

Work paused on the Carlisle flood risk management scheme for the winter

Since construction started in July 2019, we have encountered the wettest August and September in the last 30 years according to the Met Office. This has made working conditions for machinery and Environment Agency teams on the ground difficult for both the in river works and embankment construction.

Works to date have been focussed in the Warwick Road area. The decision to pause has not been taken lightly and the Environment Agency consider it will be of greater benefit in the long run to pause rather than attempt to carry on through winter when we are likely to make little progress. Much of the plant and equipment will be moved from Melbourne Park from the end of October and will return in 2020.

The change in the works timetable will not increase the flood risk to the local area. In addition to this flood scheme the Environment Agency have been preparing for the wetter winter period. Their 2019 winter readiness plans remain unchanged and include: replacing flood gates at the Caldew Maltings; control panel repairs at Little Caldew pumping station; repairs to flood embankments at Willowholme and Parham Beck; repairs to Durranhill flood storage basin; as well as regularly removing blockages and debris that would have increased flood risk.

Stewart Mounsey, flood manager for Cumbria, said:

I would like to reassure people that pause doesn't mean stop. We will be busy behind the scenes working with our designers and contractor to plan our works for an accelerated start in spring 2020. Although we won't be building embankments in the winter the public may see some activity in the winter months that will be supporting the accelerated return.

The pause does not affect the completion of our works which were originally planned for spring 2020 to enable the new defences to be built ahead of winter 2020. Pausing main construction works in winter 2019 will not affect our 2020 winter readiness or our ongoing preparations for delivery of Phases 2 and 3.

The Environment Agency can never fully protect people from future flooding, so they are asking residents at risk of flooding to prepare in advance by going [online](#) and signing up for free flood warnings. Alternatively, they can telephone the Environment Agency Floodline on 0345 988 1188 and find out what they can do to protect themselves and their property when flooding hits.