

Work under way to upgrade coastal defences in Essex

The work is taking place along a stretch of coastline west of the Stansgate Abbey Road, north of Steeple, and is expected to last until December.

The scheme, which has a budget of over £2 million, will ensure the embankment continues to reduce the risk of flooding to more than 200 properties, including those in the nearby village of St Lawrence, as well as large areas of agricultural land and important habitat.

The old protection has deteriorated due to its age and needs replacing. If left, the embankment would wash away over time and eventually this would lead to flooding of the land behind.

Environment Agency contractors JBA Bentley are removing the old concrete scour protection from the embankment and replacing it with a specialist mix of stone and asphalt (OSA).

Environment Agency project lead Robert Brown said:

This work will improve the condition of the defence and will reduce the need for maintenance works for many years to come.

The OSA and equipment is being brought to site by lorry. We and JBA Bentley are working hard to ensure that any disruption is kept to a minimum.

For example, the old concrete blocks will be placed at the bottom of the seawall to act as a wave break and habitat, which will remove the need to take them away by lorry.

The work is being complemented by a similar scheme undertaken by the landowner to repair adjoining defences.

Nationally the Environment Agency is investing £2.6 billion between 2015 and 2021, delivering more than 1,500 projects, to better protect 300,000 homes from flooding and coastal erosion.

In May, the Environment Agency also launched its draft [Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy](#) which takes a long-term approach to how we can work together to build better resilience into our homes, businesses and infrastructure, ensuring that we are better prepared for the increased level of risk that the future will bring.