

News

Two years on from Babet's appearance

REPORTER TED O'NEILL LOOKS BACK AT THE DEVASTATION CAUSED BY STORM BABEL ON THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY AND REFORM UK'S PLAN TO SCRAP FLOODING COMMITTEE

LAST week was the anniversary of two years since Storm Babet caused devastation across Lincolnshire and the rest of the UK.

The storm in October 2023 forced people to evacuate their homes, businesses to close down, roads to be shut and even some farmers to move their livestock elsewhere.

The majority of the heavy rainfall arrived on Friday, October 20 and with it came some strong winds. Storm Babet resulted in the most severe and widespread disruptive weather impacts that year.

The Met Office has since confirmed that October 18 to 20 2023 was the third-wettest independent

three-day period for England and Wales in a series since 1891, while the Midlands provisionally recorded its wettest three-day period on record.

Hundreds of homes in Lincolnshire were flooded.

A former mayor of Sleaford believes that Lincolnshire doesn't



Homes and businesses were flooded in Horncastle



Travel plans were disrupted
PHOTO: RSM Photography



Staff at Lincolnshire Wildlife Park near Skegness battling to protect the animals from flooding
PHOTO: Lincolnshire Wildlife Park



Flooding on Sothorn Lane in Langworth
PHOTO: Mike Herbert



The eye of the storm



Flooding at Fen Farm in Fiskerton which was forced to temporarily rehome its livestock
PHOTO: Rand Farm Park



Jack Thomas (left) helped to bail water out of his mother-in-law Bridget Walls' house on Brant Road, Lincoln



Dog rescued in Brant Broughton
PHOTO: Lincolnshire County Council

get enough support from the Environment Agency.

Councillor Linda Edwards-Shea said: "To be honest, I expect nowhere gets sufficient support from the EA. They need proper funding.

"Our part of Lincolnshire doesn't get enough support even though we feed the nation (farming), protect the nation (armed forces) and power the nation (renewables).

"What do Lincolnshire folk get in return? Now!

"North Kesteven covers nearly 400 square miles but we don't have any motorways, hospitals or FE colleges.

"We give to the rest of the country — not forgetting two new reservoirs — but we get just a few crumbs in return."

Boston Cllr Ralph Pryke (Kirton and Frampton) said: "We would all

benefit from better weather forecasting.

"It would be better if the different agencies didn't embark on circular blame exercises every time something goes wrong.

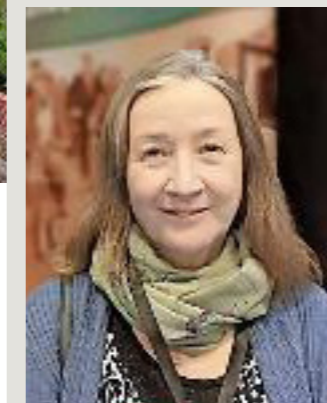
"I would like the government to restore the money cut from the Environment Agency by the previous

government."

Langworth, a small West Lindsey village, was one of the worst affected with some residents being evacuated after seeing water up to their windows.

Fiskerton was another place affected with around 80 homes evacuated due to a potential breach

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Councillor Linda Edwards-Shea

of the River Witham's banks, which could've flooded much of the village. Horncastle was also among those hit the hardest by the heavy rainfall.

The effects of the flooding in Lincolnshire were felt for weeks after the event as people worked to restore their lives back to some normality.

Change just one part of council's DOGE strategy

EARLIER this year, Reform UK came to power in Lincolnshire and immediately scrapped the flooding committee on the County Council.

The so-called 'Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee' previously allowed councillors to hold bodies like Anglian Water, the Environment Agency and Internal Drainage Boards to account.

The new administration said the change would save money and simplify the council without harming efforts to fight flooding.

Reform is boasting of how much money it is saving with its new special 'DOGE' unit.

The American 'Department for Government Efficiency' headed by Elon Musk cut swathes of spending across the American government and was not universally popular.

Reform UK's national DOGE Unit is now headed by Boston and Skegness MP Richard Tice.

Mr Tice said: "In May, Reform won a historic and unprecedented victory because voters knew that we would do things differently.

"Across the twelve councils we control, we have been doing exactly that and already cut hundreds of millions of pounds in wasteful spending.

"I look forward to progressing this vital and innovative project and ensuring that we continue to deliver on our election promises."

But as they took power Reform Councillor Danny Brookes from Skegness denied that the cuts would affect flood protection. He said: "This is an upgrade, not a downgrade. Existing partnerships maintained and enhanced."



MP Richard Tice



Cllr Danny Brookes



Flooding on Waterside South in Lincoln
PHOTO: BBC