

Dunball Sluice to get 25 year life extension

Press release

One of Somerset's most important tidal defence assets is being refurbished so it can continue protecting Bridgwater and the Somerset Levels and Moors.



Dunball Sluice near Bridgwater

A £4.2 million refurbishment scheme will refurbish or renew mechanical and electrical components in Dunball Sluice. This sluice controls flood flows in the King's Sedgemoor Drain (KSD) and the River Sowey, which is also known as the River Parrett Flood Relief Channel.

Dunball Sluice is a critical structure in the defence of the Somerset Levels and Moors and became operational in 1971. It sits at the location where the King's Sedgemoor Drain (KSD) meets the tidal River Parrett. 4 gated culverts control water levels by releasing water into the Parrett when the tide permits while preventing the tide from bringing saltwater into the KSD. This would impact nationally and internationally designated freshwater habitats.

The refurbishment will also make environmental improvements to encourage the migration of eels and improve access for otters between the KSD and the River Parrett. Health and safety improvements for Environment Agency staff and contractors who operate and maintain the sluice will also be completed as part of the scheme.

Rachel Burden of the Environment Agency said:

The project will extend the life of Dunball Sluice. Reducing the potential for failure and mitigate the risk of flooding to properties and internationally and nationally important freshwater habitats.

The scheme, funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) with £650,000 partnership funding provided by Somerset Rivers Authority. The scheme will begin at the end of July 2022 and is programmed to be completed by 2024.

Work begins on creating Dunball Sluice which opened in 1971

Cllr Mike Stanton, Chair of Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA), said:

I'm delighted that the SRA is helping to make this work possible. Dunball Sluice is a crucial facility. Refurbishing it boosts the SRA's own major scheme to increase the floodwater-carrying capacity of the River Sowy and King's Sedgemoor Drain.

Sowy-KSD works are being delivered for the SRA by the Environment Agency up until the end of October. As partners we're working together to reduce flood risks across a large part of the Somerset Levels and Moors.

The work will not have an impact on the continuing operation of the sluice and all refurbishment works will be undertaken within the compound area.

If there is a need to move water out of the system into the Parrett but the tidal gates can't be used due to the state of the tide. Then temporary pumps can be set up at the sluice to pump water over the structure and into the river. This was last done in 2014 and upgrades have been made since to better accommodate temporary pumps deployed from the nearby Bradney depot.

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[Home Secretary continues funding to support victims of terrorism](#)

Victims and survivors of terrorist attacks will continue to receive the practical and emotional support they need, as the government announces further funding to four organisations providing this vital support.

Cruse Bereavement Support, the Peace Foundation, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and Victim Support have been supported by government funding since October 2020.

Backed by this funding, these organisations have been able to set up a 24/7

support line, offer mental health assessments and referrals, provide bereavement support and establish long-term peer support networks.

Today's funding extension will ensure that all victims of terrorism can continue to access these support services, regardless of when the attack happened.

Home Secretary, Priti Patel, said:

We recognise the victims of terror attacks can be affected in more ways than many of us could ever contemplate.

The continuation of funding will ensure those affected by terrorist attacks can be provided with a broad range of practical and emotional support in their attempt to work through these traumatic events.

This year marks the fifth anniversary of several horrific terrorist attacks that took place in 2017.

The Home Office's Victims of Terrorism Unit recognises a victim to be anyone affected by a terrorist attack, whether that be someone who has suffered physical, mental or emotional harm, those who have been bereaved (including extended family members), witnesses and first responders to the scene of the incident.

The services are available to anyone affected by an attack in the UK, or those returning to the UK following an attack overseas.

[Victim Support](#) run a 24/7 support line to provide victims with immediate, practical, and easily accessible support. They can be contacted on 08 08 16 89 111 or via [live chat](#)

[South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust's](#) service focuses on outreach, screening, assessment and onwards referral for psychological treatments.

[Cruse Bereavement Support](#) provide bereavement support for victims who are not currently eligible to receive support under the Homicide Service.

[The Peace Foundation](#) facilitate a long-term peer support network for victims of terrorism and provide one-to-one casework support.

Further information about the support services available to victims can be found at victimsofterrorism.campaign.gov.uk.

Report outlines youth-centred framework to build a more confident and inclusive Northern Ireland

Press release

Wilton Park publishes report reflecting on the dialogue between participants at a special conference looking ahead to the 25th anniversary of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement.



- Youth-focused recommendations published following first-of-its-kind conference on achieving a more confident and inclusive Northern Ireland, looking forward to the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement's 25th anniversary.
- Conference highlighted importance of supporting a culture of empathy, continued and sustained integration in all aspects of society, and entrepreneurial ambition to achieve a brighter future for Northern Ireland's young people.
- Participants agreed that the public, third and private sectors should better involve young people in decision making, so they have a greater say in Northern Ireland's future.

Wilton Park today published a report reflecting on the open and constructive dialogue between participants at a special conference on a more confident and inclusive Northern Ireland, held in partnership with the Northern Ireland Office and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

The conference was convened looking ahead to the 25th anniversary of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in April 2023. It brought together young people with politicians and representatives from the public sector, academia, peace-building organisations, and youth workers to consider the conditions needed to build a fair, prosperous and vibrant future for all.

Participants reflected on the extraordinary transformation Northern Ireland has undergone over the last quarter century, and shared ideas on how Northern Ireland can reach its potential, with a focus on the role of young people.

