

Help protect communities across Yorkshire from flooding

Press release

The Environment Agency is looking for three new independent members to join a committee that plays a vital part in shaping local flood and coastal management plans across Yorkshire.



Committee members decide on the priorities for the funding and delivery of flood risk management projects as part of the Yorkshire Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC).

Applications are welcome from people actively interested in flood risk management, from different backgrounds and with an interest in, or experience of:

- local community flood forums or action groups
- engineering and construction
- spatial planning
- finance and accountancy
- asset management
- managing resilience and recovery
- conservation

- farming and land management
- the business community

Yorkshire RFCC chair, Professor Colin Mellors said:

There are 12 RFCCs in England and members of the committee play an important role in determining local priorities for investment in flood and coastal risk management, ensuring a joined-up approach among partners and raising local levies for flood alleviation schemes.

As a member of the Yorkshire RFCC you will help create partnerships that fund and deliver projects for local communities at risk of the devastating effects of flooding.

The region, consisting of over five million people and a diverse geography, makes a substantial contribution to the national economy. At the same time, it is vulnerable to the risk of flooding from many sources; rivers, surface water, groundwater and includes some of the fastest eroding coastline in Europe.

Mike Dugher, Environment Agency Yorkshire area director said:

We are looking for three enthusiastic and committed members to help us set the strategic priorities for managing flood risk throughout the Yorkshire area in the face of the challenge of our changing climate.

It is an exciting opportunity to make a practical difference to people's lives, businesses and to the environment in which we live.

Committee members do not receive a salary, but reasonable expenses are paid. RFCCs meet four times a year with potential additional work between meetings to help progress objectives set out in the RFCC's business plan.

The deadline for applications is Monday 19 September 2022.

For details on the roles and how to apply please contact Amer Bhatti on 07786 523779 or email YRFCC@environment-agency.gov.uk.

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MMO response to actions by Greenpeace in South West Deeps

We were informed by Greenpeace yesterday (Wed 7 Sept) that it intends to collect more boulders and drop them into the sea at South West Deeps in what it refers to as a peaceful protest to prevent "destructive bottom trawling".

This would mean further boulder drops into the marine space without the required marine licences.

We are extremely disappointed that Greenpeace intends to continue with its actions. Greenpeace is aware of the work that is being undertaken by MMO to protect these sites and the process that must be followed, and Greenpeace was left in no doubt following the judicial comments in the previous court proceedings, that it is expected to comply with the marine licensing regime.

We will continue to monitor and investigate as appropriate.

Since the programme started, MMO has already delivered a range of management measures in four offshore sites, including Dogger Bank SAC which at 12,331 sq. kilometres, is the largest MPA in England protecting seabed habitat. We also recently published a call for evidence, and sought views on MMO's draft assessments of the impacts of bottom-towed fishing gear on a further 13 marine protected areas (MPAs) in order to identify appropriate long-term site protection.

MMO will continue to undertake full evidence-based assessments in consultation with all stakeholders to establish robust legislative measures to protect our important marine habitats. These will be based on the best available scientific evidence and will be accompanied by a thorough analysis of how such measures will affect fishing activity. We are implementing this work in a phased, risk-based manner ensuring that those MPAs that are most vulnerable to damage from fishing activities are assessed and managed first. We will also engage with all users and stakeholders, including interested environmental NGOs with whom we have established a forum to engage and update on progress. This includes Greenpeace.

Therefore, as England's marine regulator, we are very disappointed that Greenpeace has chosen to take this action to drop boulders to form a barrier as we don't believe it is justified or will help protect our marine environment.

It is also a requirement under the Marine and Coastal Access Act that any deposit of construction below high water is required to have a Marine Licence. Greenpeace do not hold, nor have they applied for one and as such their activity is potentially illegal.

As unlicensed activity has now taken place today (Thurs 1 Sept), MMO has launched a formal investigation in accordance with its regulatory function

around marine licensing enforcement and is gathering evidence before considering its next response.

