Employers and Flood Risk in the Humber:

How do businesses understand and construct their flood risk knowledge?
Adapted from Edwards and Winn (2006: 167)
Footage of 1953 east coast flooding
Illustration of coastal squeeze submerging and eroding salt marsh under higher sea levels
Alkborough Flats managed realignment site, North Lincolnshire

Protected species: Golden Plover
Land intensive industries act as an anchor to the Humber Economy.
Hull City Council Planning Guidance:

- there is a need for further flood protection measures especially along the Humber frontage, the River Hull, as well as an embankment along the eastern side of Bransholme;
- design guidance should be used to improve ‘flood proofing’ of new developments including provision for safe refuges and evacuation plans; and

North East Lincolnshire Council Planning Guidance:

Climate change are also shown in Table B.3 ‘Water level and wave height combinations with a joint 0.5% probability of occurrence, at Cleethorpes, taken from the SFRA (2002). These figures are only indicative - developers will require the latest water level information from the Environment Agency when preparing their FRA’.

Flood risk mitigation is not an optional extra
Public and voluntary sector action has been highly publicised.
The Risk Society:

- Risks are produced by the science and technology upon which our society is based
- Risk is socially constructed and ‘uncertain’

But...

- How does risk enter the political arena?
- Role of economic agency?
- Governance as a vehicle?
The Role of Knowledge:

- Tacit knowledge versus codified knowledge
- Judgements and feelings
- The role of trust

The Crichton Risk Triangle (2008)
General Public  
Private Sector

Governance and Power?

Public Sector

Voluntary Sector
Largest business sectors in the Humber study area:

1) Construction
2) Wholesale and Retail
3) Manufacturing
4) Transport and Communication
5) Agricultural
Previous flooding experienced:

![Graph showing frequency of businesses flooded over time. The peak year for pluvial flooding is 2007.](image)
Qualitative Business Clusters:

Clusters

- North East Lincs
- Hull West
- Hull Central

Hull City Council

North East Lincs
Daily risks dealt with by businesses:

- SMEs
  - Theft
  - Vandalism
  - Adverse weather
  - Fire
  - Computer data loss
  - Postal disruption
  - Staff illness
  - Staff illness

- Larger
  - Theft
  - Vandalism
  - Fire
  - Staff illness
  - ‘Normal health and safety’ risks
  - Electronic equipment problems
  - Toxic chemicals release
Recovery from a potential flood event:

Overwhelming Helplessness

N.E Lincs

Relocation cheaper

Increased insurance costs

A risk to live with

‘We were fine last time’

Hull

‘Measures were taken to prevent a repeat of 2007’

It’s all over in two days

‘We were fine last time’

Measures were taken to prevent a repeat of 2007’
Estuary-wide planning? Areas where businesses want to expand:
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Summary

1) Businesses appear to have trouble ‘placing’ flood risk within their operations

2) Flood governance is ‘proactive’ where current business attitudes to flood risk appear ‘reactive’

3) Tacit knowledge rooted within experience is powerful, but given time, codified knowledge in the form of information and education can be highly effective if the organisation involved is trusted
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