




## NEWS

### New hovercraft set to give firefighters extra boost

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By [Steve Mather »](#)

FIREFIGHTERS in Gloucestershire will be better equipped to deal with flooding than ever before when two new rescue hovercraft are delivered this summer.

The order for the hovercraft which can be used on land, water, mud and sand has been placed and the two vessels are expected to be delivered to Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) in the coming months.

Interest in the hovercraft was sparked during last year's floods when an Italian rescue team loaned similar crafts to the county. After using the hovercraft GFRS were convinced that the vessels would be a huge asset to the county in times of crisis and during everyday business.

Chief fire officer Terry Standing, said: "We are now in the final stages of this exciting project and staff are getting ready to receive the new hovercraft.

"Last years flooding crisis has taught us that we have to be ready for anything and with these new hovercraft I believe our service is better equipped to deal with situations that may arise."

Severn Trent Water have agreed to pay for the equipment through its Community Recovery Fund and the contract was awarded to Italy-based Hi-Tech International SRL.

GFRS has three trained hovercraft pilots but a separate hovercraft rescue team made up of eight pilots and four crew members will now be formed.

Councillor Will Windsor, county council cabinet member for community safety said: "These hovercraft will make it easier for us to rescue people in various dangerous situations beyond the normal river course and therefore are a huge asset to the service.

"Gloucestershire County Council is committed to protecting the community and with equipment like this at our disposal our service can only be improved."