

UK one of first countries in Europe to receive Google Flood Alerts

The UK has become one of the first countries in Europe where people will be able to receive flood alerts on their computer, phone or personal device through the Google Public Alerts map.

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Flood warnings issued by the Environment Agency will now appear on Google Search and the [Google Public Alerts](#) map with live alerts becoming visible on personal devices in a matter of seconds once they have been issued.

These flood warnings will also include vital information on steps people can take to keep themselves and their property safe when flooding is expected. This is another important step to help lower the number of people who are affected by the devastating consequences of flooding through early warnings and advice messaging.

The Environment Agency has been working closely with Google for two years to design and implement this service in England. The service has already been rolled out in the USA, South America and parts of Asia to alert residents to environmental emergencies such as earthquakes, wildfires and extreme temperatures. The service has recently also gone live in Germany, where Google have collaborated with the German Met Office (DWD)

The Environment Agency already sends flood warnings and alerts to over 1.4 million properties in England which have signed up to a text, email and automated phone call [service](#).

However, Google Public Alerts will give even greater access and visibility to this key public warning service through tens of millions of personal devices, helping people to stay safe when flooding hits. The service has recently also gone live in Germany where Google have collaborated with the German Met Office.

Flood Warnings

The Environment Agency issues 3 levels of flood warnings: Flood Alert, Flood Warning and Severe

Flood Warning.

- Flood Alert – Prepare. Flooding is possible.
- Flood Warning – Act. Flooding is expected. Immediate action required.
- Severe Flood Warning – Survive. Severe flooding. Danger to life.

People can find out more about what to do in a flood by accessing the Environment Agency's simple Prepare, Act, Survive [plan](#).

John Curtin, Executive Director of Flood and Coastal Risk Management at the Environment Agency said:

"This pioneering service will ensure that our live flood warnings and safety advice reaches even more people when it is most needed, giving UK residents access to the first service of this kind in Europe.

"We are always looking to find innovative ways to give people advance warning of potential flood risk so they can take action to keep themselves and their property safe. We will continue to work closely with Google to explore ways in which we can further develop this fundamental public warning service."

Malte Will from the Social Impact Partnerships team at Google said,

"We are very excited about the collaboration with the UK Environment Agency that will enable users to find authoritative information on severe weather conditions in real time."

In addition to this new service, people can always check their flood risk, sign up for free flood warnings and keep up to date with the latest outlook on the Environment Agency's [Gov.uk page](#), call Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or follow @EnvAgency on [Twitter](#) for the latest flood updates.

Environment Agency flood warnings can still be accessed through gov.uk.

[Prime Minister hails 'world-leading' fusion research at Culham](#)

The visit marked a Government announcement on plans to develop a new fast-track visa route for the brightest and best scientists to continue to move to the UK after EU Exit.

During his visit, the Prime Minister was shown the work UKAEA is doing to harness the huge potential of nuclear fusion as a low-carbon energy source. This included the new MAST Upgrade fusion experiment, which is researching a compact design for future fusion power stations.

He also toured Culham's Materials Research Facility to see its cutting-edge research into materials for nuclear reactors. As well as talking to those

working at the facility, the Prime Minister controlled the manipulators which remotely handle materials samples.

The Prime Minister spoke with some of UKAEA's apprentices about their careers and about the plans for a new £12M apprentice training centre, Oxfordshire Advanced Skills, opening in September at Culham. He then visited UKAEA's robotics centre, RACE, to see how the latest research is helping UK industry compete in the fast-growing robotics sector.

Mr Johnson said afterwards:

It was fantastic to visit Culham Science Centre today and meet the men and women who are helping to invent a sustainable fusion reactor.

The UK is leading the world in this sector, thanks in significant part to the work of the UK Atomic Energy Authority. I'm confident that with the help of the immigration reforms I have announced today, we will continue to do so for many years to come.

Ian Chapman, UKAEA CEO, said:

We were delighted that the Prime Minister chose Culham as the place to make his first science announcement.

Fusion energy's huge potential is well known and the PM reiterated the Government's support for UKAEA's research. We also showed him how the Materials Research Facility and RACE are providing spillover benefits and supporting UK industry in adjacent fields, at the same time as working towards delivering sustainable fusion energy.

RACE Director Rob Buckingham added:

Talking to the PM today I could see he's an enthusiast for science. He wants the UK to be bold – and what could be bolder than taking on the challenge of delivering fusion to address climate change.

