national authorities, international organisations and civil society to commit to taking a survivor-centred approach to such documentation – in line with the standards set out in the Code.

[In November the UK are hosting an ambitious international conference](#) that marks 10 years since the launch of the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative. We will use this to strengthen global action and deliver real change for survivors.

Mr Convenor, we know that violence against women and children is preventable. The UK remains steadfast in its commitment to working toward a future for women and children that is free from discrimination and violence.

Rigorous evaluations have shown that harmful attitudes and norms can change in less than three years – this does not have to take generations.

Thank you.