

Winter ready 2016

This briefing explains what the Environment Agency is doing to get communities ready for winter and how you can support your constituents.

The devastating floods across the north of England in December 2015 saw the wettest month ever recorded in the UK, with record amounts of rainfall and river flows flooding around 17,000 homes and businesses. Since then, the Environment Agency, working closely with local communities, government departments and partners, has taken action to ensure that those affected, as well as the wider public, are better protected against future flood events.

What we are doing to reduce flood risk

There are 5 million people at risk of flooding in England; the Environment Agency works to reduce the risk of flooding to people and properties from rivers and the sea. We are making record levels of investment, spending £2.5 billion on projects over the next 6 years, to reduce flood risk for 300,000 households in England. We are working with local authorities, businesses and communities to build more schemes through partnership funding.

Since last winter, we have:

- **completed over 130 schemes** between January and September 2016, as part of the 6 year capital investment programme, **better protecting over 55,000 homes from flooding**
- **£65 million is being spent** across the country, involving 20,000 inspections and around 650 repair projects, to restore flood defences or upgrade them. **The government has given £250 million** to help local communities repair and recover.
- **provided data and evidence** to government and lead local flood authorities (LLFAs) who have carried out reports into what happened so flood events can be explained to people and steps taken to reduce impacts in the future
- **formed partnerships and published plans to look at the longer-term actions** needed to manage flood risk across the affected catchments in Cumbria and Calderdale
- delivered a **'winter readiness' action plan to ensure we are better placed to fight future floods** – this includes purchasing an additional 32km of temporary flood barriers which will be stored at several key depots across England, as well as extra pumps which have been distributed across the country prior to the winter
- extended our **flood warning service** to more communities and improved the range of digital services on gov.uk to help people take action to minimise the impacts of floods on their lives

This year's flood action campaign

Our 2016 flood action campaign will run between Tuesday 1 November and Friday 11 November. We will use media, social media and local engagement to help raise awareness of flood risk and encourage people, business and communities to take action to prepare for flooding.

With 1 in 6 properties in England at risk of flooding, there's a very real chance that people in your constituency could be affected. Only 38% of people who live in flood risk areas are aware their property is at risk: we need to change this.

We save lives and money by preparing communities for flood events, and warning and informing communities when flooding is forecast. We want to encourage people take the right actions to better protect themselves and their property from the impact of flooding.

In addition, there will be an event at the Houses of Parliament to answer your questions and provide more detailed information about managing flood risk/winter readiness in your area – further details will be provided soon.

How you can support us to help your constituents

We know that constituents often contact their MP with questions or concerns about flooding and flood risk. We want to reassure communities that the Environment Agency is taking action to ensure they are protected this winter, and that they can take action themselves to prepare for an emergency. With your support, we can do this.

If you are contacted by your constituents about flooding and flood risk, please use the information supplied above to outline the work we are carrying out, and pass on the links and numbers below. Put them on your website and use them in your newsletters. There is more information on our website, and materials that you can download for use in your communications and online. Visit www.gov.uk/floodsdestroy.

You can also support our campaign through social media:

- Use our Floods Destroy [email signature](#)
- Add the [#floodaware Twibbon](#) to your profile picture on Twitter and Facebook
- Follow [@EnvAgency](#) and our local Twitter accounts, and like our [Facebook page](#)

Thank you for your support.