South West Deep (East) is a large offshore marine conservation zone (MCZ) covering an area of 4,676 km². It is located in the Western Channel and Celtic Sea where its closest point to land lies 190 km south-west of Cornwall. The depth of the water reaches 750m in some places and the area is home to a wide variety of important species including flatfish such as sole and plaice on the seabed surface, and species of clam, cockles and marine worms. The site also provides habitats and prey species for a range of commercial fish species, as well as marine birds and mammals.

The location is part of a third round of the MMO's work to manage fishing in our offshore MPAs, and the MMO is currently gathering and analysing evidence to inform our management decisions for this site. Any proposed management for this site will be subject to public consultation, and all necessary fisheries management measures for all English offshore MPAs will be in place by the end of 2024.

The fishing vessels that work in these waters are predominantly French and Spanish with only two UK static netters which are vessels that deploy a static wall of netting (either trammel or gill net) in a fixed position. From available records, the type of fishing undertaken is a mix of gill netting, long lining, bottom trawling, pelagic trawling and fly seining.

Therefore, it is our view that to drop boulders in this location will have minimal impact.

The MMO remains open to discussions with Greenpeace to ensure we can achieve our joint goal of marine nature recovery. In fact, MMO met with a range of MPA stakeholders, including Greenpeace, just last week to discuss our work to manage fishing in MPAs.

To assist vessels' safe navigation, MMO understands that there are 18 boulders in the following locations, based on communication from Greenpeace and observation by MMO officers.

The coordinates of each boulder provided by Greenpeace are:

- N 48-59.1284 W 008-46.7469

- N 48-58.9120 W 008-47.9099

- N 48-57.8316 W 008-47.3914

- N 48-57.6745 W 008-48.8258

- N 48-56.9305 W 008-47.9453

- N 48-56.7746 W 008-49.3467
- N 48-55.7351 W 008-48.7217
- N 48-55.8803 W 008-49.9904
- N 48-55.0817 W 008-49.1273
- N 48-54.9064 W 008-50.8714
- N 48-54.2681 W 008-49.7659
- N 48-54.0387 W 008-51.2680
- N 48-53.2421 W 008-50.4760
- N 48-53.1244 W 008-51.8232
- N 48-52.2789 W 008-51.3377
- N 48-52.1629 W 008-52.6250
- N 48-50.8866 W 008-53.5042
- N 48-51.1433 W 008-51.9922

[Foreign criminals and illegal entrants to the UK removed to Albania](#)

Yesterday (Thursday 1 September) the UK government removed a total of 32 foreign criminals and immigration offenders on a charter flight to Albania.

Five individuals who entered the UK illegally were removed on yesterday's flight, including one person who was removed in 24 days after arriving via small boat in August.

Other individuals included a person who was removed 19 days after being caught by immigration officers working in a restaurant having overstayed as a visitor, and another who arrived hidden in a lorry from May.

The 27 foreign national offenders removed had received combined prison sentences of more than 87 years and were convicted of crimes including the supply of Class A drugs, facilitating illegal entry and sexual offences.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

This flight sends a clear message to those who flout our laws and immigration rules that you will be swiftly removed. Anyone who comes to our country in a small boat or other dangerous, illegal means should not expect to stay in the UK for long.

We are working closely with the Albanian government to tackle illegal immigration and have this week agreed our joint operational plans to expedite the removal of Albanians who enter the UK illegally via small boats.

Alongside measures in our Nationality and Borders Act, this will help end the cycle of last-minute claims and appeals that can delay removals. We will stop at nothing to remove those with no right to be here as the public rightly expects.

Foreign offenders returned on yesterday's flight to Albania include:

- an individual sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for intent to supply Class A drugs
- an individual sentenced to over four years' imprisonment for facilitating illegal entry
- an individual sentenced to over seven years' imprisonment for intent to supply Class A drugs

Yesterday's flight is the 45th operated by the Home Office this year as the government tackles illegal migration and abuse of the asylum system.

Since signing our returns agreement with Albania in 2021, we have removed nearly 1,000 Albanian foreign national offenders, including some who crossed the Channel illegally to come to the UK.

The UK has removed 7,638 people via enforced, voluntary and other return types since January 1, including 1,995 foreign national offenders. In August 2022 alone, 220 criminals were removed from the UK on both charter and scheduled flights.

