

# Press release: Polperro tidal gate repairs to start next week

The improvements will ensure the continued protection of the popular Cornish village from flooding and coastal erosion.

The tidal gate shelters the inner harbour from waves during storms, helps preserve historic listed quays and reduces flood risk to commercial and residential properties. It also helps provide safe moorings for the fishing fleet and pleasure craft.

The gate was seriously damaged in 2009 and underwent major repairs. Further damage occurred in 2014 affecting the supporting structure. A temporary repair was made that enabled the gate to operate, but further work is needed.

The Environment Agency has appointed NMCN Sustainable Solutions Ltd as principal contractor. The work will be carried out in partnership with Polperro Harbour Trust and South West Water and will continue throughout the summer.

The first phase will be the removal of the tidal gate using a floating crane on a barge. The gate will be taken to Par to be dismantled and any equipment that can be reused will be removed. Contractors will then repair the supports and running equipment and reinforce the hinge before reinstalling the replacement gate.

South West Water will also be working at the harbour carrying out improvements to the sewerage system. By working together and carrying out repairs at the same time the Environment Agency and water company will minimise any disruption. Where possible, equipment will be brought in via barge rather than road to minimise disturbance to the local community.

Sam Armstrong, for the Environment Agency, said:

There will be an increased risk of high water within Polperro harbour while these critical refurbishment works are carried out. We will review our current flood warning service to see if any short term changes are necessary to help warn and inform the local community for the duration of this project. When completed the tidal gate will be fit for a further 30 years.

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## News story: Scottish Secretary welcomes Labour Market Statistics

Latest figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show that Scotland's unemployment rate at 3.3% is the lowest on record. Furthermore, the number of people employed in Scotland is close to the recent record high at 2,688,000. Scotland's employment rate however, at 75.6%, remains below the UK's rate at 76.1%.

Responding to the figures the Scottish Secretary said:

It is great news that unemployment in Scotland is at a record low, coupled with the rise in employment, there is a lot to be positive about.

Scotland's two governments are working together to strengthen our economy and create jobs, with our growth deal programme reaping rewards across the nation. The UK Government's investment in growth deals is now more than £1.35 billion, demonstrating our huge commitment to growing Scotland's job sector and economy.

For the three months to February, Scotland's overall labour market provides a strong and positive picture: employment increased robustly (+17,000); unemployment fell moderately (-8,000) and activity has increased too (+8,000). However, monthly claimant count numbers are worsening over the month of March, as there are 104,900 people in Scotland claiming Jobseeker's Allowance and out-of-work Universal Credit (seasonally adjusted); this is up 2,300 on the month of February (provisional) and 19,900 up on the year before.

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## News story: Home Office allocates £51 million to police forces for increased action on knife crime ahead of Easter weekend

The surge funding for forces worst affected by these crimes will enable them to bolster their operational activities. It will help them fund increased patrols and weapon sweeps, equipment for officers and overtime.

The additional investment comes from the £100 million serious violence fund announced by the government in March as part of its continued efforts to crackdown on violent crime.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Knife crime destroys lives and as Home Secretary I'm determined to do everything in my power to stamp it out.

This funding will help the police forces worst affected by violent crime to up their response, including by increasing the number of officers out on the streets over the Easter weekend.

The police are on the front line in the fight against serious violence and they have our full support.

National Police Chiefs' Council Chair Martin Hewitt said:

The announcement of additional funding for the most affected police forces to tackle violence is welcome.

This will help forces to carry out activity that we know works, such as increasing the number of officers available to carry out targeted patrols in crime hotspots and increase our use of stop and search.

Chief constables in these areas will now consider how best to use their additional resources.

Police tactics alone will not prevent violence however and any solutions must involve government, education, health, social services and communities themselves.

It will be for chief constables to decide how to utilise the additional funding, but the money is intended to be used to support visible policing in hotspot areas. Funding is being allocated to 18 forces in England and Wales, and a full list of forces and the funding they have received will be published in due course.

The Home Office will work closely with the police to monitor and assess the impact of the funding, including improving the quality of data returns on serious violence and knife crime in particular.

Around a third of the serious violence fund will support the setting up of violence reduction units (VRUs) and other preventative activity across the country. VRUs are a multi-agency approach bringing together police, health, local government, and community representatives to tackle violent crime and its underlying causes.

The remaining money will be allocated in due course and will be used to

support forces who see an escalation in violence during the year and to increase capacity in the policing system.

Today's announcement follows a [speech by the Home Secretary](#) on Monday in which he called for a shift in mindset to tackle the spike in knife crime. Sajid Javid called on all parts of government to work together to eradicate violence, building on the government's serious violence strategy and the Prime Minister's serious youth violence summit in Downing Street this month. The summit brought together more than 100 attendees from a diverse range of backgrounds – including young people with experience living in communities impacted by serious violence, law enforcement, the voluntary sector and health and education experts – to explore what more we can do as a whole society to tackle knife crime.

On 1 April, the first day of the summit, the government began a consultation on a new legal duty to support a multi-agency or 'public health' approach to preventing and tackling serious violence.

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## **Press release: Sentence increased in sexual assault case**

Prashant Sawney will now face 3 years imprisonment after referral by the Solicitor General

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The sentence of a man who sexually assaulted a woman while she slept in her own home has been increased after intervention by the Solicitor General, Robert Buckland QC MP.

Prashant Sawney, 32, had been drinking with friends at his home on the evening of his offences. After helping an intoxicated friend back to his home that the friend shared with the victim, Sawney went into the victim's bedroom, climbed into bed with her and sexually assaulted her.

Sawney was originally sentenced to 1 year in prison at Manchester Minshull Street Crown Court. The case was referred to the Solicitor General under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme, and as a result the Court of Appeal has today increased his sentence to 3 years.

Speaking after the hearing, the Solicitor General said:

“Sawney took advantage of an individual while she slept in her own home – a place where she has a right to feel safe and unfortunately, no longer does. I hope that the Court of Appeal’s decision today brings her some comfort.”