

New flood warnings for Etwall help communities be better prepared

- New flood warnings now available for communities in Etwall, Derbyshire
- Helping people to be better prepared
- The risk of flooding to these areas has not increased and will not affect insurance

The Environment Agency will be writing this week inviting people in Etwall to take advantage of this free service, which is available by text message, telephone or email.

We are always looking for ways to help communities impacted by flooding be better prepared.

During the last winter we saw some of the highest river levels ever recorded across the West Midlands, and as part of the continuous improvement of our flood warning service, we have been able to expand the service.

Data from recent years has shown that additional warnings, along with the existing ones, would help those living and working in Etwall.

These new warnings do not show a change in flood risk, they mean we can give people better, more targeted information about when flooding may happen.

It is important that everyone knows if their property or business is at risk of flooding and it is a simple and quick process to find out.

To check if your property is now within the new warning area visit <https://gov.uk/check-flood-risk> or call Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

Fully register now to receive the following:

- Flood Alerts, when flooding to low lying land and roads is possible
- Flood Warnings, when flooding to residential property is expected
- You can register for more than one location

If residents decide not to fully register, your mobile phone service provider may automatically register you to receive a free text alert flood warning for your home area as an opt out service.

However you will not receive all the available information, so we still recommend full sign up.

If residents have any problems accessing the service, or any other questions,

please contact us at floodresilience@environment-agency.gov.uk where someone will be happy to assist.

Notes to editors

The government recently unveiled its [long-term plan to tackle the risks of flooding and coastal erosion](#), ensuring 336,000 properties in England are better protected from flooding by 2027 with a record £5.2 billion investment.

The Environment Agency also published its [Flood and Coast Erosion Risk Management Strategy](#), a blueprint setting out how it will work with communities to deliver the government's plan.

More information can be found on [GOV UK](#) or call our Floodline on 0345 988 11 88.

UK-built rover landing on Martian surface moves one giant fall closer

Once the European Space Agency (ESA) ExoMars Rosalind Franklin rover reaches Mars, a dramatic 6-minute sequence will see a 'descent module' – carrying the rover – deploy two parachutes to rapidly slow it down ahead of its landing on the Martian surface.

Atmospheric drag will slow the module from around 21,000 kmph to 1,700 kmph at which point the first parachute will be deployed. Some 20 seconds later, at about 400 kmph, the second parachute will open. When the module is 1 kilometre above ground, the braking engines will kick into gear and safely deliver it to Mars' surface.

The complete parachute descent system needs testing and verifying on Earth, which can only be done through high-altitude drop tests that replicate conditions of low atmospheric pressure on Mars. The test – which had been delayed since March due to COVID, wind and forest fires – took place over Oregon, U.S. on 9 November, with a drop test vehicle lofted to a height of 29 km in a stratospheric balloon.

The parachute extraction and deceleration proceeded as scientists in the mission had expected, with the test vehicle landing safely and parachutes recovered. There was minor 'canopy damage' on the two parachutes, occurring at the onset of inflation.

Rosalind Franklin – a joint Europe and Russia mission – will try to detect life, past or present, on the Red Planet and is due for launch in 2022. Completion of the parachute test marks a critical milestone for the rover, which has been built in Stevenage by Airbus, and the team will now analyse

test data to determine further improvements for the next tests.

Sue Horne, Head of Space Exploration, said:

Mars has been an object of our fascination and speculation for all recorded history, but we know that missions to the Red Planet are no easy ride.

A total of 20 probes, from countries and agencies around the world, have all had their share of crashing on their way to the Red Planet. They've crashed on take-off, crashed on landing, conked out of power.

Parachute tests are vital in helping us get the technology exactly right and making sure that the Rosalind Franklin rover lifts off with the most advanced and reliable equipment possible.

The pilot chute for the first main chute deployment (ESA)

Following failed tests of the parachute last year, the first main parachute had an upgraded parachute bag and a Kevlar reinforcement around the vent hem, aka the natural vent hole in the middle of the parachute. The second main parachute had several reinforcement rings and an upgraded parachute bag, but not reinforced parachute lines, which are also planned.

Once safely in the Oxia Planum region of Mars in June 2023, the Rosalind Franklin rover will drive off the platform and begin its science mission. It will seek out geologically interesting sites to drill below the surface, to determine if life ever existed on our neighbour planet.

UK company, Vorticity Ltd is technical consultant for the parachute system and is responsible for the high altitude drop tests of the parachutes. Vorticity designed and manufactured the parachute test vehicles and then performed the test along with their US subcontractor, Near Space Corporation.

