

Press release: School children flood in for new defences tour

Engineers went back to school to give youngsters in Teesside a tour of new multi-million pound flood defences which protect their community from flooding.

Pupils at High Clarence Primary School were shown around the state-of-the-art £4.5million flood defences at Port Clarence which reduce the risk of flooding from the River Tees.

And they saw first-hand the £11million scheme, currently under construction, which reduces the risk of flooding from Greatham Creek and will create 30 hectares of new habitat for wildlife to thrive.

Together the projects protect 350 homes and 32 businesses at Port Clarence from flooding.

Pupils travelled on the Transporter Bridge across the River Tees to get a bird's eye view of the flood defences, while at Greatham they got to see workers in action building new flood embankments – and even got to see the popular seals!

The event, which took place last week (Friday, 8 June), also gave local residents the opportunity to find out more about the scheme, while MP Alex Cunningham was also given an insight into how the defences work to protect his constituency.



Great project with innovative features

Phil Marshall, the Environment Agency's Senior Advisor on the project, said:

It's really important the community understands how the flood defences at Port Clarence work together with the scheme at Greatham Creek to reduce their risk of flooding.

It's a great project with lots of innovative features and the added benefit of creating extra habitat for wildlife in a vital conservation area.

Our future generations will play an important role in ensuring our communities are resilient as we deal with the impacts of climate change and it was great to show the school pupils this great engineering and habitat creation project. Hopefully it will inspire them to want to make a difference!

The first phase of the project was completed in December 2015 and saw new flood defences built in Port Clarence, consisting of a mixture of earth embankments, flood walls, and a raised section of the road on the approach to the Transporter Bridge.

In addition, the Environment Agency worked together with local business Wilton Engineering to install removable steel flood defences along the River Tees. This improves flood protection while still allowing Wilton to operate

from the river.

Work started on the second phase in summer 2017 and involves raising existing flood embankments along Greatham Creek.



Managed realignment

There is also a managed realignment of part of the current flood defences. This means a new embankment to the north of the RSPB Saltholme Nature Reserve has been built around a larger area of land, and then the existing flood embankment will be breached later this year.

This results in the creation of around 30 hectares of intertidal habitat to the north of the nature reserve. It's a popular area frequented by seals, and a variety of bird species including shelduck, knot and redshank.

The Environment Agency is working with local businesses in the area, with SABIC UK providing funding towards the scheme and INOVYN ChlorVinyls providing some of their land for the additional habitat creation. Phil added:

Work is progressing well and is expected to be completed this autumn. The local businesses in the area know only too well how devastating it is to be flooded having been affected by the tidal surge in December 2013.

By working together with industry we're vastly improving existing defences to protect residents and businesses and reduce the risk of

flooding now and into the future as sea levels start to rise. This has been quite a unique partnership and I can't emphasise enough the benefits this will bring for the area.



The Environment Agency has also been working closely with partners at RSPB and Natural England to design and build a scheme which maximises benefits for the internationally designated habitat, and to ensure disruption to wildlife and visitors to the local area is kept to a minimum.

Contractors BAM Nuttall and Mott MacDonald Joint Venture (BMMJV), are carrying out the work on behalf of the Environment Agency.

If you would like to know more about your risk of flooding and how to be prepared call Floodline on 0345 988 1188, or visit [the Floods Destroy website](#)

[News story: Media intelligence merger could raise competition concerns](#)

Nielsen and Ebiquity gather, collate and analyse information on the advertising activity of companies.

Both companies are the only suppliers of this intelligence across a broad range of UK media. While they face some competition from firms offering this service for digital advertising, no firm competes with Nielsen and Ebiquity for detailed intelligence across all UK media channels.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) therefore found competition may be significantly reduced if the merger went ahead as planned.

The CMA also found that the companies are each other's closest competitor in the supply of intelligence on international advertising to UK customers, and that they face only limited competition from other suppliers for this service.

Nielsen and Ebiquity have until 20 June to offer a solution to the competition concerns raised by the CMA, otherwise it will go ahead with a more in-depth (phase 2) investigation.

Press release: New start-up visa route announced by the Home Secretary

The new route, announced during London Tech Week, will widen the applicant pool of talented entrepreneurs and make the visa process faster and smoother for entrepreneurs coming to the UK. It will replace a visa route which was exclusively for graduates, opening it up to a wider pool of talented business founders.

