

Godalming flood alleviation scheme is officially unveiled

Properties in Godalming will be better protected from flooding thanks to a brand new flood alleviation scheme. The construction of the scheme cost approximately £4.5 million and the Environment Agency contributed approximately a third of the cost, through government grant-in-aid.

Godalming flood alleviation scheme, which will protect 90 properties, was officially unveiled today, Friday 11 October 2019, by the chair of the Environment Agency, Emma Howard Boyd, and South West Surrey MP Jeremy Hunt.

A 525-metre flood wall has been built along the banks of the Hell's Ditch to reduce flooding in the Meadow and Catteshall area. The new defence is built to withstand a flood with a 0.5% probability of one occurring in any year, plus a provision for climate change. This is part of the Environment Agency's long-term approach to be better prepared for the increased level of risk that climate change will bring.

Godalming has a history of flooding, with 4 notable events in 1968, 1990, 2000 and 2013. During the most recent 2013 flood, Meadow and Catteshall Road area were flooded, with access from Meadow to Godalming severely restricted.

A removable flood barrier will complete the defence across Catteshall Road, put up only when flooding is predicted and the road needs to be closed. Two pumping stations have also been installed to pump out a combined total of 84 litres per second. The pumps catch water fed by the surface water drainage system and ground water and will pump water back to Hell's Ditch during times of high river levels.

The opening ceremony saw Environment Agency officers demonstrate the removable flood barrier on Catteshall Bridge. This flood barrier is customised for the scheme and can be put up quickly to stop flood water flowing from Lammis Land towards Meadow.

Emma Howard Boyd, the Environment Agency's chair, said:

This innovative flood scheme project is an example of how partnership working at all levels can achieve fantastic results. As the impacts of the climate emergency become more apparent, making communities like Godalming more resilient is the Environment Agency's top priority and builds on the Government's £2.6 billion investment in flood and coastal defences up and down the country.

The scheme has been developed as a partnership project between the Environment Agency, Surrey County Council, Waverley Borough Council, Godalming Town Council, Thames Water, Scottish and Southern Electricity and the local Godalming Flood Group supported by Jeremy Hunt MP.

In addition to building and maintaining flood defences the Environment Agency also runs a free flood warning service. You can sign up for free flood warnings on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) or you can call Floodline free on 0345 988 1188.