

Press release: Calstock flood defence improvements

The existing Calstock flood embankment was improved in the 1980s following a significant flood in the village. It still plays an important role in reducing flood risk in Calstock, but requires periodic repairs.

In 2012/13 the Environment Agency carried out emergency work on just over 100 metres of the embankment. This work incorporated less than 10% of the total embankment length, but cost in excess of £300,000. Maintaining the current embankment in its existing location on a 'patch and repair basis' is not sustainable.

The Environment Agency is now looking at ways to continue to manage flood risk in the village. Likely options will include moving the existing embankment inland away from the river where it will be under less pressure from erosion.

Project manager Dan Boswell said:

It's our priority to do everything we can to protect people from flooding.

Unfortunately the current embankment is no longer viable so we have to look at other options to maintain the current level of flood protection for Calstock. One of the options involves moving the existing embankment inland.

In addition to flood risk management benefits, moving the embankment would enable the creation of reed-bed habitat attracting additional wildlife. It is important to note that we are looking at all options which may be available to us. We will be talking to the community about these before final decisions are made.

The Environment Agency is looking to work with local partners to ensure that people can still use this area recreationally. Currently the Environment Agency has granted a permissive footpath across the embankment and they are keen that the footpath should continue in some form, but this will require the collaboration of local partners.

Over the next few months the Environment Agency's consultants will be carrying out ground investigations and topographic surveys to help them develop suitable options. When they have developed these the Environment Agency will arrange a drop-in session in Calstock for the community to come along and view and comment on proposals. This is likely to take place in the autumn.

The Environment Agency is spending more than £2.5 billion to build flood

schemes around the country, which will better protect 300,000 homes by 2021.

[Press release: Special delivery for Kielder Salmon Centre](#)

Two giant new fish tanks have been delivered to the hatchery at the Environment Agency's Kielder Salmon Centre.

The fibre glass tanks, which measure 9 metres across by 1.5 metres deep, weigh more than 500kg and can hold 50,000 litres of water each, will be the final stop for thousands of young salmon before they are released into tributaries of the River Tyne.

The old tanks had been in use since the hatchery opened in 1980, and were at risk of failing and flooding the nearby office and visitor centre.



Young salmon will be 'stronger and fitter'

Richard Bond, manager of Kielder Salmon Centre, said:

It was a relief to see the new tanks arrive safely, and our young

salmon will be stronger and fitter in future because of the improved conditions we can now provide.

During the summer and autumn months up to 150,000 small fish aged between four to eight months will be stored in each tank.

There are only two manufacturers of tanks this size in the UK, so they had to be brought on a long road trip from Aberdeen down to the salmon centre.



Specialist fitters were given the job of installing the £200,000 tanks on to concrete bases, specially strengthened to support the eventual 128 tonne weight of the tanks when filled.

The new concrete slab was laid with space and water supplies for five smaller tanks which it's hoped will be installed in future as the work of the hatchery expands.

Kielder Salmon Centre is run by the Environment Agency and is open to visitors every day from April to September from 10am until 4pm. Visitors can take a self-guided tour to discover some incredible facts about the wild salmon, endangered freshwater mussels which are also looked after at the hatchery, and other interesting species in their local environment.

Press release: North East men fined for illegal fishing

The Environment Agency is reminding anglers of the importance of having a rod licence after two men were fined for fishing illegally in separate offences.

They were caught during targeted patrols on the River Derwent in Gateshead by Environment Agency Fisheries Enforcement Officers

On 28 March this year, Kyle Taylor-Allen, 30, of The Crescent, Dunston, Gateshead, was found coarse fishing at Swalwell without a licence.

He was also fishing during the close season, which is prohibited, and using illegal bait.

He was fined a total of £770, ordered to pay costs of £127 and a victim surcharge of £30.

On 13 April this year, Peter Blackett, 53, of Waterbeach Place, Newcastle, was found fishing without a licence at Rowlands Gill.

He was also fishing during close season, using an illegal bait and he had taken and killed a fish while fishing without the landowner's permission, an offence under the Theft Act.

The offences were all proved in absence at Gateshead Magistrates' Court on 3 July.

'It's vital anglers abide by the law'

Fisheries Enforcement Officer David Shears said: "It's vital that anglers abide by the law to protect the future of the sport and the quality of our rivers and fisheries.

"We work closely with our partners at the police, angling clubs and the Angling Trust to identify where illegal fishing might be taking place.

"Our fisheries enforcement officers work hard to target those people flouting the law and we won't hesitate to take action.

"Illegal fishing can be more costly than you think and hopefully this will act as a deterrent for any angler thinking of cheating the system."

The close season started on 15 March and runs for three months, preventing fishing for coarse fish to give the fish a chance to breed.

