

## **£12.1M Flood defences in Caton Road, Lancaster officially launched**

- The scheme will better protect more than 170 homes and businesses to a Storm Desmond level and has been in operation since December 2020
- A further 1100 business properties will benefit from the scheme as a result of reduced flooding to surrounding roads and infrastructure
- Lancaster flooded during Storm Desmond on 5 and 6 December 2015, when river levels exceeded the design level of the existing defences, resulting in the extensive flooding of the city.

A major flood risk management scheme on the River Lune, designed to protect hundreds of properties from the risk of flooding, has launched today.

Covering the Caton Road and Aldrens Lane area, the new scheme reduces flood risk to more than 170 homes and businesses at a cost of £12.1 million pounds – substantially increasing protection from the previous defences.

In partnership with the Environment Agency, Lancaster City Council have built new and improved existing flood walls and is making significant improvements to surface water flooding in the area.

Work during the scheme also improved and fully resurfaced the Millennium cycle path and the project has planted 3000 trees in the city to date. 5000 trees will be planted in total when work on the surface water flood mitigation is completed. This equates to 5 new trees for every one lost during the construction phase.

Play and recreation facilities have also been improved, including new park benches and entrance features. Additionally, thrill seekers can soon make use of a new climbing wall utilising 8 of the pre-cast flood walls not used during construction.

The project team secured £3.85M in European Regional Development Funding as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020 towards the scheme and all of this funding has now been claimed. This means that the defences have been delivered around 2 years earlier as a result.

To mark the official launch of the fluvial flood defences, Lancaster City Council and the Environment Agency hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony and presentation next to the River Lune flood gate close to the Holiday Inn on the 1st October 2021.

**Councillor Caroline Jackson, leader of Lancaster City Council, said:**

“The 2015 floods that followed Storm Desmond caused devastation to businesses along Caton Road. Many said they would not be able to survive another

catastrophic flood and would rather relocate than run the risk, so it was vital for our economy that we improved the defences along this stretch of the Lune.

“A number of homes will also be better protected and the scheme has brought other benefits such as the resurfacing of the cycle track and planting of new trees. I’d like to pay tribute to the huge amount of work that has been undertaken by officers in the city council, in partnership with the Environment Agency, construction partners, a number of local businesses, and our communities in delivering this vitally important project.”

**Andy Brown, Environment Agency’s Flood and Coastal Risk Manager for Lancashire, said:**

“The communities of Lancaster have seen first-hand how devastating flooding can be. That’s why I’m so pleased to see the launch of the fluvial flood defences of this vital scheme.

“This new £12.1 million investment will better protect homes and businesses in Lancaster, and is an example of how we work with partners to make communities more resilient to the escalating impacts of the climate emergency.

“The Caton Road and Aldrens Lane communities will have a substantially higher standard of protection, and whilst we can never guarantee that there will never be future flooding, we hope that this scheme will bring peace of mind to residents. We look forward to completing the surface water mitigation in the coming months.”

**What work has been undertaken:**

- £3.85M of European Regional Development Funding has been achieved as part of the funding package. The Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities is the Managing Authority for European Regional Development Fund. Established by the European Union, the European Regional Development Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit .
- Work has included the construction of new flood walls and embankments to directly better protect over 170 homes and businesses and benefit over 1100 businesses through reduced flooding to infrastructure such as bridges and roads.
- 2.8km of new walls and embankments have been constructed along the left and right banks of the River Lune.
- The project is currently assessing the required surface water mitigation upstream of Caton Road and around the M6 and new Bay Gateway Junction.

**Future investment**

- Homes and businesses in Cumbria and Lancashire are to be better

protected from flooding and coastal erosion as part of plans published by the government and Environment Agency, with £82.1m invested in more than 100 schemes in 2020/21

- The investment is part of plans outlining £5.2 billion of investment over the next six years. More than £860 million will be spent in 2021/22 boosting design and construction of more than 1,000 schemes across England as part of the Environment Agency's annual capital programme.
- The delivery of the new schemes follows the [successful delivery of the previous programme](#). The government invested £2.6 billion in new flood defences through this programme – surpassing its target of better protecting 300,000 homes between 2015 and 2021. The new schemes will be an important part of the implementation of [the government's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Policy Statement](#) and the [Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Risk Management Strategy](#)