

Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy - Enhancing the Lincolnshire Coast - Beach Management



Frequently asked questions

March 2021

Why are we doing this scheme?

The Lincolnshire coastal flood plain has had a long history of flooding from the sea and many forms of defence are now in place including sand dunes, seawalls, rock/timber structures and beaches. By restoring beach levels lost over the year, the Environment Agency protects its hard sea defences from the impact of waves and tides.

Since 1994, we have nourished the beaches in Lincolnshire, between Mablethorpe and Skegness, with sand to provide a wide defence which reduces the impact of wave action and tides, in combination with the existing hard and soft flood defences.

Without beach nourishment, there would be little sand left on the beaches. The sand plays a vital part in protecting the defences. Without this protection, there would be an increased chance of the defence becoming breached during stormy weather. Large areas of land behind the seawall are at or below sea level and such breaches would be devastating for homes, businesses and agriculture. The sandy beaches not only help to protect and preserve the defences but also provide an ideal attraction for tourists visiting the area.

How does beach nourishment work?

We carry out a survey before works begin to calculate how much sand needs to be replaced following winter storms. A trailing suction hopper dredger heads out to licensed offshore sites in The Wash and collects sand from the sea bed. Twice a day, just before high tide reaches its peak, the dredger moves closer to the shoreline and connects to a steel and rubber pipeline. The HAM316 dredger then pumps the collected sand through a 630m long pipeline onto the beach.

We use heavy machinery to move the sand to where it's needed. This rebuilds the profile of the beach, replacing sand lost to erosion. Increasing the depth of sand helps protect the sea defences from wave-action.

We work around the clock, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week between May and the summer holidays. Through this work, we will replace sand lost to erosion, reducing wave overtopping during storms and protecting the sea defences from being damaged.

Where will we be working?

Following the Coronavirus lockdown last year, mobilisation and site set up started in May with dredging starting at the beginning of June. This year, we will start mobilisation before the Easter holidays and start dredging after the holidays in April. We will make every effort to avoid working during the school holidays subject to any delays. The programme will of course be subject to change due to uncertainties around possible further restrictions coming into force.

The beach will be nourished along the Lincolnshire coast between Saltfleet and Gibraltar Point in the following locations: Ingoldmells, Trunch Lane, Wolla Bank/Chapel Six Marshes, Boygriff, Trusthorpe and Huttoft.

How long will the work last?

The beach nourishment happens every year and takes approximately 6 – 8 weeks depending on the weather conditions.

The works take place 24 hours per day including weekends and any bank holidays.

How are we working around Coronavirus?

Coronavirus is causing concern across the country for everyone, both personally and professionally. Our key priorities are to protect the health, safety and well-being of our own staff, the public and the businesses and partners we work with; to prevent loss of life and serious harm to the environment; and to keep our critical operations running. During Coronavirus, we are continuing to deliver our Flood and Coastal Risk Management projects where it is safe for our teams and delivery partners to do so. We are following the latest guidance from Public Health England regarding safe working on construction sites.

What are we doing to minimise the impact of the works on the public?

We always try to plan the works to take place between Easter and before the start of the summer school holidays in July to avoid the busy high season.

Who are we consulting in relation to the works?

We have informed local Members of Parliament Matt Warman MP (Boston and Skegness), Victoria Atkins MP (Louth and Horncastle) and the Regional Flood & Coastal Committee.

We have consulted with our statutory stakeholders including Natural England and Crown Estates along with our local stakeholders: Marine Management Organisation, Internal Drainage Boards and local Parish Councillors. We are also engaging with the local community, residents and businesses through our webpage <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/lincolnshire-and-northamptonshire/sgp-ibm>, Public Information Unit and newsletters.

What standard of protection does the work provide?

Replacing the sand reduces the risk of waves reaching and overtopping the main sea defences, protecting them from damage and erosion, so they in turn can help protect 20,000 homes and businesses, 24,500 static caravans and 35,000 hectares of land from flooding.

Since sand nourishment began on this stretch of coast in the 1990s, the east coast has experienced tidal surges greater than those seen in 1953. Due to improved defences and annual sand nourishment work we have not witnessed the same flooding impacts.

Where will the sand for the beach nourishment come from?

The HAM316 dredger heads out to licensed offshore sites in The Wash, collects sand from the sea bed and pumps it directly onto the beach.

How long are we closing the public access to the beach?

When work is taking place, sections of the beach will be closed to the public for short periods of time. Please observe beach closure signs, be careful with children, exercise caution with dogs and keep pets on a lead.

Please adhere to the social distancing measures of 2m if you are required to approach or speak to our workers.

For safety reasons, during the works we will cordon off sections of the beach from public access. We will only close the sections of the beach we are working in.

How can I protect myself from flooding?

Sign up to receive free flood warnings

Free and easy to do

Warnings on the go

Make the most of the service and receive warnings by landline, mobile, text and email

Keep loved ones up to date – sign up for them

Be in the know – receive warnings for your holiday home/caravan

To register:

Call Floodline 0345 988 1188 or do it online by visiting **www.gov.uk/flood**

Make a plan

You can help reduce the impact of flooding on your home by completing an **emergency plan** for you and your property.

There are a range of measures you could consider from moving precious photo albums to a higher position, knowing where your electricity/gas/water shut off points are to having an **emergency kit bag** ready containing important documents and essential items.

Get involved!

You can help by simply keeping an eye out for your friends, family and neighbours. Support your community's Emergency Plan by becoming an emergency volunteer – For more information visit www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lincolnshire-prepared

What does the future flood risk management for the Lincolnshire coast look like?

The Environment Agency has been restoring sand levels on the Lincolnshire coast each year since 1994, and, while the work continues to be effective, long-term estimates suggest that the impacts of climate change will mean continuing to use sand alone as a method of managing flood risk will not be sustainable. Therefore, the Environment Agency's strategy for managing coastal flood risk between Saltfleet and Gibraltar Point has been under review for a number of years.

A new strategy has been developed to manage flood risk between Saltfleet and Gibraltar Point for the next 100 years.

More information on the strategy can be found on our Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point strategy – Enhancing the Lincolnshire Coast information page.

How can I find out more about the project?

We will use our Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy Citizen Space information page to keep you up to date with progress. For more information about the Strategy and the Lincolnshire Beach Management scheme follow the link below:

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/lincolnshire-and-northamptonshire/sgp-lbm>

If you have any questions or comments about the project, please contact our Public Liaison Officer **Monica Stonham** on **07534 457348**