All income from rod licence sales is used to fund Environment Agency work to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries, including improving habitats for fish and facilities for anglers, tackling illegal fishing and working with partners to encourage people to give fishing a go.

Buying a rod licence is quick and easy – you can [buy one online on the gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk/buy-a-rod-licence)

The Environment Agency urges anyone to report illegal fishing by calling 0800 80 70 60.

Press release: Demolition company fined for illegal waste site

A County Durham demolition company has been ordered to pay £6,180.46 after pleading guilty to breaking environmental laws.

PTS Demolition and Dismantling Ltd, which operates out of Hackworth Industrial Estate, Shildon, Bishop Auckland, was prosecuted for operating a waste transfer station without a permit at Newton Aycliffe Magistrates' Court on 5 July 2017. The court ruled it was a deliberate offence and ordered the firm to pay a fine of £3,500 and £2,680.46 costs.

The charges brought by the Environment Agency relate to the company's attempts to reduce costs by starting its own waste transfer station.

An Environment Officer and a colleague from Durham County Council visited the site in July 2014 to provide advice on how to apply for an environmental permit and planning permission to do this.

In 2015, Environment Officers visited a further five times to give additional advice and guidance. At the same time they recorded evidence that the company was operating a waste transfer station illegally, including storing 100 tonnes of crushed aggregate, 15 skips full of mixed waste and a store of fire extinguishers.

In February 2016, PTS Demolition submitted a permit application, which was returned for failing to include the application fee. Following a further visit by Environment Officers to give more advice, the company submitted another application. This was also returned for failing to include a Fire Prevention Plan (FPP). Again, officers provided advice on how to complete an FPP.

Officers returned to the site on 11 August 2016. The levels of waste had reduced but some skips of mixed waste remained, along with a number of wooden railway sleepers and a skip containing glass.

Company given 'every possible opportunity' to comply

Jamie Fletcher, Environment Agency Area Environment Manager, said:

The regulations exist to protect the environment, legitimate business and local communities from the risk of harm. Every business dealing in waste, whether they produce, carry, sort, recycle, ship or dispose of it, has a responsibility to fully understand and comply with environmental laws.

We gave PTS Demolition every possible opportunity and extensive support to comply. However, not only did they store waste illegally, the company repeatedly ignored advice and failed to shut down operations.

Those that repeatedly fail to comply with regulations pose a heightened risk to the environment and undermine legitimate business. In such circumstances we will have no hesitation prosecuting to ensure that waste crime doesn't pay.

Press release: Official opening of Croston Flood Risk Management Scheme

The Croston Flood Risk Management Scheme, developed by the Environment Agency in partnership with Chorley Council, Lancashire County Council and United Utilities, and in collaboration with the Lower Yarrow Flood Action Group, will benefit residents who flooded on Boxing Day 2015, when 344 properties were affected. In 2012, 30 properties in Croston village flooded.

The scheme, which includes an upstream flood storage area on the River Yarrow and 600m earth embankment is capable of retaining up to 1.3 million m³ of water – equivalent to 520 Olympic size swimming pools.

Chair of the Environment Agency, Emma Howard Boyd cut the ribbon on the gate leading to the new embankment and was shown around the new scheme by Cumbria and Lancashire Area Director of the Environment Agency, Keith Ashcroft.

The opening also included a presentation by Dave Massam from the Lower Yarrow Flood Action Group and Neil Forsythe from the Environment Agency.

The scheme received £5.4 million of Government Grant in Aid funding, including £2.1 million from the Government's Project of Acceleration and Growth (PAG) programme launched after the summer floods in 2012. Chorley Council contributed £1 million, Lancashire County Council £181,000 and £667,000 was received from local levy to finance the scheme.

While the risk is reduced, people living in this and other flood risk area should [sign up for flood warnings](#) and be prepared for flooding.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

In February 2016 I saw the devastating impact of the flooding in Croston and I am so impressed by the village's recovery.

I want to celebrate the partnership between the community, the Environment Agency, the councils and United Utilities, who created the Croston Flood Risk Management Scheme together. Everyone has a part to play in protecting themselves from the risk of flooding, but it is by listening to each other and working in partnership that we get the best results.

Cumbria and Lancashire Area Director of the Environment Agency, Keith Ashcroft, said:

The village of Croston has a history of flooding, with 344 properties affected in the Boxing Day 2015 flood, 20 in 2012 and 205 in 1987 from the River Yarrow. This scheme allows us to control the flow of the River Yarrow and store water reducing flows downstream.

We have kept the community updated throughout the construction of the scheme, and the Lower Yarrow Flood Action Group was heavily involved throughout the project, including helping us to work with the whole community, who were able to walk along the embankment as part of the opening event.