It will require applicants to have acquired an endorsement from a university or approved business sponsor, including accelerators.

Entrepreneurs play a key role in creating jobs and driving economic growth in the UK and the changes announced today will ensure the UK remains a world-leading destination for the best global talent.

The visa route has been designed following advice from the Migration Advisory Committee and feedback from the tech sector and other stakeholders.

The Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, said:

The UK can be proud that we are a leading nation when it comes to tech and innovation, but we want to do more to attract businesses to the UK and our migration system plays a key part in that.

That's why I am pleased to announce a new visa for people wanting to start a business in the UK. This will help to ensure we continue to attract the best global talent and maintain the UK's position as a world-leading destination for innovation and entrepreneurs.

This initiative builds on other recent reforms to the visa system – including doubling the number of visas available on the Exceptional Talent route to 2,000 per year – and shows the government's commitment to making the UK a dynamic, open, globally-trading nation.

The expanded route will launch in Spring 2019, further details will be announced in due course.

Press release: £2.3 billion boost and 1,600 jobs created as UK tech goes global

The Prime Minister will host a raft of cutting-edge companies for a roundtable, as part of London Tech Week, to showcase Britain as the best place in the world to run a tech company. This event kicks off a series of roundtables to drive inward investment in key sectors.

Companies announcing investment today include:

- Salesforce, who are investing of \$2.5 billion in the UK over the next five years, which will include the opening of a second UK data centre in 2019
- Mubadala, who are launching £300 million European investment fund based in the UK
- NTT data who are investing £41million to open a new office and Innovation Centre, creating up to 200 jobs over the next three years

The Prime Minister will in turn make a number of commitments so that tech companies will also benefit from government funding, and greater access to talent and data under new plans.

These announcements will include:

- a new £2.5 billion British Patient Capital programme, which is expected to attract a further £5 billion in private investment, to support UK companies with high growth potential to access the long-term investment they need to grow and go global
- a new Start-Up Visa for entrepreneurs will launch in Spring 2019. This will replace a visa route which was exclusively for graduates, opening it up to talented business founders. This will include accelerators playing a role in the endorsement of candidates
- Roger Taylor will be announced as Chair of the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation, alongside a consultation on the role of the Centre – a key part of plans for a new National Data Strategy
- opening up key parts of the Ordnance Survey's valuable geospatial data

- to small businesses for free to boost competition in the digital economy
- two new Tech Hubs will be launched in Brazil and South Africa, to build innovative partnerships and develop skills, capability and business networks in these markets

Over 180 tech founders, entrepreneurs and investors will also attend a reception at Downing Street this evening, which will celebrate the UK's position as a world-leading destination for tech investment.

Britain is leading Europe in tech investment as evidenced last week when Amazon announced the creation of 2,500 jobs, and yesterday when Big Commerce announced that it will open its first European office in London this year. BT also announced yesterday that it has built the UK's first practical quantum-secured high-speed fibre network between Cambridge and Ipswich.

Last year, British tech businesses attracted \$7.8 billion of funding, almost double the amount received in 2016, compared to France and Germany's combined total of \$6 billion and the Prime Minister will reaffirm that the UK's leadership is set to grow as our modern Industrial Strategy drives further investment in centres of UK expertise.

Some 2.1 million people are now employed in the digital tech economy and a new digital tech job is created in the UK every 50 minutes, according to new estimates released this week by Dealroom and Tech Nation.

Founders Forum, who will be in Downing Street today, will also launch a new start-up competition across UK secondary schools and universities to inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

The measures we are announcing today will allow innovative British start-ups to invest in their future – and in the UK – by hiring more skilled people, expanding their business and exporting their expertise across the world.

It's a great time to be in tech in the UK, and our modern Industrial Strategy will drive continued investment, ensuring the nation flourishes in the industries of the future and creating more high-paying jobs.

Chancellor Philip Hammond said:

The UK is home to some of the world's most innovative companies and I want to make sure that they stay at the forefront of the tech revolution. So, British Patient Capital will provide an extra £2.5 billion for these cutting-edge business ensuring Britain remains one of the best places to start and grow a company.

