

West Bay ready for winter

Press release

The flood defence scheme at West Bay is ready for whatever winter has to throw at it, despite how different it looks from last year.



West Bay, Dorset, ready for winter

Last year the Environment Agency and Dorset Council completed the West Bay coastal defence improvements project that reduces the risk of flooding from the sea to 260 properties and businesses.

Although the beach was returned to its usual shape after the completion of the defence scheme, levels at East Beach have been dropping slowly for most of this year. This has reduced the width of the beach crest, creating a steep beach front in several places. This is likely to be a result of wind and wave conditions experienced so far this year.

Ron Curtis from the Environment Agency said:

The current condition of the beach is not unique to West Bay, with very low beach levels currently at many other beaches across the south coast.

Even with low beach levels, the flood defence is working exactly how it should be. In fact the current steep beach face actually lowers flood risk as it reduces waves running up and overtopping the beach. However, we know this can make access difficult which is why we plan to re-profile the shape of the beach.

The Environment Agency completed work to reduce the steep front face of the beach in March and July 2020. These works have limited flood defence benefit and are only to improve amenity access to the beach.

The Environment Agency has plans in place and is ready to respond to any

incidents including using machinery to re-profile and maintain the flood defence.

Cllr Ray Bryan, Dorset Council's Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment, said:

As climate change affects our weather and increases the possibility of flooding in the future, it is vital we continue to work with partners to monitor our coastline and take action where necessary to protect Dorset residents and businesses. On behalf of Dorset Council members and officers, I'd like to thank our colleagues at the Environment Agency for their help with these defence improvements. By working together, we can continue to face and overcome these challenges.

The work at West Bay is part of a wider maintenance programme that the Environment Agency completes throughout the year to ensure flood defences are operating as they should be. Works to re-profile beaches across the Dorset coast are planned in the coming weeks and months to prepare for winter.

Notes to editors

- Further flood defence works are planned at West Bay with the final phase of the West Bay coastal defence improvements scheme due to be carried out this winter
- Fluvial improvement works to the River Brit riverbank will provide protection against the river overflowing and flooding the Parkdean Resorts West Bay Holiday Park and West Bay as a whole
- This work to improve the riverbank is a partnership between Dorset Council, the Environment Agency, Parkdean Resorts UK, Dorset Coast Forum and Jacobs Consultants and is planned to start on 30 November 2020 and complete in February 2021.
- For more information on this scheme please visit the [Dorset Coast Forum website](#)
- For any interview requests please contact: Environment Agency: 0800 917 9271, Dorset Council: 01305 858233

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