

Stokesley Flood Alleviation Scheme February 2021 Newsletter

Construction of the Stokesley Flood Alleviation Scheme is continuing with work ongoing at both flow control structures and the re-profiling of the flood diversion channel. Construction is planned to be complete early Summer 2021, and will continue to provide flood risk protection to Stokesley for the next 50 years.

What are we doing?

We have commissioned BMM JV (a joint venture between Mott MacDonald and Bam Nuttall) to undertake construction of the new scheme. The site is working to Construction Leadership Council guidelines, providing a safe workplace for our workforce. To date we have had zero Covid-19 Cases. By engaging with the workforce and routine site inspections we are always looking to improve.

An additional challenge has been the poor weather conditions and regular high flows in the river of late. Despite this we are making progress and have removed the downstream flow control structure to enable construction of the replacement structure in the same location. The River Leven flows are being managed through temporary culverts so the flow still continues downstream with Eller Beck.



The upstream flow control structure remains in place while the new structure is built slightly upstream. This is allowing us to deliver the Flood Warning Service as normal. Once the new structure is built and gauging equipment installed we will be able to remove the existing structure. The River Leven flow is being managed as normal with the flow control penstocks being closed when we are expecting high flows in the Leven.



The flood diversion channel is being re-profiled to ensure it has the capacity to contain flows and make maintenance easier and safer in the future. This requires some tree management and will result in some trees being removed.

Along with BMM JV we have undertaken a detailed assessment which considers the quality and value of the trees and the costs of various options of cut and fill of soil in the flood diversion channel. For more general information on the methodology please follow the link below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xe8_78f2avA

We are developing a tree/hedge planting plan aiming to plant trees in the vicinity of the works but also throughout open spaces in Stokesley and Great Ayton. Please see Environmental Enhancement section below.

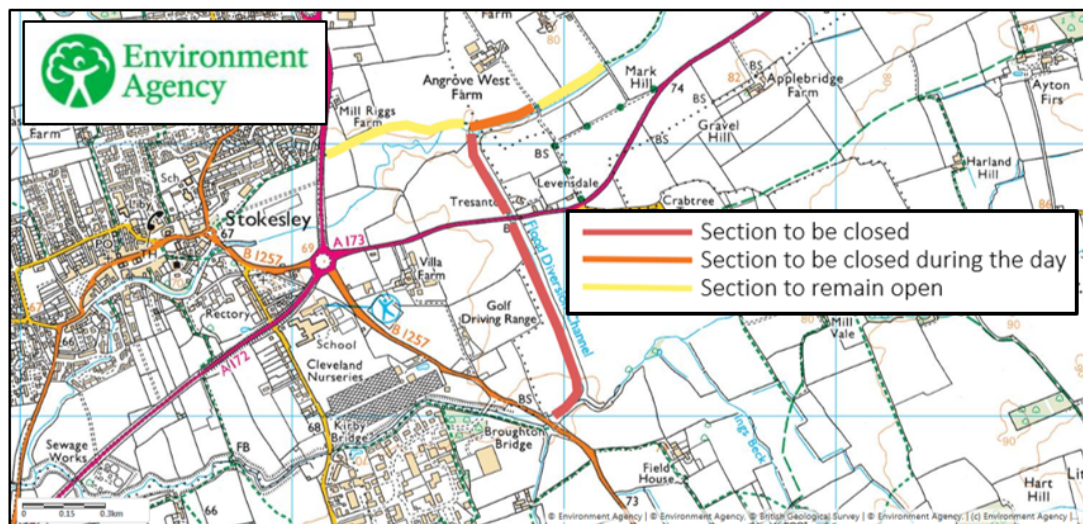
Local Footpath Closures

To ensure public safety throughout the work, it will be necessary to temporarily close some footpaths in the vicinity of the flood diversion channel and upstream flow control structure.

