

£450,000 repair work for Hereford flood wall damaged in winter floods

The 3 named storms in February – Storm Ciara, Dennis and Jorge – caused extensive disruption and severe impacts with many areas flooded, including parts of the Midlands.

With ground already sodden from last autumn's heavy rains and floods, the area quickly became flooded, with many rivers reaching some of the highest levels ever seen, including the Wye which reached the highest level ever recorded in Hereford.

Despite this our flood defences protected 201 properties in Hereford, including 165 residential and 36 businesses, which otherwise would have flooded.

Making sure flood defences are in top shape to protect communities is a priority for the Environment Agency and an £8m flood recovery programme of the repair of flood defences in the Environment Agency's West Midlands area¹, damaged in the February floods is now underway. This includes the £450,000 project to repair the Hereford flood wall.

Hereford's riverside flood wall is a key part of the flood protection for the town and scaffolding is now in place to allow our consultants safe access. They will be surveying the extent of the damage to the brick cladding before work on repairing the damage can begin.

The repair work will begin as soon as we understand the extent and nature of repairs needed. The scaffolding will remain for the duration of the repairs.

Richard Henderson, Asset Recovery Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

This is a significant project to repair an area of the cladding on the Hereford flood wall. It poses quite a challenging project for our contractors to reach the damage, hence the need to erect the scaffolding. However, there is no damage to the core of the wall.

Repairing this flood defence asset will help to strengthen the flood wall and make a big difference to reducing the risk of flooding to the local area.

The sheer volume of water in rivers in the February floods put pressure on many of our flood defences. Since then, where possible, and, whilst adhering to government guidance, our teams have been inspecting defences to check for any damage and the need for any repairs, so that we can ensure they are ready for any future floods. We have also used drone footage to help with the process.

Environment Agency teams work around the clock to help protect people from flooding, but flood risk can never be eliminated completely, everyone still has a responsibility to take steps to protect themselves.

Check whether you're at risk of flooding, and sign up to receive our free flood warnings by calling 0345 988 1188 or [registering online](#). By registering, you can choose how you'd prefer to be reached – by text, phone call to a mobile or landline, or even email – giving you vital notice to prepare if flooding is expected.

Since the floods in November 2019, the Environment Agency has checked 3,750 flood assets across the West Midlands¹ and identified over 95 individual repairs that are required at a cost of £8m, to protect around 4,000 properties.

The repair works are being carried out by the Environment Agency's contractors, Jackson and design consultant ARUP as a collaborative delivery team.

Notes to editors

- ¹The Environment Agency's West Midlands' area includes Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Staffordshire, Birmingham and the Black Country.
- In the February 2020 floods 166 properties were flooded in Hereford.
- The Environment Agency worked as part of an operational team alongside emergency response partners including Herefordshire Council, West Mercia Police, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and health partners to support residents and protect the most vulnerable.
- According to Met Office statistics, February 2020 was the wettest February on record for England with double the average monthly rainfall. It was also the 5th wettest of any calendar month since 1862 and some areas experienced a month's worth of rain in 24 hours. In England 154.9mm rainfall fell, 258% of the average rainfall for the month. Some places received over 4 times the average monthly rainfall.

We encourage all those who may be at risk of flooding to take steps to protect themselves by: