

Sheffield river maintenance works to reduce flood risk

The Environment Agency will be starting work in the river channel in Sheffield this month (September) to help reduce the risk of flooding in the city.

These works will take place in the River Loxley at Malinbridge and Hillsborough, and on the River Don at Norfolk Bridge.

During high river flows it is important to ensure that bridges and the nearby channel don't restrict the flow of water. To ensure this, gravel, brick and stone deposits will be reduced from areas where it has built up underneath bridge arches and in the adjacent river.

Overhanging vegetation and trees around bridges will also be removed to ensure the flow of water in the river is not restricted and debris is less likely to get caught.

This project is part of the £32 million programme of recovery works across Yorkshire to repair defences damaged by the flood event last February. Since November officers have inspected over 3,000 flood defence assets along the Rivers Don, Rother and Aire, carried out urgent repairs, and continued work to improve flood defences.

To plan these works, the project team has worked with flood risk, geomorphology and fisheries specialists from the Environment Agency to minimise the impact the reduction of the deposits may have on fish and wildlife in the area. Carrying out the work in September also avoids fish spawning periods and the bird nesting season.

Lianne Grogan, Sheffield catchment advisor for the Environment Agency, said:

These works are important as part of our river maintenance programme to help reduce the risk of flooding. We've worked closely with teams to consider flood risk, fish and wildlife, and this approach ensures the works balance the need to improve the flow of water through the river during a flood, whilst also retaining channel gravels for aquatic species and vegetation cover for fish.

We can't entirely prevent flooding from rivers and streams, but we can reduce the likelihood of flooding by ensuring that rivers, becks and streams are free from excess debris and vegetation that might block the watercourse so that in high rain events water remains in the channel.

Works are planned to start from 7 September and expected to take around a week at each location depending on weather conditions. The Environment Agency has employed contractors AmcoGiffen to carry out the work.

For any enquiries about the work email: SYPS0@environment-agency.gov.uk