

Press release: Calstock flood defence improvements

The existing Calstock flood embankment was improved in the 1980s following a significant flood in the village. It still plays an important role in reducing flood risk in Calstock, but requires periodic repairs.

In 2012/13 the Environment Agency carried out emergency work on just over 100 metres of the embankment. This work incorporated less than 10% of the total embankment length, but cost in excess of £300,000. Maintaining the current embankment in its existing location on a 'patch and repair basis' is not sustainable.

The Environment Agency is now looking at ways to continue to manage flood risk in the village. Likely options will include moving the existing embankment inland away from the river where it will be under less pressure from erosion.

Project manager Dan Boswell said:

It's our priority to do everything we can to protect people from flooding.

Unfortunately the current embankment is no longer viable so we have to look at other options to maintain the current level of flood protection for Calstock. One of the options involves moving the existing embankment inland.

In addition to flood risk management benefits, moving the embankment would enable the creation of reed-bed habitat attracting additional wildlife. It is important to note that we are looking at all options which may be available to us. We will be talking to the community about these before final decisions are made.

The Environment Agency is looking to work with local partners to ensure that people can still use this area recreationally. Currently the Environment Agency has granted a permissive footpath across the embankment and they are keen that the footpath should continue in some form, but this will require the collaboration of local partners.

Over the next few months the Environment Agency's consultants will be carrying out ground investigations and topographic surveys to help them develop suitable options. When they have developed these the Environment Agency will arrange a drop-in session in Calstock for the community to come along and view and comment on proposals. This is likely to take place in the autumn.

The Environment Agency is spending more than £2.5 billion to build flood

schemes around the country, which will better protect 300,000 homes by 2021.