

July 2020

## **Environment Agency Recovery Works Update**

This briefing provides an overview of the current recovery works programme being led by the Environment Agency in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire.

### **Recovery summary**

- In September, October and November last year, we saw significant rainfall. This prolonged wet weather resulted in heavily saturated catchments and high flows in many of our watercourses, leading to over-topping and damage to defences in some locations.
- The recovery programme consists of 138 recovery projects with an approx £50 million approved budget.
- Recovery works are progressing well. Throughout Coronavirus we are carrying out the repair of our assets where it remains safe to do so and we can support our teams by providing guidance on safe systems of working based on the latest Public Health England advice.
- Our work maintaining and refurbishing existing assets is essential to mitigate increased flood risk for people, homes and businesses. We are continuing to work with both our contractors and engineers to prioritise, design and construct permanent repairs. We are working through these as efficiently and as timely as possible.
- We are supporting our contractors delivering work on our behalf with clear guidance, carrying out assurance checks and providing public signage on site.
- We are continuing to liaise directly with affected landowners and parish councils, keeping them informed of progress on local repairs.



### **Key recovery work sites underway**

#### **Black Sluice & Lock, Boston**



Since the decommissioning of Black Sluice Pumping Station, we have updated our operating procedures at the Black Sluice Complex to utilise the lock as a gravity sluice more often during rainfall events. This was successfully put to the test over the winter, with only minor over-topping of tributaries in the South Forty Foot Drain despite some of the highest levels recorded. To ensure the resilience of this asset both for flood risk and navigation, a 2-phase programme of works begun in March this year. This has, through careful planning by our site officers and the contractors, been able to continue without delays whilst applying strict Coronavirus protection measures.

- The first phase is complete, with repairs to the hinges on the guillotine gate finished in April and

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replacement of the straps on the pointing doors completed at the end of June. This work was expected 'wear and tear' due to heavy use of the asset over winter.

- The second phase is a larger piece of work jointly being carried out by FCRM, Waterways and MEICA. Refurbishment of the stop logs and a full drain-down of the lock is needed for the Waterways 10 year detailed inspection, and FCRM elements below water will be inspected and repaired (if needed) as well. Again, this is to ensure this essential secondary discharge sluice remains operable during flood events.
- The drain down is currently programmed for the 10 August and will close the lock for 1 month to allow time for the works. Our Waterways team are leading on the formal notification to close the lock.

### **Lincoln Defences Project**

Last year, Lincoln also suffered some damage and isolated flooding from heavy rainfall and high river flows. The Lincoln Defences Project is a series of refurbishment works that will maintain the existing standard of flood-risk protection for around 4,000 homes and businesses in Lincoln. As part of these refurbishments, locations which did suffer damage last year have been encompassed into the project.

The £6m project began in June 2019 and, subject to reasonable weather conditions, is expected to be completed by the 31st March 2021. More than two kilometres of riverside walls and three sluices will have been renovated, as well as environmental improvements, generating economic benefits valued at almost £33m.

Naturally, despite regular maintenance, defences need repairing and improving every now and then. This investment will ensure they continue to offer the same reliable standard of protection for years to come, while – at the same time – introducing measures that will enhance the environment for wildlife.



### **Further information**

Please find attached a map of all projects in this year's programme.

Please contact the Environment Agency's Recovery Team on [recovery.lincsandnorthants@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:recovery.lincsandnorthants@environment-agency.gov.uk) for further information on the programme or a specific project.