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New Floods Minister for Defra

Andrea Leadsom was appointed **Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs** on 14 July 2016. She was elected as Conservative MP for South Northamptonshire in 2010.

George Eustice was appointed **Minister of State** at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 11 May 2015. He was elected as the Conservative MP for Camborne and Redruth in 2010.

Lord Gardiner was appointed **Parliamentary Under Secretary of State** at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 17 July 2016. He is a Conservative member of the House of Lords.

He is the Lords Spokesman for the Department for Environment, Food and



Thérèse Coffey was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 17 July 2016. She was elected the Conservative MP for Suffolk Coastal in May 2010. She is the new Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment and Rural Life Opportunities. **She is the new Floods Minister.**

Her other responsibilities include: natural environment, including biodiversity, the marine environment, and international wildlife trafficking, rural life opportunities, covering rural

Rural Affairs. He is **responsible for all Defra business** in the House of Lords.

More information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs>

childcare, education and skills, and health, water and waterways, air quality, and waste management

Environment Agency Appoints New Executive Directors

The Environment Agency announced on 15 March that John Curtin is the new Executive Director for Flood & Coastal Risk Management and Harvey Bradshaw is the new Executive Director for Environment & Business.

John Curtin and Harvey Bradshaw had been doing the roles on an interim basis. John Curtin was previously the Environment Agency's Director of Incident Management and Harvey Bradshaw was previously the Director of Regulated Industry.

Sir James Bevan, Environment Agency Chief Executive, said: "I am delighted to announce, following a competitive assessment process from an exceptional field, the appointments of John Curtin and Harvey Bradshaw to the Executive Directors' Team. They bring a wealth of expertise and experience to the roles."

John Curtin, Executive Director of Flood & Coastal Risk Management, said: "It's a real privilege to secure this role at such an important time. The events of last winter once again demonstrated the challenges England faces from flooding and I hope to play an important part in facing those challenges."

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/environment-agency-appoints-new-executive-directors>

Natural Flood Management

Natural flood management is an important part of how we manage flood and coastal erosion risk by protecting, restoring and emulating the natural regulating function of catchments, rivers, floodplains and coasts. There are many ways in which flood flows can be slowed and held back. At a local scale, this can involve installing 'leaky dams' in upland streams, or re-planting hedges on farms. At a larger scale, it can involve reinstating seasonally flooded grassland or restoring meandering rivers.

In the right place and at the right scale, natural flood management can help reduce flood and coastal risk, usually in conjunction with more traditional measures. Although the effects will be site specific, work at places like Belford in Northumberland and Pickering in North Yorkshire shows that natural flood management measures can be effective in catchments of up to 10 km² and

in smaller river floods. Recent research suggests that natural flood management may have a role to play in catchments of up to 100km².

There are some practical challenges in developing natural flood management measures. For example, demonstrating the benefits of remote natural flood management measures compared to local engineering approaches such as embankments can be challenging. Successful natural flood management depends on close partnership working with landowners and managers.

There is lots of information on, and examples of, natural flood management. Some good references to start with are the Defra catchment scale pilots [From Source to Sea](#) - Holnicote, Somerset; [Making Space for Water](#) - Derbyshire; [Slowing the Flow at Pickering](#) – Yorkshire, and the summary report [An appraisal of the Defra Multi-Objective Flood Management Projects](#).

For further details, contact: [Duncan Huggett](#)

Severe Floods Highlight Climate Change Challenge for Insurers and EU

As [Flash Floods hits Austria, France and Germany](#) this summer, the threat of extreme weather caused by climate change and the challenges it can pose to EU citizens and insurers were highlighted. The floods in France [alone, killed four and cost millions...](#)

A Software Tool for Rapid Flood Inundation Mapping

The GIS Flood Tool (GFT) was developed by the U.S. Geological Survey with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance to provide a means for production of reconnaissance-level flood inundation mapping for data-sparse and resource-limited areas of the world. [More...](#)

The Sesame Project

The [Sesame project](#) aimed to understand and model the impacts of flooding on the UK's small businesses and the knock-on effects on the wider economy – and to find ways of encouraging businesses to be better prepared in future. One of its outputs is a user website aimed at [small businesses](#) at risk of flooding

Camber Officially Safe from Sea

The [Broomhill Sands scheme](#) on Romney Marsh was officially opened on Friday May 13 by Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency. Lots of people turned out for the ceremony, including Damian Collins, MP for Folkestone and Hythe, and representatives from the local community, the Ministry of Defence, Camber Parish Council, Defend Our Coast, and the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.