Ends

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UK Atomic Energy Authority

The UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) researches fusion energy and related technologies, with the aim of positioning the UK as a leader in sustainable nuclear energy. It oversees Britain's fusion programme, headed by the MAST Upgrade (Mega Amp Spherical Tokamak) experiment. It also hosts the world's largest fusion research facility, JET (Joint European Torus), which it operates for European scientists under a contract with the European Commission. Based at Culham Science Centre near Oxford, UKAEA is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

More information: www.gov.uk/ukaea Twitter: @UKAEAofficial

Fusion energy research

Fusion research aims to copy the process which powers the Sun for a new large-scale source of clean energy here on Earth. When light atomic nuclei fuse together to form heavier ones, a large amount of energy is released. To do this, fuel is heated to extreme temperatures, hotter than the centre of the Sun, forming a plasma in which fusion reactions take place. A commercial power station will use the energy produced by fusion reactions to generate electricity.

Nuclear fusion has huge potential as a long-term energy source that is environmentally responsible (with no carbon emissions) and inherently safe, with abundant and widespread fuel resources (the raw materials are found in seawater and the Earth's crust).

Researchers at Culham are developing a type of fusion reactor known as a 'tokamak' – a magnetic chamber in which plasma is heated and controlled. The research is focused on preparing for the international tokamak experiment ITER, now being built in southern France. ITER – due to start up in 2025 – is designed to show that fusion can work on the scale of a powerplant, and if successful should lead to electricity from fusion being on the grid by 2050.

Fusion research at Culham is funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council ([EPSRC](http://www.ukri.org/EPSC)) and by the European Union under the EURATOM treaty.

[Clothes designed to grow as children age could mean savings for parents while cutting waste](#)

- Businesses developing pioneering products to fight plastic pollution and clean up our oceans to receive funding boost

- projects across the UK, from Bath to Edinburgh and London to Yorkshire, are being backed by the government / Sky Ocean Ventures partnership
- green economy already growing faster than other sectors with green jobs expected to grow up to 2 million by 2030

Innovative businesses creating green alternatives to plastic bottles, cosmetic beads and synthetic materials are being backed by new funding from the government and Sky.

10 projects have been given a funding boost from the government and Sky Ocean Ventures – Sky's impact investment fund – to find fast and future-proof solutions to the ocean plastics crisis.

Bath-based company Naturbeads is developing a biodegradable alternative to microscopic plastic beads found in cosmetics including exfoliators and toothpastes. Their work with the University of Bath will tackle the 30,000 tonnes of micro plastics from consumer products that end up in our oceans and are ingested by sea creatures.

Meanwhile, London company Petit-Pli have created expanding clothes that grow with the wearer, inspired by satellite folding structures and origami. They hope to diversify from children's' clothes to maternity wear using the cash boost.

Business Secretary Andrea Leadsom said:

Trailblazing UK businesses are giving us all the choice to buy more sustainable clothing, packaging and cosmetics that are better for our environment.

Consumers have shown they are keen for green and we're committed to championing those innovative companies that lead the way in this, protecting the planet while at the same time opening up huge opportunities for the UK economy.

Jeremy Darroch, Sky's Group Chief Executive, said:

These 10 innovative investments can create meaningful change and help the world turn off the plastics tap. We look forward to supporting the businesses and their breakthrough ideas.

Backing for Naturbeads follows the government's success in banning microbeads from cosmetic products last year, and its plans to end the sale of plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds from April 2020. Naturbeads joins a further 9 projects receiving funding to develop innovations to challenge single-use plastics and encourage the modern consumer to reuse and recycle products.

Successful projects to help reduce waste and pollution also include:

- flexible cardboard packaging for surfboards and bottles, created by Cornwall-based surfers Flexi Hex after noticing plastic waste on their local beaches
- a carbon neutral water bottle, made from 100% natural materials, that can biodegrade completely in a matter of months – from Edinburgh-based Choose Water
- West-Yorkshire based textile innovators HD Wool, who are replacing synthetic fleeces with the next generation of sustainable wool products

Professor Duncan Wingham, Executive Chair of NERC – the Natural Environment Research Council for UK Research and Innovation, said:

Plastic pollution is a global crisis that affects our oceans and our land.

This partnership with Sky Ocean Ventures, along with other programmes, will help establish the UK as a leading innovator in smart and sustainable plastic packaging solutions, delivering cleaner growth across the supply chain, with a dramatic reduction in plastic waste entering the environment by 2025.

