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## When the North Sea growls Boston holds its breath

It held its breath again on Friday – ominously Friday the 13th – as tide and wild wind collaborated to menace and threaten.

Thankfully the town and its coastal villages were able to exhale and breathe easy again as the risk of flooding came and went without too much drama.

The uneasy coincidence of a very high tide and windy conditions in just the wrong direction again had everyone on tenterhooks.

Would it, wouldn't it? No one, experts included, ever know for sure, until the witching hour is almost upon them.

That's why the switch is thrown in advance on a well-practiced emergency procedure, to warn, inform and prepare for the worst, should it happen. No one who was flooded in Boston in December, 2013, would disagree with all measures taken to help them defend their properties against flood.

Local teams on the ground inform a central unit in a high-tech control room in Lincoln. On Friday Boston Borough Council officers were on duty in Lincoln, joined by staff from Lincolnshire Police, Fire and Rescue, the Army and the RAF, the Environment Agency, East Lindsey District Council, Lincolnshire County Council, the NHS and volunteer organisations, such as the Red Cross.

All these also had staff on the ground and staff on standby should the worst happen.

Additionally, in Boston, the state-of-the-art CCTV system provided a single access point for monitoring conditions as they happened.

Staff in the CCTV control suite in Municipal Buildings were able to watch real-time images streamed in from cameras they remotely controlled of sea conditions along the shore in Skegness and Mablethorpe and the river condition in Boston at many different points. Images



from these cameras, via Municipal Buildings were then beamed into the emergency control "bunker" in Lincoln.

Cllr Peter Bedford, Leader of Boston Borough Council, said: "Friday's incidents – the early morning and early evening high tides – proved two things; the dire need for Boston to have the improved flood protection that the Barrier will bring as soon as it can possibly be provided and the value of our CCTV system, one of the best of anywhere in the country.

"We were even able to view and record thrill seekers at Mablethorpe who ignored warnings and put themselves at risk where waves were crashing ashore. These images were relayed in real-time to the Lincoln command centre for police to take action.

"In Boston we were able to monitor rising river levels minute by minute at known locations where flooding has occurred first in the past. Experience has shown us when to recognise the point at which flooding is possible. Fortunately, on Friday, these levels were not reached."

Phil Drury, Boston Borough Council Chief Executive, who spent the high-risk periods on Friday monitoring the developing situation in the West Street CCTV suite, said: "In the event there were no undue incidents. I want to thank all council staff, and all others involved, who were on the ground, and on standby, should they have been required, had this developed into an emergency situation."

### Council tax help for year ahead

Boston Borough Council voted on Monday for no change to the current Council Tax Support scheme in 2017/18.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/2iKruu2>

### Six public toilets now available in Boston town centre

The number of public toilets in Boston town centre has doubled to six following the launch of a community toilet scheme making some shop loos available.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/2iksc2u>



### Accident-prone hire driver loses his licence

Boston Borough Council has taken action against a private hire driver and withdrawn his licence with immediate effect after hearing of a catalogue of accidents he had been involved in.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/2jkbKf>

### Blueprint for better Boston transport network

Major new roads, better public transport and improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians are all included in a new vision for Boston's transport infrastructure.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/2is8Vut>



### Have your say on council finances

A proposal that Boston Borough Council's share of council tax should increase by an average of less than just 9p a week per household forms part of the overall budget plan now out for public comment.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/2ifWNOU>

### Bid for top-flight maternity services in Boston

Borough councillors have pledged to give every support to keep consultancy-led maternity services in Boston, and has recommended a task group be set up to investigate the area's longer-term ability to attract medical professionals.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/2k1mOC9>

### Help survive a terrorist attack

Terror attacks are increasing around the world. While Boston remains a safe place to be, recent events have shown that anyone could get caught up in an horrific incident with some of the most brutal being committed at popular holiday resorts and family events attended by British holidaymakers.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/2jt6pW9>