

## [Press release: Environment Agency warns of coastal flooding in Dorset](#)

The Environment Agency is urging people to remain vigilant to potential coastal flooding as high winds and rain is forecast to hit the Dorset coast on Saturday.

Current forecasts show a low pressure storm arriving on Saturday 21 October which, combined with close-to-spring tides, means flood warnings are likely to be issued along the Dorset coast.

Areas likely to be impacted include West Bay, Lyme Regis, Poole Harbour, Chiswell, Preston Beach and Christchurch.

Rachel Jacobs of the Environment Agency said:

We urge people to take care on the Dorset coast this weekend. Strong winds pose a risk of waves overtopping defences and whilst coastal storms can look dramatic, we strongly advise against “wave watching” or taking “storm selfies”.

Please take note of road closures and don't attempt to walk or drive through flood water. Just 30cm of flowing water can move a car and driving through water can also create waves.

Environment Agency teams have been working around the clock to check flood defences and have been taking precautionary measures such as closing tidal gates. Teams will continue to be out this weekend and are ready to respond to flooding.

The Environment Agency continue to monitor the situation and will review plans as and when the forecast changes.

Residents and businesses are encouraged to [sign up to flood warnings](#) on the Environment Agency website. People can also call Floodline on 0345 988 1188. Once registered, if a flood warning is issued, they will receive an automatic message by telephone, SMS text message, email and/or fax.

Find out [how to prepare for flooding and if your home is at risk](#).

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## [Press release: Xylella fastidiosa: UK](#)

## secures added EU protections

The European Commission's Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (SCOPAFF) has approved (Thursday 19 October) increased protections against *Xylella fastidiosa*. The plant disease has devastated olive plantations in southern Italy and is killing plants and trees in areas across Europe.

Last month the Environment Secretary Michael Gove [wrote to the European Commission](#) stressing that if EU protections were not increased, we would consider our own national measures, which could include a suspension of high risk imports. The disease, which could be deadly to our oak trees, would be difficult to eradicate if it was to arrive, which is why the UK has pushed hard for these increased protections to help keep it out.

The new measures incorporate key proposals from the UK and include strengthened movement requirements on high risk plants and require quicker responses to potential findings of the disease.

Following the vote Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

Xylella poses a serious threat to our plants, trees and horticulture sector and as I made clear to Commissioner Andriukaitis last month, we need to see robust action by the EU against the disease.

I am therefore pleased this has been taken forward. These increased protections will add to our own efforts to protect our horticulture sector and our famous ancient oaks which have stood tall and proud for centuries as a national symbol of strength and survival.

While the measures we pressed for will come into force, we will keep the risk level under continuous review to determine if further measures are needed to keep the disease out of the UK.

When we leave the EU we will have an opportunity to examine all our national biosecurity measures on plant imports to ensure they are as robust as possible and we are doing everything we can to protect the UK against diseases like Xylella.

The new measures will take effect around the end of November, following a formal adoption process in the European Commission and will supplement measures already in place in the UK which require certain plants to be notified to the plant health authorities when they are brought into the country. This enables the Animal and Plant Health Agency to carry out targeted inspections as well as surveillance for disease in the wider environment.

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## **Scientific ocean drilling expedition explores continental rift development in Greece**

The Corinth Rift, located in the Gulf of Corinth in Central Greece is one of the most seismically active areas in Europe. It is here that one of the Earth's tectonic plates is being ripped apart causing geological hazards including earthquakes. This rifting process is the focus of the International Ocean Discovery Program (IODP) Expedition 381 "Corinth Active Rift Development".

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## **Press release: River restoration project wins national conservation award**

A partnership project between the Environment Agency and the Box Moor Trust in Hemel Hempstead has been recognised with a national award.

The project has transformed a 1 kilometre stretch of the River Bulbourne in Hemel Hempstead from a straight, wide and silty river into a meandering chalk stream, which is a globally rare habitat.

The 'Bringing Back the Bulbourne' project scooped the 'best medium scale' award at The Wild Trout Trust Conservation Awards held at the Savile Club in London. The awards seek to recognise and encourage excellence in habitat management and conservation and celebrate effort, ingenuity and imagination.

Nancy Baume from the Environment Agency said:

We are delighted that our work to restore the River Bulbourne has been recognised by the Wild Trout Trust. This project represents years of hard work for us and our partners.

The Environment Agency is committed to working with partners to protect and restore our chalk streams for the benefit of wildlife so future generations are able to enjoy these unique resources.

The £60,000 project has breathed new life into the river. The natural meander of the river has now been restored, creating new habitats for plants and wildlife. Removing a weir has allowed fish to move along the river, while cutting back trees has allowed more light to reach the river.



An aerial photo showing the straight river before the project works started.



An aerial photo showing the restored river after the project works.

Volunteers have installed woody habitat features along the channel which create refuge areas for fish and other wildlife.

Other works include installing fencing to reduce bank erosion from livestock, creation of kingfisher banks to increase nesting opportunities, and improving ford crossing points across the river. The project has been designed to incorporate natural flood management techniques, and the final phase of the project, to create wetland scrapes, will take place later this year.

People walking through the moors can now appreciate a rare and iconic chalk stream with all of the rich diversity of wildlife that it supports.

The River Bulbourne is an example of a chalk stream, which is a watercourse that flows from chalk-fed groundwater. Chalk streams are a very rare habitat globally, with more than 85% of all the chalk streams in the world found in England.

David Kirk the Chairman of the The Box Moor Trust said:

The Box Moor Trust would like to thank all of those involved at the Environment Agency, in particular Nancy Baume and Jack Herriot, for all of their hard work and dedication over the last few years. The Trust would also like to thank Allen Beechey of the Chilterns Chalk Stream Project for his help and our dedicated team of volunteers whose tireless work has been integral to the success of the project.

This project is part of a wider programme of works which the Environment Agency are working on, alongside partners, to deliver improvements to chalk streams in the Hertfordshire and North London area. These works include river restoration improvements and abstraction reductions.

For more information contact: [HNLenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:HNLenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk).

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