

How can we reduce flooding in north Reading and Lower Caversham?

Newsletter

August 2019

The Environment Agency have been working with partners to investigate how we could reduce flood risk in north Reading and Lower Caversham.

Flooding in this area can affect homes, businesses, utilities and a number of busy roads for long periods of time.

We have carried out site investigations and are continuing to develop designs. The project is not fully funded and does not have approval or planning permission at this stage.

What have we been doing?

We are looking into different ways to reduce flood risk in the area. To gain a better understanding of what would be possible we have carried out ground investigation works over the past few months. You may have seen our contractors carrying out environmental surveys and structural assessments. This work included drilling holes to understand what the ground is made up of, checking for groundwater and finding the exact locations of underground services.

We now have information on the groundwater conditions and soil types in the area. Using this information we will be able to inform design proposals more accurately. We are looking for opportunities to provide the greatest benefit, including reducing flood risk to a large number of homes, roads and amenities, and improving landscape and public open space.

What would the proposals mean for me?

Flood walls would not be built right next the river. They would be set back as far from the water's edge as is possible in each location. In some places we may be able to use or replace existing walls. We have worked to reduce wall and embankment heights where possible. We are producing before and after images to help you see how different areas could look. When they are ready we will let you know and will publish them on our website.



Borehole drilling on the south bank towpath on 18 February 2019.

Look out for updates about the scheme on the Environment Agency's Twitter and Facebook accounts:



For more information see our website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/north-reading-and-lower-caversham-flood-alleviation-scheme/north-reading-and-lower-caversham-flood-alleviation-scheme>

How will you mitigate environmental impacts?

- We are working with local wildlife and environmental groups. We are looking for opportunities to provide an overall gain for plants and animals by creating new and improved areas for wildlife.
- Trees play a really important role for the community and local wildlife. We are looking at designs to avoid the loss of trees wherever possible, and would replant appropriate numbers if any were to be removed.

How will I access my property?

- We are working with landowners to understand their day to day access arrangements and what this scheme might mean for them.
- If we include flood gates as part of a scheme we would keep them open at all times unless a flood is forecast.



Minor floods such as the flooding in Christchurch Meadows in January 2014 (left) and November 2012 (right) are likely to become more frequent and severe due to climate change. Flood risk varies across the scheme area. 2 out of 3 people who live in flood risk areas don't know that they are at risk of flooding. Do you know your risk? You can view our flood maps at www.gov.uk/check-if-youre-at-risk-of-flooding and find the risk to your property.

How do I contact you?

- Over the last couple of months, we have been attending local events and holding pop-ups to raise awareness of flood risk and our proposals.
- Our next awareness raising events will be:
 - Christchurch Meadows by the footbridge
 - Wednesday 14 August, 9am to 12pm
 - Thursday 29 August, 11.30am to 14.30pm
 - Reading Pride, Saturday 31 August, 12pm to 3.30pm

If you have any questions or feedback please get in touch at reading&cavershamscheme@environment-agency.gov.uk