Announcement of new Deputy Police Commissioner in Turks and Caicos

My purpose today is to announce the appointment of a new Deputy Commissioner of Police and to explain to you the choice I've made. I will deal with that important matter in a few moments. Before that I intend to put that decision in the context of how I see crime on the island, and say something about the future openness that needs to exist between the public and the Police in terms of two way communication.

But before saying anything, I want to pay tribute to the officers in our Police Force. In the last three weeks, I've spent more time with them, than I have spent with my own team. I'm only just starting to get to know them but I like what I see. I note that the police come in for occasional criticism, from some quarter's sustained criticism. That criticism will probably pause the moment it is you who dials 911. These are the people that we rely on to move rapidly towards trouble when they are called on to do so, not run from it. Our police are this country's first responders and we are lucky to have men and women prepared to serve in this way.

I've just completed a visit to Grand Turk Police Station where I've been briefed on crime here in Grand Turk, and their response to it, by police officers serving in this, the nation's capital.

Crime is a headline issue at present and so it would be remiss of me to make a statement at a police station, announcing the appointment of a new Deputy Commissioner of Police, without touching upon this issue. In a few moments I'm going to provide a telephone number, if you are in anyway concerned about crime I'd ask that you write it down. Have a pen and paper, or your phone, to hand. This isn't just about me informing you, this is about how you can help.

In talking about crime, however, I don't have to be at a police station. I could be anywhere in these islands – a church – a home – a shop – a school – hanging out under a tree – at a basketball court – in the bush – in one of the best restaurants on the island. Anywhere.

Crime occurs when members of a society choose to reject the norms that a society has decided it needs, for the good of all. Those norms are called 'the law'. Laws provide peace and stability. Laws provide prosperity and security. Laws allow us to live the good life rather than a life lived in physical fear, a life lived in permanent mutual suspicion fearing that the strongest will take all.

The answer to crime therefore does not come from the police, or if it comes from the police, it comes as a last resort. The first responsibility of a society is not to build a police force to detect and arrest wrong-doing. The first role of society is to generate a climate where all who live within that society believe they have a sufficient stake in it that short-term possible profit, gained from wrong-doing, is overwhelmingly displaced by a belief that their stake is in the collective security, and humanity, that the law provides for and demands.

A society has to be healthy and inclusive if it is to capture its citizen's loyalty. A person must believe they are living in a society worth embracing and committing to rather than exploiting and corrupting. The belief in the collective good must trump individual desire, and it has to be bolstered by a society that generates personal integrity, from the earliest age, so that the citizen does what is right when no one is looking rather than hiding their true self through apparent virtuousness or engaging charm.

If you find yourself saying the police needs to do more you have moved to the very end of the conversation you need to have, without tackling your own personal agency or the agency of your community in the issue. If the police needs to do more, the society that it serves needs to be healthier.

Two points flow from this. The first is simply a phone number – write it down – +1-800-8477. I've already posted what I'm about to say on my Instagram account @governortci. It's not just the police's job to detect and prosecute, it's your job to help focus them and report, not the fact that a crime has been committed or you need help – that's 911 – but information that will stop the crime from ever occurring.

There are good people out there, there may even be great people who some think of as 'bad' – through prejudice – but who do have a strong internal moral compass. Who do have integrity. And who do know something. You can be courageous, you can demonstrate personal integrity – but you can also be safe

– if you report what you know to Crime-Stoppers on that number +1-800-8477.

They won't ask your name. Everything is deliberately anonymous; much investment has gone into it and it all fails if it fails one caller, once. The call is taken in Miami. There is no call identification. It cannot be traced. The information can't be too small, it might just provide a start point to allow a thorough investigation that will lead to an arrest or a gun being taken off the street. You can provide a perfect example of your own integrity, your own quiet commitment to this community, by making that call. Third time: the number is +1-800-8477.

My second point is about information running in two ways, from the public to the police and the police to the public. I've covered the first but what about the second. While, of course, I do not welcome any apparent increase in violent crime, I do welcome the fact that I have already seen we are smart enough as a country, not least in conversations I have heard in our churches, and in our press, that rather than just taking the easy course of blaming the criminal or the police, you are also questioning the role we can all play in the reduction of crime through the strengthening of our society.

