

Press release: Major milestone for £45 million York Flood Alleviation Scheme

A major milestone has been reached as construction work gets underway on the Environment Agency's York Flood Alleviation Scheme, in partnership with City of York Council.

Contractors have started preparing to raise and improve flood defences from Westgate Apartments to the Park Inn hotel on North Street. This section of the flood defence scheme will also see the floodgate under Lendal Bridge increased in height. A site compound has started being constructed on Tanner Row opposite the Maltings pub.

The work forms part of the £45 million York Flood Alleviation Scheme which will better protect 2,000 properties across the city by 2021.

Project manager Richard Lever, of the Environment Agency, said:

It is great news that we're now on the ground working to better protect York, its residents and businesses from flooding.

The flood wall along North Street has previously come close to overtopping and needs increasing in height to cope with rising flood heights and the effects of climate change.

In both 2000 and 2015 the river levels were close to the top of the wall so sandbags were used to increase the defence height.

If we don't carry out this work there is also a risk that flood water might flow round the end of the existing defences, finding a path through the War Memorial Gardens and the York City Rowing Club boathouse to flood properties on Rougier Street and Wellington Row, as well as cutting off Station Road.

Cllr Andrew Waller, Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning, said:

City of York Council is working closely with the Environment Agency on these schemes. Protecting people's homes and businesses is an absolute priority so we can defend the city in the future.

The work will consist of:

- Raising the existing floodwall along North Street by up to 30cm and installing new flood gates, and increasing the width of the gate nearest Lendal Bridge to 2.5m to improve access
- Increasing the height of the Lendal Bridge floodgate by 30cm with an additional 15cm demountable panel for extreme events.
- Enabling demountable flood barriers to be used across the main and second entrance to the Memorial Gardens.
- Constructing a new flood wall up to 70cm high along Leeman Road from Westgate Apartments to a new embankment in the grounds of York City Rowing Club, with the incorporation of demountable barriers at access points.
- Raising of the wall and replacement/refurbishment of penstocks at the Park Inn/riverside walkway.

The section of Leeman Road used as a coach stop, adjacent to Memorial Gardens, will be closed for the duration of the work. The work at Memorial Gardens is expected to be complete in time for the Remembrance Sunday service.

Access will remain open on the road next to Westgate apartments, to the Esplanade car park and along Wellington Row to the rowing club. Traffic lights will be used to manage traffic along North Street and Wellington Row during the wall-raising work and a banksman will manage traffic to and from the site.

Work on the Lendal Bridge flood gates will take place on one gate at a time so access will not be impeded until testing is carried out, where it will be closed for approximately four days.

The work will take place in two parts; the construction of the new wall and embankment in War Memorial Gardens, and the raising of North Street flood wall and Lendal Bridge flood gate.

While the majority of work will only take place in daytime hours, night working is expected in a short section, near the junction of Leeman Road and Station Avenue. Further construction work is expected to start between Water End and Scarborough Bridge, at the back of St Peter's School, in the coming months.

The Environment Agency will continue working with City of York Council between now and 2021 to carry out a major programme of flood defence upgrades within the city. Initial ideas were identified within the York 5 Year Plan, published in November 2016.

For further details email yorkfloodplan@environment-agency.gov.uk or visit: