£1.4bn flood investment unleashed to protect homes and businesses

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£830m in funding for flood schemes for 2026/27 to improve protection for tens of thousands of homes and businesses – part of record investment of at least £10.5 billion between 2024-2036.

Tens of thousands of homes and businesses across England will be better protected from the devastating impact of flooding with investment to construct new flood schemes and upgrade existing flood defences, the Environment Agency announced today (Tuesday 17 March).

More than 600 projects will be funded to help better protect tens of thousands of homes and businesses this year – from improved flood barriers and embankments to natural flood management schemes that slow the flow of water before it reaches communities and coastal flood defence projects that reduce the risk of flooding

Together they form part of the largest flood defence programme in English history with at least £10.5 billion invested between 2024 and 2036 to protect homes, businesses, and critical infrastructure from the growing threat of flooding. This is part of a £1.4 billion investment in flood defences in 2026/27.

£260 million will be also allocated to repairing and maintaining Environment Agency flood defences, including those damaged by Storms Goretti and Chandra, ensuring vital protections remain strong when communities need them most. It also marks a decisive break from 14 years of decline in flood asset condition that left too many communities dangerously exposed.

Every £1 invested in flood defences prevents around £8 in economic damage, meaning this investment alone is expected to shield the economy from more than £10 billion in losses.

Floods Minister Emma Hardy said:

> Flooding can turn lives upside down in a matter of hours, destroying homes, shutting down businesses and leaving communities facing months of heartbreak and recovery.
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> This £1.4 billion investment will help protect tens of thousands of homes and businesses across the country and strengthen the defences families rely on when the worst happens.
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> We've already stepped in to stabilise our flood assets after years of decline and this funding goes further, creating thousands of jobs, protecting communities from billions of pounds of damage, and unlocking new homes and businesses in places made safer from flooding.

Caroline Douglass, Environment Agency Executive Director for Flood and Coastal Risk Management, said:

> This investment allows the Environment Agency and our partners to continue our work

needed to protect communities from flooding.

In partnership with local authorities, homes and businesses will benefit from stronger defences with more than 600 schemes being delivered across England.

From major flood barriers and strengthened embankments to natural flood management and coastal defence projects, we're combining engineering and nature-based solutions to reduce flood risk and build long-term resilience for communities across the country.

Across the country, major schemes already underway are helping protect communities from flooding and coastal erosion. This includes:

- A £100 million coastal defence scheme on the south coast between Pevensey Bay and Eastbourne, with more than £8 million invested this year alone, is protecting more than 2,100 homes for the next century.
- The £37 million second phase of the Our City Our River programme in Derby will reduce flood risk to around 1,500 homes and 700 businesses along the River Derwent, safeguarding critical infrastructure including Rolls-Royce Nuclear. The first phase has already protected more than 1,100 homes and 400 businesses.
- A further £5 million will strengthen coastal defences between Holywell and Cooden Beach, protecting thousands of properties from flooding, rising sea levels and stronger storms ahead of the next phase of investment from 2027.
- In Lancashire, the Preston and South Ribble Flood Risk Management Scheme will receive £15.2 million to safeguard around 5,000 homes when complete.

The investment will see more natural flood management used to hold back water in the landscape and lessen wave energy at the coast. This includes measures such as tree planting, re-naturalising rivers, and saltmarsh restoration, helping to strengthen flood resilience while also delivering wider benefits for nature and society.

For example, Ribble Rivers Trust is working with landowners to install leaky barriers – natural wooden structures that slow the flow of water – and restore floodplain wetlands, helping to reduce flood risk to Clitheroe in Lancashire while providing important ecological benefits.

Flooding can cause immediate and severe harm to homes, businesses and communities, making strong defences critical for both families and local economies.

Since 2024, the government has invested £2.65 billion in flood defences, prioritising repairs and maintenance to reverse years of decline, with a further £4.2 billion committed over the next three years to construct new schemes and maintain existing defences.

Over the next decade, a record £7.9 billion capital investment will benefit 840,000 properties – the largest flooding programme in history.

The investment will protect communities across the country from the devastating impacts of climate change, support thousands of skilled jobs across engineering, construction and environmental management, and help unlock new homes and business growth in areas made safer from flooding.

Every £1 invested in flood defences prevents around £8 in economic damage, saving billions of pounds in potential costs to households, businesses and the wider economy. The Environment Agency, working with councils and other local Risk Management Authorities, will deliver the programme across England, scaling up the country's resilience as extreme weather becomes more

frequent.

The announcement comes shortly after the sixth Flood Resilience Taskforce met in Manchester, which brought together government, emergency responders and local partners to assess the impact of recent winter storms and accelerate action to protect communities. The Flood Resilience Taskforce has been working since September 2024 and led to the training over 1,500 emergency responders as well as introducing an improved forecasting service for surface water flooding.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Major schemes

Project Name	Office of National Statistics Region	Ceremonial County	Project Type	Risk Source	Indicative Government Investment 2026/27 (£k)
Bispham Coast Protection scheme	North West	Lancashire	Defence	Coastal Erosion	14,600
Blackpool Beach Nourishment Scheme	North West	Lancashire	Capital Maintenance	Coastal Erosion	17,690
Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Beach Management	East Midlands	Lincolnshire	Defence	Sea Flooding	11,358
Bridgwater Tidal Barrier Flood Defence Scheme	South West	Somerset	Defence	River Flooding	59,293
Derby Flood Risk Management Scheme	East Midlands	Derbyshire	Defence	River Flooding	37,146
Upper Thurne Integrated Drainage Improvements	East of England	Norfolk	Defence	River Flooding	20,344
Wareham Coastal Change - Poole Harbour Habitat Creation	South West	Dorset	Defence	Sea Flooding	12,338
Portsea Island - Flood Cell 1 Southsea Coastal Flood and Erosion Risk Management Scheme	South East	Hampshire	Defence	Sea Flooding	10,318
River Roch-Rochdale & Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme	North West	Greater Manchester	Defence	River Flooding	16,674
Preston and South Ribble Flood Risk Management Scheme	North West	Lancashire	Defence	River Flooding	15,189
River Thames Scheme - Capacity Improvements and Flood Channel	South East	Surrey	Defence	River Flooding	17,047
Kendal Flood Risk Management Scheme	North West	Cumbria	Defence	River Flooding	24,331

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/14bn-flood-investment-unleashed-to-protect-homes-and-businesses