These ideas included:

- Ensuring that children and young people from all backgrounds are included in decision-making processes – participants also called on business and civic society to be more proactive in their youth engagement.
- Longer-term investments and improvements in education, in particular to support greater integration through education.
- Developing empathy skills, including via the education and skills system to support a more stable and just society.
- Work to attain a more confident and inclusive society is something that begins in very early stages of life, and can be supported by early years interventions.
- Instilling a sense of entrepreneurial ambition within young people would retain talent and support Northern Ireland's future economic prosperity.

Looking forward, the conference concluded that the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement's upcoming 25th anniversary presents a strong opportunity to share Northern Ireland's success story with the world – with a particular focus on promoting its innovative economy, cultural prowess and creativity, and areas of natural beauty.

Minister of State for Northern Ireland, Conor Burns, who attended the conference, said:

This report really captures the positive and uplifting discussions that were had at Wilton Park.

Bringing together young voices and decision makers is so crucial in political debate, and I was inspired to hear fresh thinking to help us achieve a more confident and inclusive Northern Ireland with long-term peace and prosperity.

As we move closer to the 25th anniversary of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, it is more important than ever to encourage individuals from all walks of life to engage in dialogue so that we may build an even brighter future.

In support for greater integration through education, the UK government has recently announced a [£1.9m funding package](#) to support schools through the transformation process towards integrated status.

Notes to editors

- The report is available to download. As the conference was held under the Chatham House Rule, conference participants are not identified: <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/reports/>
- Wilton Park was established as part of an initiative inspired by Winston

Churchill to help re-establish peace and democracy in Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War. Discussions on how to promote peace, reconciliation and understanding have been a core mandate of Wilton Park ever since. Find out more about the conference at: www.wiltonpark.org.uk/event/a-more-confident-and-inclusive-northern-ireland/

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[Stoke angler fined £461 for illegal fishing](#)

Kieran Hall, 29, of Saturn Road, Stoke, admitted the offences at Northampton magistrates on 1 August 2022.

He was fined £146 for fishing without a licence and a further £146 for failing to give his name and address when asked. He was also ordered to pay £135 costs and a £34 victim's surcharge.

The offences took place on 12 March 2022 when Hall was fishing at Holden Lane Pool, Milton, near Hanley, Staffordshire.

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency said:

This case shows we will pursue offenders through the courts and won't hesitate to take enforcement action where anglers break rules.

This offender did not have a valid licence, but he was also unhelpful when questioned by our officers.

We will not tolerate abusive behaviour towards our officers who routinely undertake licence checks, and we urge anyone with information about illegal fishing to contact us on 0800 807060.

Background information

All anglers need a valid Environment Agency rod licence.

The money raised through the sales of rod licences is re-invested back into

the sport and illegal fishing undermines the Environment Agency's efforts to make fishing sustainable.

Anyone found fishing illegally may face prosecution and a fine of up to £2,500.

The Environment Agency carries out enforcement work all year round and is supported by partners including the police and the Angling Trust.

Fisheries enforcement work is intelligence-led, targeting known hot-spots and where illegal fishing is reported.

Any angler aged 13 or over, fishing on a river, canal or still water needs a licence.

A 1 day licence costs from just £6 and an annual licence costs from just £30 (concessions available). Junior licences are free for 13 to 16 year olds.

Licences are available to purchase [online](#) or by calling the Environment Agency on 0344 800 5386 between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday.

[Future stars create fusion energy machine at school](#)

School children from Waverley Junior Academy, near Rotherham, have combined science with art to create a fusion energy machine of the future.

Year 5 students took part in two workshops to learn about fusion – based on the same processes that powers the sun and stars – which has great potential to become an environmentally responsible part of the world's future energy supply.

Before taking to their pens and pencils to design a star-making machine, the students discovered what fusion is and let-off steam by running around to create energy of their own.

The fun and interactive sessions were delivered by a team from the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) based at the neighbouring technology park in Catcliffe.

Jordan d'Arras, graduate development engineer at UKAEA, said: "The children were really enthusiastic and asked so many good questions. They learned the importance of safe, low carbon energy in the fight against climate change and heard about the variety of career opportunities we have at UKAEA that will help make fusion happen. We hope to have inspired our engineers, scientists and communicators of the future!"

The students went head-to-head in a design competition and impressed the UKAEA team with their interpretation of what a future fusion energy machine could look like.

Waverley Junior Academy's Year 5 teachers, Patrick Selkirk and Holly Peace, were very proud of the scientific knowledge and artistic talent of their classes.

Patrick said: "It was a great experience for the children to fully engage with. They had previously learnt all about renewable energy and the effects of non-renewable sources. The UKAEA workshop was enlightening and well-pitched to the children. The workshop began conversations that sparked debate about fusion energy."

Based on the same process that powers our sun and the stars, fusion has long been considered the ultimate energy source:

- When a mix of two forms of hydrogen (deuterium and tritium) are heated to extreme temperatures (10 times hotter than the core of the sun) they fuse together to create helium and release vast amounts of energy in the form of heat.
- This superheated material forms a plasma, the fourth state of matter found in lightning and neon signs. Plasma has incredibly complex, but fascinating, physics akin to weather systems, and predicting its behaviour is just as difficult.
- There is more than one way of achieving fusion. At UKAEA, we hold this hot plasma using strong magnets in a doughnut-shaped machine called a tokamak.
- The energy created from fusion can generate electricity similar to existing power stations.

For further information about UKAEA's fusion technology facility in Rotherham, visit: ccfe.ukaea.uk