

COASTAL FLOODING

Coastal flooding is caused by a combination of high tides and waves. Tides are controlled by the movements of the sun and moon. The highest tides, and therefore the highest risk of coastal flooding, take place in Spring around March 20th and in September again around 20th.

A build up of low pressure can coincide with high tides and lead to a **tidal surge**, which can lead to serious flooding. A major tidal surge took place in the UK in 1953 along the east coast leading to serious loss of life and damage to property.

The Environment Agency monitors tides around the UK coastline and issues warnings when there is a danger of flooding. These events can be made worse by high water in rivers and estuaries leading to the coast.

Protection from flooding along our coastline is the responsibility of the **Environment Agency and Maritime District Councils**. They carry out flood alleviation measures along the coast to both prevent flooding and also protect against erosion. These schemes are usually funded by **DEFRA**.

The Environment Agency also draws up **Shoreline Management Plans** and **Coastal Habitat Management Plans** (CHAMPS) to ensure that whatever protection measures might be needed the coastal habitat is preserved.

Instead of building ever higher sea defences current policy looks for ways to manage the shoreline in a more natural way, through the use of softer measures, such as using existing sand dunes, shingle beaches and salt marshes as a form of defence.