Environment Agency Flood Widget

The Environment Agency has developed a new flood widget which can be placed on any website to show flood warnings.

The widget will replace the existing Environment Agency flood widget and has been re-designed to provide either a national (England) view or a county-based view. You can download the new widget at <https://environment.data.gov.uk/flood-widgets>.

The old widget is currently featured on other people's websites. We are contacting those that we know about. If your website features the existing flood widget, you should replace it with the new version. You can choose which design and location you want to feature. The old widget will only continue to work till the end of May 2016. It is important that you update your website with the new widget before June if you want to continue to receive the service.

Contact: [Frazer Rhodes](#), 07833 614286

Flood Preparedness, there is an App for that...

During the recent Texas flooding, the U.S. Geological Survey unveiled [a new tool](#) that gives users real-time water, weather and National Weather Service flood forecast information all in one place. When water levels are rising, it can be hard to quickly get all the information you need about your area, especially when you're not in front of a computer.

Longer Term Flood Risk Information

In July 2016, the Environment Agency will be adding longer term flood risk information to the existing [live flood information service on GOV.UK](#). People will be able to search by postcode to find out the flood risk for an address. Users will then be given relevant actions depending on their risk and can access maps to view the potential extent of flooding. This service has been developed using customer feedback and input and will replace the existing [flood hazard maps on the Environment Agency legacy web pages](#). We will not be adding or changing any of the base flood risk data. We have improved the way we present it based on customer input and user testing. Contact: [Mark Todd](#), 07920 703781

Permitting for Flood Risk Activities



The Flood Defence Consenting (FDC) regime has been incorporated into the Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR).

The move to EPR will bring flood risk activities into a consistent framework with most of the Environment Agency's other regulation. This means that the Environment Agency will focus their regulatory activity –of their own and third party works - according to risk.

The new regime came into effect from on 6 April 2016. Customers can access information about the new regulations, application process and guidance on GOV.UK. A short note outlining the key aspects of the change can be requested from floodriskpermits@environment-agency.gov.uk. In February the Environment Agency also concluded a consultation on charges and received 104 responses. A response document will be published shortly and the final proposals are being agreed with Defra and HMT.

Contact floodriskpermits@environment-agency.gov.uk for more information.

The Rain Barrel Is Only the Beginning of the West's Water Wars

For years now, Coloradans have been [fighting](#) over the seemingly innocuous rain barrel. Environmentally conscious and thrifty residents say they should have the right to catch as much rain as they please, while agricultural interests argue that doing so is tantamount to stealing water from its rightful owners. The same battle has played out throughout the West, but Colorado is the last remaining state where barrels are banned outright—for a few more days, anyway. On April 1, the state legislature [passed a bill](#) to permit residents to catch rain in measured quantities...

Publication of Adapting to Climate Change: Advice for Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Authorities

The Environment Agency has updated the climate change advice to flood and coastal erosion risk management authorities for development and appraisal of flood and coastal erosion risk management projects. The updated version of 'Adapting to Climate Change: Advice to Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Authorities' (2011) has now been published on GOV.UK.

The document has been updated in line with best available scientific evidence to help ensure flood and coastal erosion risk management schemes and plans take into account the most up to date scientific evidence, to plan for long term safety and resilience to flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere. The climate change advice in this update is consistent with the climate change allowances for spatial planning, contained in the 'Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances' on GOV.UK.

The updated advice came into force with immediate effect. However, where schemes or plans are well advanced, the Environment Agency wish to avoid where possible significantly slowing down completion or adding to costs. They will therefore, other than for particularly vulnerable locations or sensitive developments, continue to base our advice on the 2011 allowances where scheme proposals are well advanced.

Contact: [Andrew Eden](#)

At a Cape Cod Landmark, a Strategic Retreat From the Ocean

PROVINCETOWN, Mass. — It is a simple pleasure in a classic summertime locale: Pull a car between the stripes on the parking lot here, a ribbon of asphalt parallel to the water atop a sloped wall in the sand, and look right out over the beach, where one can see Cape Cod Bay meeting the Atlantic Ocean.. [more NYT.](#)

