

# Prepare for that sinking feeling



## Rising global temperatures greatly increase the risk of flooding across Scotland

THE impact of climate change on Scotland's most flood prone communities is projected to place more than 200,000 homes and businesses at risk of flooding by 2080.

Flooding is the most common natural disaster in the UK and can happen at any time of the year, affecting your home, travel and work life.

Winter storms, severe weather and rainfall mean increased risk of flooding. And with the festive season fast approaching, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) is reminding communities to stay prepared in case flooding occurs.

Stewart Prodder from SEPA's Flood Unit said: "Being flooded can be a life-changing event, and with so many Scottish homes and businesses at risk of flooding, especially during the winter months, it's important to have the appropriate measures in place to protect yourself and your loved ones."

"Sixty per cent of Scottish homeowners surveyed know it's their responsibility to protect their own property and more than half know to contact SEPA for flood warning information."

As Scotland's national authority for flood forecasting and warning, SEPA operates a 24-hour Flood forecasting and warning service to inform first responders, local authorities and emergency services of emerging flood events and the potential impact on local communities and critical infrastructure.

Operating 365 days a year, SEPA's Floodline issues hundreds of regional Flood Alerts and local Flood Warnings every year. Over 27,000 customers nationwide opt to receive these directly, with many thousands more accessing them online.

"Our Floodline service provides live flood updates and advice on how to prepare for and cope with the impacts of flooding 24 hours a day, seven days a week," Prodder explained. "Registering with Floodline is free and means you'll be able to get flooding information direct to your phone for the areas you're interested in."

Environment Secretary Roseanna Cunningham said: "Reducing flood risk is a key commitment in the Scottish Government's programme for government and will



Rescue teams respond to flooding at Port Elphinstone, Aberdeen in 2016. Below: Environment Secretary, Roseanna Cunningham



become even more crucial as climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of flooding across Scotland.

"The Scottish Government is investing £420 million over ten years to protect homes in many of Scotland's most flood-prone areas and is working to reduce flood risk by supporting SEPA, local authorities, and Scottish Water to fulfil their flood risk management responsibilities. This includes assessing flood risk nationally and preparing local flood risk management plans, as well as helping the public to be prepared."

It's important to remember that recognising your risk, getting prepared and taking action can help reduce the impact that flooding can have on your life. Here are five simple things that you can do in advance in case flooding is forecast:

- Be aware: sign up to get SEPA's free Floodline messages direct to your phone for your home and travel areas. Register online at

[www.floodlinescotland.org.uk](http://www.floodlinescotland.org.uk) or call 0345 988 1188;

- Be prepared: if your home or business is in a flood risk area, make sure you have left it as well flood protected as possible, and if you're away, make sure a neighbour, or a friend or family member, who lives nearby, can easily contact and help you.
- Be active: maintain your property by doing simple things like keeping gutters and drains clear of blockages like leaves;
- Be covered: make sure your domestic or business insurance covers flooding;
- Be ready: prepare an emergency flood kit either to take away with you on holiday or in case you need to leave your home.

SEPA currently provides a flood warning service to almost 300 communities across Scotland and this September launched 19 new coastal flood warning areas covering Orkney and the North East Coast.

For a list of flood risk areas, visit [floodline.sepa.org.uk/floodupdates/quickdialcodes/](http://floodline.sepa.org.uk/floodupdates/quickdialcodes/)

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A non-departmental public body of the Scottish Government oversees environmental regulation, monitors and reports on the state of the environment, raises awareness of environmental issues, and resolves environmental harms.



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The Herald's Climate for Change initiative supports efforts being made by the Scottish Government with key organisations and campaign partners. Throughout the year we will provide a forum in The Herald newspaper, online at [herald.scotland.com](http://herald.scotland.com) and in Business HQ magazine, covering news and significant developments in this increasingly crucial area.



### BULLETIN



Anthony Lester, Baron Lester of Herne Hill.

### Groping claim Lord resigns

A PEER accused of groping a woman and promising her a peerage in exchange for sex has resigned from the House of Lords.

Lord Lester of Herne Hill said he will step down with immediate effect, adding that the inquiry into his alleged conduct – which he denies – has "taken a serious toll" on his health. The 82-year-old was suspended from the Liberal Democrats.

The Lords Privileges and Conduct Committee recommended he should be suspended until 2022 after he allegedly offered Jasvinder Sanghera "corrupt inducements" to sleep with him.

### Tasered man mentally ill

A MAN aged 29 who was arrested by armed police near an entrance to the Houses of Parliament has been detained under the Mental Health Act, police said.

About a dozen officers swarmed around the suspect as he was held against a fence inside the Carriage Gates on Tuesday.

The man was Tasered after he ran toward officers and failed to stop, the Metropolitan Police said.

He was arrested on suspicion of trespassing at a protected site, and taken to a police station for questioning and has since been detained following a mental health assessment.

### NEWS DIGEST

## Review calls for shake-up of regulation on agriculture

MARTYN LANDI

DRONES to monitor wildlife schemes and local advisers to help farmers with issues such as animal welfare should form part of the future regulation of farming, a review suggests.

Leaving the EU, where a one-size-fits-all rules-based approach for agriculture is inflexible and "pernickety", would allow for a shake-up of the way farms are regulated, the review by Dame Glenys Stacey says.

The report, commissioned by Environment Secretary Michael Gove, recommends a new independent regulator that would be supportive of farmers' individual

circumstances and offer practical advice.

It should be organised so local staff can deliver services such as advice to farmers on issues including biosecurity to prevent disease, soil quality and animal health.

The regulator could also incentivise good practice, for example through fewer or less comprehensive inspections for farms with a good record, or for those who are certified by a recognised assurance scheme.