But in looking at the police's response to crime, and to have an intelligent national conversation, you do need to know facts. Headlines can mislead, but we have responsible journalists serving us who I'm sure can help facilitate smart, rather than ill informed, conversations. In a democracy the press not only has a right, it has a duty, to ask tough questions – preferably questions that elicit facts rather than opinions – and the police have an interest in having an educated community understanding the challenges they face.

It's therefore good timing that the new Commissioner of Police, who I swore in last week, is committed, in terms of engaging the public, to be generous in terms of explaining what's happening with regard to crime underpinning his narrative with data.

Commissioner Botting holds his first press conference on Wednesday. From my conversations with him, much as I believe in 'Governing in the sunlight' – so people can draw their own conclusions about my Governorship based on fact – he too believes in 'Policing in the sunlight'. In terms of openness my expectation is that we are cut from the same cloth, although it is worth saying the Commissioner has a duty to protect ongoing operational equities, and also matters that are subjudacy – something I'm sure the press will understand. I'm looking forward to the two of us being a very strong team that communicates well on this issue.

But today is not about the Commissioner, or our relationship, or indeed our approach to openness. It is all about announcing the appointment of a Deputy Commissioner. I spoke to the successful candidate at midday today, over the phone, to inform him of my decision.

The title 'Deputy Commissioner' doesn't in some ways do justice to the extraordinary role this individual will inherit. I rather suspect that Commissioner Botting, while delighted to receive his promotion, regrets

losing the role he has been promoted out of.

This role is, if you like, the Operational Command job in the police force. While the Commissioner must look up and out, and take responsibility for the Forces medium and long term future, and good governance across all functions, it's the Deputy Commissioner who runs the daily operations of the force making those decisions that impact right here, and right now, on the safety of our citizens. If you are operational by nature this is the dream job. This is the appointment that, when done well, is the conductor of an operational orchestra.

As Governor, it's therefore an extremely important appointment for me to get right. The best job I can do for the Islands is to place the best person I can find into the role. I certainly need the chemistry between the Commissioner and his Deputy to be first class, with a complimentary skill set that makes this policing top team better than the sum of its parts.

So I've given great thought to this appointment.

It has, I think, been entirely appropriate for others to lobby publicly that this role should go to a local officer. I can see all the reasons why that makes sense, not least in the Turks and Caicos Islands national story.

You will also appreciate that with my focus on crime, border protection and human trafficking, and with the way these issues are at the top, or near the top, of the public agenda, my first priority is to appoint the very best man or woman I can find to the job. I am a strong believer in meritocracy, I dislike any sense of entitlement, and if there is a competition for a job, the best candidate will always, under my watch, secure the role.

This dilemma has not proved as hard as some might have thought. I'm delighted to be able to announce that I can square this particular circle painlessly. The interview panel, chaired by the new Commissioner, interviewed a strong mix of local and international candidates and they have recommended to me the appointment of Rodney Adams, a TCI Islander and veteran police officer, to be the next Deputy of the force.

The Islands will have, as the person making the daily operational decisions about policing, a man who came from these islands. I think in Trevor, and Rodney, I and the islands get the best of both worlds.

While it is my intention to make this appointment 'substantive', for the moment I intend the rank to be 'acting'. While I understand it was not a popular comment, I do believe it was a wise comment, made by the outgoing Commissioner that our officers need as much international exposure – or at least as much cross-government exposure – as they can get if they are to really deliver in the top jobs. I also agree with the present Commissioner, who recommended Mr Adams, that we have not done well in investing in our officers to give them this opportunity.

So our new Deputy Commissioner will be invested in, on the prestigious Police Command Course, run in the UK. This course is mandatory for UK police

officers advancement to the highest ranks. It's a tough course, but it's also a course that develops an officer and will give Mr Adams tremendous exposure to national policing and national security leadership – including exposure at Ministerial level – in the UK.

Mr Adams's permanent appointment will be subject to passing that course. In the interim it will give me the opportunity – one I much prefer when making senior appointments – to observe Mr Adams deliver against some of the biggest challenges these islands face, in the field, rather than just describing how he will tackle them in the interview room. I wouldn't be appointing him today if I didn't think he will not only relish the challenge, but also deliver above expectation. I briefed the Premier on this course of action on Friday, and she is delighted.

I conclude with my congratulations to Rodney Adams a man who has secured this opportunity to further serve on merit, and merit alone, who will be confirmed by being tested in both the role here in TCI, as well as against the best Britain has in the UK, while also recognising that our new Commissioner of Police has the Deputy he wants and the one we both believe the country needs.

And may God bless the Turks and Caicos Islands.