

Sent via email

Wednesday 13 January 2021

Hello

WORKING TOGETHER IN 2021

As we all continue to live and work amidst the Coronavirus pandemic, I want to wish you a Happy New Year, and update you on how the Environment Agency continue to manage the operational impacts of Coronavirus and look to the opportunities ahead.

Although the coming months will be challenging, we are hopeful that this year will bring new and plentiful opportunities to enhance our environment and help the country adapt to the worsening effects of Climate Change. We look forward to playing our part in the run up to the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference, and we continue to work at pace to adapt our own operations to reduce our carbon footprint and achieve our ambition to become a net zero organisation by 2030.

We are confident that we can overcome the challenges we face and capitalise on new opportunities by continuing to operate following strict health and safety guidelines, and working more closely than ever with our stakeholders, partners and communities.

As we enter this third national lockdown, our priority remains to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff and the communities we serve. Over Christmas, our teams were ready and able to respond to flooding impacts seen in a number of communities. We remain ready to do the same should the winter weather present further issues.

Since March, we have taken a number of measures to ensure our operational staff can work safely and that our workplaces are COVID-secure. In light of rapidly rising infection rates, we are now conducting in-depth reviews across all of our risk assessments to ensure our current systems remain sufficient.

We are able to maintain our critical operations, following the latest Government guidelines to mitigate against virus transmission. This means that we will:

- Respond quickly and effectively in the event of a major flood, pollution or other incident;
- Carry out our regulatory activities in a safe, secure and effective way;
- Keep our operational sites, such as flood barriers, up and running;
- Support businesses who face their own operational difficulties;
- Sustain our cooperation with the emergency services, local authorities and other partners, including in the Local Resilience Forums which are helping manage the current crisis.

We will continue to act quickly and decisively as the situation develops, which may mean we need to stop or slow some of our activities in the coming days. Where this is the case we will engage our customers, stakeholders and partners. We will also provide our latest operational advice via our [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) pages and through established channels.

We look forward to working with you in the coming year as we face the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "JD Bevan". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted.

Sir James Bevan
Chief Executive