And the report recommends increasing use of technology such as drones or high-resolution satellites, which could be used to check compliance with environmental schemes, for example where a farmer

is paid to provide wildflower field margins for wildlife.

Technology could also help with remote surveillance of issues such as unregistered pigs or poor slurry management without so many on-foot inspections or lengthy journeys to remote areas.

Dame Glenys said farmers were currently subject to a number of "pernickety and sometimes nonsensical rules".

"There is little practical advice or guidance given to ensure compliance. Instead, automatic financial penalties have become the norm when at times they are unfair. The large majority of farmers want to farm responsibly but some need guidance, advice and support to do

that. A regulator should provide that, and explain why any change on the farm is needed. Yes, sometimes swinging sanctions are justified, but more often, more is achieved by a more supportive approach."

And she said: "There is so much scope to regulate more effectively, by harnessing technology and local knowledge."

"A strong regulatory culture brings many opportunities – from getting on top of systemic issues such as animal diseases, to improving plant health and our environment under the new farming system."

Mr Gove said: "It's clear current regulation isn't working as it should. Leaving the EU gives us the chance for a fresh and modern approach."



Michael Gove with Devon farmer David Bawden on Exmoor.

## Moderator marks birthday with sensory garden appeal

JAMES HAMILTON

THE Moderator of the General Assembly is asking people to donate to a Highlands residential home instead of buying her presents for her birthday.

Rt Rev Susan Brown, who is celebrating her 60th today, said Oversteps in Dornoch marked the same milestone last month and she would rather see funds used to create a sensory garden in the leafy grounds.

She said installing water features, benches and plants to stimulate the senses would benefit residents at the 24-room assisted living development, run by CrossReach, the operating arm of the Kirk's social care council.

One resident, Andrew MacLeod, 98, was recently awarded the Legion d'Honneur, France's most prestigious military honour, for the part he played at Normandy during the Second World War.

He served with the Seaforth Highlanders as a stretcher-bearer and attended to wounded soldiers during the 1944 Allied invasion of France.

After the war, Mr MacLeod, a member of Dornoch Cathedral in Sutherland, where Mrs Brown is minister, enjoyed a career as a painter and decorator and was a very good golfer.

The Moderator, who set up an online fundraiser page and hopes to raise at least £500 for the project, esti-

mated to cost up to £15,000, said: "A month apart and Oversteps and I both reach 60. I am in denial but how about rubbing salt into the wound by supporting the funding of a sensory garden for the residential care home?"

"Please consider it because it offers so many physical and emotional benefits for residents who deserve it."

Andrew Mackenzie, 95, an elder of Dornoch Cathedral and fellow Legion d'Honneur recipient, said he was delighted Mrs Brown was forsaking presents in aid of Oversteps.

He was the pilot of a Lancaster bomber that bombed German gun emplacements on the Normandy coast to clear the way for the landing parties on D-Day – June 6, 1944.

Too frail to travel to a special awards ceremony, Mr Mackenzie, who has known Mr MacLeod for 30 years and is also a keen golfer, received his gift in the post last year.

Mr Mackenzie, who used to run Linburn House for the war blind in West Lothian, said: "I am not in the least bit surprised Susan is doing this because she is wonderful. It is a splendid idea because she is a splendid person."

Mrs Brown described the war heroes as two "lovely men" who regularly attended Dornoch Cathedral until recently.

"They are very much a part of both the church family and the community," she added.

## Gotcha! BBC 2 looks at Rupert Murdoch's influence

ALEX GREEN

THE BBC will explore the influence of newspaper mogul Rupert Murdoch's media empire in a new three-part television series.

A Tabloid Empire will cover the period between 1997 and 2012, ending with the Leveson Inquiry, and will be broadcast on BBC Two.

Each hour-long episode will look at how Mr Murdoch's British newspapers shaped the nation's political climate until they became mired in scandal following revelations of phone hacking.

The series, created by 72 Films, will use archive footage and exclusive interviews to explore issues of privacy and media ethics.

A BBC commissioner promised the series would use "intricate storytelling, beautifully assembled archive and fascinating interviews from those who witnessed and lived through these events".

Through his various companies, the Australian-born tycoon owns British news outlets including the Sun, the Sun on Sunday, the Times and the Sunday Times.

He also owned the News of the World before its closure in 2011.

BBC Two controller Patrick Holland said: "With A Dangerous Dynasty: House Of Assad, 72 Films made one of the most exceptional modern history series of recent years.

"This series promises to combine the same forensic eye for detail with

the best documentary storytelling to explore the decade which changed our relationship with the press."

Tom McDonald, head of commissioning for natural history and specialist factual programmes, said: "This new commission continues to signal our commitment to stories, forms and ideas which shine a light on the big issues in modern society through the prism of recent history. This series promises intricate storytelling, beautifully assembled archive and fascinating interviews from those who witnessed and lived through these events."

The broadcast date has not yet been confirmed. It comes as the future of Team Sky cycling team, which has delivered Tour de France

wins for Britons Sir Bradley Wiggins, Chris Froome and Geraint Thomas, was thrown into doubt after the broadcaster – of which Mr Murdoch was previously a major shareholder – announced it will withdraw backing at the end of 2019.

Team Sky was launched in January 2010 and has since amassed 322 victories, including eight Grand Tour successes.

"Team Sky will continue to race under a different name if a new backer is secured to provide funding," said a Team Sky statement.

The decision – taken by chief executive Jeremy Darroch – is part of a review of commercial partnerships after the £30bn takeover of the satellite broadcaster.



Rupert Murdoch's ownership of tabloid newspapers is scrutinised.