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox said:

The UK is already a world-leading destination for tech investment with one tech start-up opening every 50 minutes. Our tech sector, with our strong legal system, skilled workforce and low taxation economy combine with our world class universities to make us the most attractive home for investment in Europe.

As an international economic department, DIT will continue to encourage investment from overseas with a further series of events to attract inward business. Last month we launched a new online portfolio of opportunities worth £30 billion, and in turn this will drive growth and create jobs in our economy.

Culture Secretary, Media and Sport Matt Hancock said:

Britain is a digital dynamo with the government and tech sector working together to help make this country the best place in the world to start and grow a digital business. We're encouraging the best and brightest tech talent to come to the UK and creating the right conditions for our high growth digital businesses to thrive.

We are spearheading digital innovation in exciting areas such as Artificial Intelligence and our network of tech hubs will connect us with some of the leading emerging technology nations across the world to share best practice.

Press release: Online dating giant vows clearer path to love

Venntro Media Group Ltd (Venntro), which has over 55 million users worldwide and supplies online dating services through just under 3,500 websites, has been investigated by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) over concerns about misleading claims and how it used people's personal data.

Venntro operates dating sites on behalf of major media outlets and other organisations, including both general and specialist sites that were marketed to people looking for a partner with a specific hobby, interest, ethnicity, locality or religion.

The CMA discovered that people who signed up to Venntro's websites were often unaware their information would be stored in a central database and that their profiles might be visible on the company's other dating sites. It also

saw complaints from people who said they had signed up for sites featuring explicit adult content without realising that they were doing so.

The CMA was therefore concerned people could have signed up for a specialist site, yet some of the profiles they saw and people they paid to interact with were not actually subscribers to that site and did not necessarily share their interests. It was also worried that in certain circumstances messages sent between these people would not be received.

As a result of the CMA's investigation, Venntro has made legally binding commitments to make it clear to people before they sign up that it will share their information on other sites and obtain their full agreement to do this. It must provide a list of these sites and will not place members' profiles on sites containing explicit adult material without their additional active consent.

Venntro must also make it easier for people to delete their profile when their subscription ends and not make misleading claims about the number of members on its sites, or the number of messages sent through those sites.

George Lusty, Senior Director for Consumer Protection at the CMA, said:

With millions of people trusting dating sites to find their perfect match, it's important they fully understand how personal information will be used, before they sign up, and that sites tell the truth about what they can offer.

We took action against Venntro because we were concerned people's profiles were being placed on sites without their knowledge or permission, and that they were being misled about how likely they were to meet someone with common ground. As a result of our investigation, Venntro has now pledged to be more upfront with its customers in future.

In addition to this action against Venntro, the CMA has sent warning letters to 14 other leading dating websites and app providers demanding they review their terms and practices to ensure they are fair and comply with consumer protection law.

Together with the UK's privacy regulator, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the CMA has published [advice for online dating businesses](#) to explain how to fully comply with both consumer and data protection laws. It has also published [advice about what people should watch out for](#) when using online dating services.

Notes for Editors

1. Venntro also trades under the names 'Global Personals' and 'White Label Dating.' Most of Venntro's websites are managed on a 'white label' basis, which means that Venntro provides the basic infrastructure and its commercial partners provide their own branding to the customer-

facing webpage. A large number of Venntro's dating websites are aimed at people with particular interests (like cycling or music) or characteristics (such as ethnicity or religion). The full changes that Venntro will be making are available on the CMA's [case page](#).

2. The key pieces of consumer protection legislation relevant to the CMA's investigation are the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPRs) and Part 2 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015 (CRA). The CPRs contain a general prohibition against unfair commercial practices and specific prohibitions against misleading actions, misleading omissions and aggressive commercial practices. Part 2 of the CRA aims to protect consumers against unfair contract terms and notices, and requires contract terms to be fair and transparent. Ultimately, only a court can rule that a particular term or practice infringes the law.
3. Companies that control and process personal data in the UK, including companies that operate dating websites, also have obligations under the new Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The laws are regulated by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which is the UK's independent authority set up to uphold information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals.
4. Media enquiries should be directed to the CMA Press Office (press@cma.gsi.gov.uk, 020 3738 6191).