John Underwood, Principal Engineer at Vorticity, said:

This is an enormously challenging programme involving the development of the largest parachute ever sent to Mars. Huge improvements have been made to the system since the tests last year and we are confident that the last issues will be ironed out before the mission launch in 2022.

Vorticity is a privately owned UK SME which operates as a centre of excellence for aerospace systems engineering consultancy and space systems development.

ExoMars Programme Team Leader Francois Spoto, said:

Landing on Mars is extremely difficult, with no room for error. The latest test was a good step forward but is not yet the perfect outcome we are seeking. Therefore, we will use the extensive test data we have acquired to refine our approach, plan further tests and keep on track for our launch in September 2022.

In July this year, NASA launched its Perseverance mission, blazing a trail ahead of the launch of the UK-built Rosalind Franklin rover. Perseverance has several science goals for its mission, and is carrying instruments geared to search for the carbon building blocks of life and other microbes and to reconstruct the geological history of the Red Planet.

The idea is that by investigating the presence and history of water on Mars we can begin to consider the question of whether or not life existed there; which in turn would provide powerful evidence of the probability that life exists elsewhere in the Universe.

No better time than now to step up climate action

The Philippines has once again suffered the brunt of climate change impacts. Less than a week after the devastating Super Typhoon Goni (Rolly), Typhoon Vamco (Ulysses) struck, leading to the declaration of a state of calamity for the entire island of Luzon. These extreme events in the Philippines derail economic gains and only exacerbate existing pressures brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tomorrow, the UK will be hosting the first virtual Climate Change and Environment Dialogue with the Philippines led by Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu as chairperson of the Cabinet Cluster working on Climate Change. We will agree on a Partnership to further strengthen our cooperation to tackle climate change. We will set-out the climate and environment priorities including for the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26), which the UK will host in partnership with Italy in November 2021, and reach agreement on energy transition and nature-based solutions.

As we start the conversation, we want to recognise the growing momentum in the Philippines towards an inclusive, resilient, and green recovery.

In the energy sector, we welcome the announcement of the Department of Energy (DOE) to no longer accept proposals for new coal power projects. Such effort provides a positive signal for businesses to shift their investments to renewable energy sources. We are also delighted for Masbate City to join the Powering Past Coal Alliance, along with Negros Oriental and Ilocos Norte; it shows commitment to advance the transition from unabated coal power

generation to clean energy. We are optimistic that more and more local government units will follow suit. Next week, we look forward to the Philippines' participation in the first meeting of the COP26 Energy Transition Council and the Asian Clean Power Dialogue. These platforms will facilitate genuine conversation with leaders in the international power sector to accelerate the global energy transition.

We are also delighted that the Department of Transport is supporting the "Driving Change Together" Declaration. This signifies strong leadership to transform the transport sector and industry from conventional and polluting to cleaner, more economical and sustainable alternatives.

The UK-Philippine cooperation on climate and environment continues to grow covering a wide range of sectors including energy, green infrastructure, health, hydrometeorology, agriculture and biodiversity supported by the Darwin Fund Initiative, Newton Agham Programme, and the UK's multilateral funding to the Urban Climate Change Resilience Trust Fund.

The UK's ASEAN Low Carbon Energy Programme supports the development of the Sustainable Finance Roadmap and has already provided recommendations to the Department of Energy on the administration, classification and certification of energy service companies, and voluntary renewable energy market development. Our study on Scenarios for Energy Transition confirmed the Bloomberg finding that coal power plant additions beyond 2023/24 are not expected to be economical in the Philippines. We are also enthusiastic to launch our green recovery project with the United Nations Development Programme and sign the Memorandum of Understanding with Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi to develop the 2050 Calculator Pathway, a tool to plan the Philippines' low-carbon transition.

Domestically, the UK remains committed to doing our share. Prime Minister Boris Johnson recently announced the Ten Point Plan for a UK Green Industrial Revolution to allow the UK to forge ahead with eradicating its contribution to climate change by 2050. It also serves as the blueprint to support up to 250,000 "new" green collar jobs. It comes as the UK prepares to host the Climate Ambition Summit, with the UN and France, and in partnership with Chile and Italy, on December 12 – a pivotal moment for world leaders to share ambitious new commitments to tackle climate change.

Countries in the region are beginning to rally behind the goal of reaching net zero emissions, including China, Japan and South Korea. We hope, too, that the Philippines will join the majority of countries around the world in announcing commitments to go above and beyond what was announced in 2015 when parties to the Paris Agreement committed to tackling the climate crisis.