BMM JV have agreed footpath closures with North Yorkshire County Council. This allows us to close the paths from the 12th October 2020 until June 2021 however they will only close paths if it is strictly necessary for certain stages in the work and will endeavour to reopen them when possible.

We have explored various alternative options to allow footpaths to remain open but unfortunately maintaining fully open footpaths throughout the works will not be possible and so some sections will have to be closed. Signage will be kept up to date to inform people of closures.

The map below shows the routes affected.



The current construction plan means:

- The footpath shown in red next to the flood diversion channel north of the A173 will be fully closed until June 2021
- The path shown in red next to the flood diversion channel south of the A173 will be closed from mid-February until June 2021.
- Part of the Stokesley to Great Ayton route shown in orange will be closed during the day from November 2020 until June 2021. The path will be re-opened in the evenings and over weekends.
- The yellow sections are open but are not through routes due to the closure of the orange and red sections.

These are approximate dates and are dependent on construction programme.

One section of public footpath along Eller Beck will be affected as shown below between March and April. This work will fix the frequently boggy wet section of footpath.



BMM JV have a closure agreed with North Yorkshire County Council for the whole path length shown by the red line above. However the working area is only within the blue line and so when possible the path will be opened up with a diversion to Ellerbeck Way shown in green. Clear signage will be in place.

Environmental Enhancements

The new flow control structures will allow us to take advantage of improved water flow through Stokesley town centre and will offer some great environmental benefits.

The structures allow for improved fish passage and have a reduced impact on the natural geomorphological regime of the river, as it will allow more flow to pass down the River Leven before the flood diversion channel needs to be used. This movement of sediment and increased flow diversity through the town will improve habitats for wildlife.

We have a partnership agreement with the Tees Rivers Trust, to deliver river restoration techniques in the Leven as it passes through the town centre. The work will reduce the width of the over-wide sections, create a more meandering natural channel and improve the habitat through landscaping on the river's edge.

The Trusts work has been delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions on social distancing and will commence once restrictions allow.

As referred to above we are developing a tree planting plan. Our intention is to plant hedgerows along the diversion channel boundary. We are in discussions with Broadacres Housing Association, the Stokesley Climate Action group, and Stokesley Secondary School on where trees could be planted. If you would like to contribute to the plan and have any suggestions of where you would like trees planted please get in touch.

Help protect yourself from flooding

Research shows that you will recover quicker from the impacts of flooding if you are better prepared. Check if you are at risk of flooding online at <https://www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk>.

We have a fantastic team of flood wardens who volunteer within Stokesley to work with the Environment Agency during periods of bad weather, helping to monitor river levels and warn residents of the risks of flooding. There are now an amazing 8 members of the Stokesley Flood Group - Isobel Dolan, Philip Ryan, Alec Dick, Jeff King, Pam King, Bridget Holmstrom, Richard Southern, and Lynn Southern. Thanks to you all!

You can also sign up to receive flood alerts and warnings at <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings> or by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

If you would like more information on how you could be more prepared for flooding, please contact your local flood resilience officer Sarah.Duffy@environment-agency.gov.uk

White Clawed Crayfish

Over the past few months the Environment Agency has been investigating the deaths of white clawed Crayfish in the River Leven. We have surveyed for crayfish and samples were tested for crayfish plague, a water mould which is deadly to our rare, native white-clawed crayfish. The water mould can be easily spread throughout the catchment, or into other watercourses. BMM JV have been following our advice and are taking additional biosecurity measures.

The tests showed that the plague was the cause of the deaths, and unfortunately we have not yet found any living white clawed crayfish in the river. We are planning on returning to do more surveys this year on the Leven and its tributaries.

For further information on invasive species and how you can help prevent them spreading please see the link below.

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry/>

How can I find out more information?

If you would like more information about the scheme, or have a specific question, please get in touch with the project mailbox at StokesleyFloodScheme@environment-agency.gov.uk

Or **Brian Hall** - BMM JV Community Liaison Officer on **07423 694783**