

Construction of Exmouth tidal defence scheme recommencing in January



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The Environment Agency scheme will reduce flood risk for 1,800 properties, including 1,400 homes and 400 businesses.

Construction will restart in January and is due to finish by the end of 2021.

A team of community flood volunteers will be established to open and close flood gates.

Construction work on the Exmouth tidal defence began in June 2019. The Environment Agency's schedule included a pause in construction to re-open roads and clear visible construction for the busy summer and autumn tourist season.

The Environment Agency and East Devon District Council have now confirmed that work will restart in January 2021 and includes:

Strengthening the lower walkway of the sea wall between Morton.

Crescent west and Temple Steps opposite Alexandra Terrace Junction.

New drainage outfalls through the sea wall.

Reconfiguring Alexandra Terrace Junction.

Highways accommodation works for floodgates and installation of floodgates at Esplanade East (Premier Inn), Esplanade West (the Grove), Alston Terrace and Alexandra Terrace Junction.

Environment Agency Flood Manager, Ben Johnstone said:

I am delighted to confirm that construction of the Exmouth tidal defence scheme will recommence in January and the scheme is

due to be complete in 2021. Climate change is happening now and we expect to see an increase in extreme weather and flood events. The Exmouth tidal defence, and schemes like it, are an important part of how we plan to better protect homes and businesses in Devon and Cornwall from flooding. I would like to thank residents in advance for their understanding and co-operation while we work on this vital scheme for Exmouth.

Cllr Geoff Jung, East Devon District Councillor, Portfolio Holder for Coast Country and Environment said:

I am really pleased to see the final sections to this all-important tidal defence scheme being finished, which will protect the low-lying properties in Exmouth from coastal flooding. This is another important section to the ongoing work East Devon District Council, Devon County Council and the Environment Agency are required to carry out due to the increasing threat of increased storm intensity and sea level rise due to climate change.

The Environment Agency and contractors will work closely with Devon County Council Highways at Alexandra Terrace junction and across the Esplanade on the installation of flood gates. From January sections of the Esplanade Road will be closed with signed diversions in place. A route through for cyclists and pedestrians will be maintained if it is safe to do so.

The Exmouth tidal defence scheme includes flood gates in 26 locations. These specially made gates need to be closed when floods are predicted, to reduce the risk to local homes and businesses. The road based gates will be operated by East Devon District Council. Other gates will be operated by teams of community volunteers.

Community closed gates are used effectively in other towns across Devon, they offer more flexibility, can be opened between tides and opened sooner once the all clear is given. This limits the length of time the gates are shut reducing inconvenience for residents and businesses. The Environment Agency is working with Exmouth Town Council and East Devon District Council, to establish a team of Exmouth community flood gate volunteers.

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