Five years later, there is much more to be done. Climate Change is a shared global challenge – every country in the world needs to take action to secure the future of the planet for our children, grandchildren and generations to come. It is our responsibility to stop this. There is no time to waste.

Tiering decisions to be made through national command structure

The Health Secretary will today set out in Parliament the tier which each local authority in England will fall under, in line with the measures set out in the COVID-19 Winter Plan published on Monday.

As announced earlier this week, the tiers have been toughened and many more areas will be placed into the higher tiers in order to safeguard the gains made during the period of national restrictions.

The first review point for the current tier allocations will take place by Wednesday 16 December.

This allows for the possibility of areas which continue to make progress in slowing the spread of the disease to be moved down a tier in advance of Christmas.

Decisions on tiers are made by ministers based on public health recommendations informed by the following factors:

- Case detection rate (in all age groups and, in particular, amongst the over 60s);
- How quickly case rates are rising or falling;
- Positivity in the general population;
- Pressure on the NHS – including current and projected (3-4 weeks out) NHS capacity – including admissions, general/acute/ICU bed occupancy, staff absences; and
- Local context and exceptional circumstances such as a local but contained outbreak.

If these indicators are not improving, an area may be moved up a tier and if the trajectory improves, the area may move to a lower tier.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Thanks to the hard work and sacrifice made by people up and down the country, we are able to move out of national lockdown and into

more targeted local, tiered restrictions.

I know for those of you faced with tier 3 restrictions this will be a particularly difficult time but I want to reassure you that we'll be supporting your areas with mass community testing and extra funding.

By following the rules together we can get out of these tough measures.

The Contain Outbreak Management Fund will be extended so that it can provide monthly payments to Local Authorities facing higher restrictions until the end of the financial year, in recognition of the ongoing public health and outbreak management costs of tackling COVID-19. For those authorities in Tier 3, this funding will amount to £4 per head of population per month, and for those in Tier 2, it will amount to £2 per head of population per month.

The Joint Biosecurity Centre works closely with PHE, the NHS and across government to monitor the number of new infections, positivity rates, and pressures on the NHS.

These factors form their public health advice to the Chief Medical Officer and Ministers through the Local Action Committee and the COVID Operations Committee.

Final decisions on tiering are made by the Prime Minister at the COVID Operations Committee.

The government will also publish an analysis of the health, economic and social impacts of the tiered approach.

Local authorities that fall into tier 3 will be offered support from NHS Test and Trace and the Armed Forces to deliver a six-week rapid community testing programme.

Community testing will make use of rapid Lateral Flow Tests which give results within an hour, and will focus on locating and suppressing asymptomatic transmission. The more cases identified and self-isolating, the quicker the control of virus transmission which is essential to help areas move down a tier.

With some individuals with coronavirus showing no symptoms increased community testing will help identify those who are infected and infectious, but asymptomatic and unaware that they might be spreading the disease, so that they can isolate and protect others.

Local authorities will be able to decide whether to use lateral flow test kits for targeted testing for high-risk workplaces and industries, or for wider asymptomatic community testing, to find positive cases more quickly and break chains of transmission.

Anyone who tests positive, using either a lateral flow test or an existing

swab test, must self-isolate along with their household immediately and their contacts will be traced.

Rapid community testing will expand on existing testing programmes within the NHS, care homes, universities and schools to protect those most at risk, and builds on the pilots of community testing which are taking place in Liverpool and Merthyr Tydfil.

Notes to editors

- Guidance on what is allowed in each tier can be found on GOV UK: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers-what-you-need-to-know>
- All available data has been assessed by the government, including the Health and Social Care Secretary, NHS Test and Trace, the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC), Public Health England (PHE), the Chief Medical Officer and the Cabinet Office. Data assessed includes incidence, test positivity and the growth rate of the virus.
- A Watchlist will be published every Thursday detailing the latest data at a regional level providing the rationale and data behind these decisions.

[Karina C report published](#)

News story

Fatal accident during cargo operations on Karina C while in Seville, Spain.



Our accident investigation report into a fatal crush incident on the general cargo vessel Karina C on 24 May 2019, is now published.

The report contains details of what happened, actions taken and recommendations made: [read more](#).

Statement from the Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents

Ship's decks are dangerous places and this accident could have been avoided if personnel operating Karina C's deck that day had adhered to established safe working practices. The limited space available and ambient noise on deck mean that travelling gantry cranes, common on many operators' vessels, can be particularly hazardous. Recently they have been involved in a number of fatal accidents and the MAIB is currently investigating another tragic death in similar circumstances. The accident on Karina C is a further case where excess alcohol consumption almost certainly contributed to the death of a seafarer.

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