The Nationality and Borders Act will further deter illegal entry into the UK, breaking the business model of people-smuggling networks and speed up the removal of those with no right to be in the UK.

Consultation on annual return 2023 concludes

Government response

The Charity Commission's response to the conclusion of the consultation on annual return 2023



Helen Stephenson, CEO of the Charity Commission said:

I am pleased that a wide range of charities and interested parties have engaged positively with our consultation on the annual return, and would like to thank all those who made time to have their say. The annual return is a vital tool, which helps us gather the data we need to regulate effectively, and which serves to widen public understanding of charities. We are now carefully reviewing the responses, and intend to publish an analysis of the consultation, along with the new annual return questions, later this year.

Background

- The Commission received 460 responses, as of midnight 01/09/2022. 54% of respondents were acting on behalf of their charity and included both trustees and employees; 38% of respondents were trustees sharing their personal view on the consultation topics.
- The consultation ran from 9 June to 1 September 2022.
- Overall, the tone of engagement was positive. Early analysis of the feedback received indicates areas requiring further thought to help ensure the Commission gathers data in a way that is straightforward, and relevant to charities regardless of their purpose and the type of work they do.
- The Commission is now analysing responses, and will publish a consultation response towards the end of the year.

- The Annual Return is an online form that all charities with yearly incomes of £10,000 or more must complete within 10 months of the end of their financial reporting period. Further background about the annual return, and the proposed changes for 2023, can be viewed [on the Commission's website](#).

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[New programme aimed to boost diversity in boardrooms](#)

- Government launches new programme to boost diversity in public boardrooms
- New scheme will spread opportunity across the UK as part of levelling up drive
- Aspiring board members to receive practical boardroom experience, knowledge and skills

Today, (2 September 2022) the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Greg Clark MP, has launched a UK-wide pilot Boardroom Apprentice programme to develop aspiring board members for positions across the public and voluntary sectors.

The programme aims to create a pipeline of more diverse talent to ensure public and voluntary sector boardrooms more closely reflect the communities they serve across the UK.

Candidates will undertake 12 months of board learning, development and placements, arming them with the knowledge and practical experience they need to become board members.

The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Greg Clark MP, said:

Our boardrooms should be open to the best talent available.

I encourage aspiring board members from all backgrounds to apply for this unique opportunity to expand their skills, grow their knowledge and gain invaluable experience.

Today's announcement builds on a successful programme in Northern Ireland that has already seen over 50% of participants appointed to a board position within 12 months post completion.

Born to a Jamaican father and mother from Northern Ireland, David is a class of 2021 participant on the Boardroom Apprentice programme. David has been

disabled since birth and has sought to overcome some of the challenges experienced by persons with disabilities.

David Johnston, Boardroom Apprentice, Community Relations Council, said:

Being part of the Boardroom Apprentice programme as a privilege.

For me the Boardroom Apprentice programme has reinforced the importance of being motivated and committed to enhancing public service delivery. Diversity is in the DNA of the Boardroom Apprentice programme, so apply and be the change that you want to see.

Jo McGinley, from Derry/Londonderry in Northern Ireland, completed the NI Boardroom Apprentice programme in 2020. She applied to the programme because, her family and herself had a huge amount of support from voluntary and public sectors and she wanted to give something back to her local community.

Jo McGinley, Non-Executive Director on the Board of a local charity, said:

My impression was that you only went on to a Board when you retired or when you were senior in an organisation. Boardroom Apprentice fundamentally changed my opinion on that. The programme gives participants, regardless of their background or education; the knowledge, experience, and skills to sit on a Board.

I gained practical experience sitting on a Board, increased my understanding of the role of a Board member and developed a fantastic network of support. So, the advice that I'd give anyone who is thinking of going for the Boardroom Apprentice programme is to do it!

As a result of completing the Boardroom Apprentice programme, Jo is now a Non-Executive Director on the Board of a local charity.

The programme forms part of the government's wider mission to level up the country and strengthen the Union by spreading opportunity and improving diversity of thought, background, experience and geographic location of Board candidates.

We expect to open to apprentice applications in the autumn.