

Hundreds of thousands of businesses and homes to benefit from largest flood defence investment programme in history

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The largest flooding programme in history has been announced by government, with a record £7.9 billion committed over ten years to protect hundreds of thousands of homes, small businesses, and vital infrastructure from the growing threat of flooding.

From high-performance flood barriers to nature-based solutions like wetland restoration, the programme will deliver long-term protection for communities and strengthen local economies – delivering on the government’s Plan for Change.

This comes as the government gears up to announcing its landmark Infrastructure Strategy – a targeted, long-term plan to invest in Britain. The Strategy focuses on ensuring every penny of taxpayer money spent delivers real returns for working people, through stronger local economies, better jobs and more resilient communities.

The new flooding programme is proof of that strategy in action. Every £1 spent on flood defences expected to prevent around £8 in economic damage, meaning significant savings for public services, such as the NHS and schools.

The major funding pledge will bolster the government’s mission of accelerating economic growth, by reducing the time and costs businesses face when recovering from floods and empowering them to invest in local areas.

Environment Secretary Steve Reed said:

Protecting citizens is the first duty of any Government. Yet we inherited crumbling flood defences in their worst condition on record – exposing thousands of homes.

Under the Plan for Change, this Government is taking urgent action with the largest flooding programme in our country's history.

We will leave no stone unturned to protect our citizens.

Philip Duffy, chief executive at the Environment Agency, said:

As our changing climate continues to bring more extreme weather to the nation, it's never been more vital to invest in new flood defences and repair our existing assets.

This long-term investment will be welcome news for businesses and homeowners, who have too often faced the destructive nature of flooding. Our priority will continue to be working with the government and local authorities to ensure as many properties are protected as possible.

The investment will also continue the government's plans to protect cities and towns from the devastating impacts of floodings, including from Oxford to Portsmouth and up to Derby and Blackpool.

In the Spending Review, the Government also confirmed that £4.2 billion will be spent on the flooding programme over the next three years (2026/7 to 2028/9), which will be focused on both capital and resources such as building new defences and repairing and maintaining existing ones.

Alongside this, the Government [launched a consultation](#) on new proposals to introduce a simplified, more transparent approach to bid for government funding for flood defences. This will benefit councils that have less resource to commit to the application process and will ensure money is distributed more effectively across the country.