

Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Project

CONTENTS:

Background	1 - 2
Flooding from the sea	2 - 4
Flooding from rivers and extreme rainfall	4 - 5
Your involvement	5 - 6

Hello and welcome to our latest edition of the project newsletter.

Since Lowestoft was flooded from the sea in 2013 and from rivers and extreme rainfall in 2015, all of our partners have been involved in working to reduce this risk to the community. By protecting homes and businesses from flooding we anticipate that this will help to develop and grow Lowestoft.

The project team has been through a number of consultation and engagement periods. The work has progressed into the design stage and we have a better idea what the walls might look like, and how the installation of the barrier might take place.

We are pleased to report that all partners have been working together closely to find a solution that enables the port of Lowestoft to continue to operate whilst the work is in progress and allow Lowestoft to be a strategic point for the wind energy projects which are important on a national scale. The solution is complex and innovative. It will also be the first of its kind in the country.

The designs to reduce the flooding from rivers and extreme rainfall are progressing. It is encouraging to see that many of the eligible residents have indicated that they would like to protect their properties using simple but effective measures.

We hope that the information is helpful to you, but if you have any queries at all, please do get in touch.

Best wishes

David Ritchie

Chair, Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Board



Background

During the December 2013 tidal surge over 160 homes and businesses in Lowestoft were flooded. In addition to this road and rail networks were significantly disrupted. A severe rainfall event in July 2015 also resulted in over 30 homes adjacent to Kirkley Stream suffering internal flooding.

The Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Project is about developing a way forward to reduce the risk of flooding from the sea, rivers and from extreme rainfall. The target date for completion is 2023 and when finished, the project will support the economic growth and regeneration of Lowestoft and reduce the risk of flooding to existing homes and businesses.

So far an over arching strategy has been developed in consultation with partners, landowners and the community, we are in the process of developing design before submitting a request to build to Government later this year.

A lot of work has been done to date to find out what will be best for the residents and businesses of Lowestoft. Studies and modelling has been undertaken to find out what is feasible and now the schemes are in the process of being refined.

Lowestoft is an important harbour strategically, particularly for the wind energy projects that use the port. This means that the work to install a tidal gate must happen at suitable times so that the wind energy projects can continue operations. The works to reduce flood risk can only happen in the winter months and the project team has had to be innovative in their design.

A vital part of the project is working with and consulting local communities, businesses and organisations. At a number of key points in the project we have consulted with the public and key stakeholders. Your views have been very important to helping us to shape the work. There is more still happening and you may have seen the Watertight Words project who have been working with local schools and the community to help to design art work around the town and engravings that will go on to glass sections of the sea defence. Please do keep an eye out for other events that we hope you will get involved with.

What are we considering and how has the project progressed?

Flooding from the sea

The main risk from tidal flooding is from the sea. This is caused by a surge that develops in the North Sea along the eastern coastline of the United Kingdom as was demonstrated by the events in 1953 and most recently in December 2013 and again in 2017 although to a lesser extent. Lowestoft has very limited existing tidal flood defences and without this investment, the town will remain at significant risk.

The part of the project addressing tidal flooding covers the areas of Lowestoft deemed to be at significant risk between the Outer Harbour and the western end of Lake Lothing at Mutford Lock.

In deciding the best ways in which we should manage flood risk in Lowestoft now and in the future, we have carried out a number of studies reviewing risk, projections which include climate change projections and costs. Ground investigations have been carried out as part of the engineering work.

To ensure that impacts to people, the local economy and the environment have been fully understood and taken into consideration, everyone living, visiting or working on or around Lowestoft have had the opportunity to take part in determining how flood risk within Lowestoft should be managed.

Public engagement so far:

- 6th June – 29th July 2016 (Public consultation on options)
- 25th January – 8th March 2017 (Strategic Environment Assessment)
- 17th – 18th March 2017 (Lowestoft Fayre)
- 31st October 2017 (Workshop with key stakeholders)
- 30th October – 14th December 2017 (Public consultation on rivers and extreme rainfall, environmental impacts (PEIR), river users' issues and visual aspects of the tidal element)

“Lowestoft is an important harbour strategically, particularly for the wind energy projects that use the port.”

Flooding from the sea continued

The best location for flood walls has been agreed by working with landowners, partners and the community and we hope to have the first walls under construction by 2018.

Lowestoft is an extremely important location on the coast of England due to the port and particularly because the wind energy projects use the harbour to access the North Sea. It is vital that Lowestoft retains these important operations now and for future business. This important part of Lowestoft's economy really puts Lowestoft on the map in terms of national importance for supporting the energy supply to the UK.

The port and channel must continue to function during their main working months in spring and summer, which means that the tidal gate can only be delivered in their dormant winter months of mid October to mid March. The winter working period means that the works come with the added risk from weather and this combined with the short working period means that the design team has had to be very creative to find a solution. This solution is the first of its kind in the country.

Due to the complex nature of the work the project team is expecting to deliver the work in phases, with the sea wall built in the first phase. The tidal gate, which is the technically difficult aspect of the work, is expected in the second phase of works.

“everyone living, visiting or working on or around Lowestoft have had the opportunity to take part in determining how flood risk within Lowestoft should be managed.”

Temporary flood barriers

Lowestoft's temporary flood barriers were delivered in November 2016 and you may have seen them operate during a surge event. We have worked closely with all professional partners such as the blue light services, the Environment Agency,



Associated British Ports and the Suffolk Resilience Forum to develop a deployment plan and operational procedures for the 1.4km of temporary barrier.

This plan and the deployment of the barriers were tested during the tidal surge that happened on Friday 13th January 2017. Although the tide did not reach the heights predicted, the barrier deployment has been tested in some extreme weather conditions.

Surge events and your safety

We will continue to share information about surge events but it is extremely important to stay away from the flood risk zones when extremely high tides are predicted. The blue light teams and operational teams work to protect Lowestoft from flood and if crowds gather the risks can be extremely dangerous. Please stay at home or follow the instructions of the emergency professionals.

Flooding from rivers and extreme rainfall

Intense rainfall events, particularly during the summer months seem to be becoming more frequent and severe; this is resulting in the urban watercourses and drainage systems in Lowestoft being put under considerable pressure. The project is working to identify those properties most vulnerable and then take steps to reduce the risk of flooding from rivers (fluvial) and surface water (pluvial).

Waveney District Council continues to provide overall project management, with Suffolk County Council leading on the delivery of the fluvial and pluvial elements. Modelling has been undertaken to understand how to manage flood risk reduction, along with options and costs, some of which are detailed below.

A group of properties alongside Kirkley Stream have been identified to benefit from the construction of a flood wall and associated surface water pump. An outline design has been completed and work is progressing on the detail and related planning permission.

A further 280 properties have been identified a risk from surface water flooding that could be protected by Property Level Protection, which involves installing flood resistant doors, protection for air bricks, non-return valves in sewer systems etc. All affected properties have been contacted and a sizable proportion have indicated a willingness to participate in a scheme to help improve their resilience to future flooding. It is hoped work will begin on this and the flood wall during 2018.

“All affected properties have been contacted and a sizable proportion have indicated a willingness to participate in a scheme to help improve their resilience to future flooding.”

Flooding from rivers and extreme rainfall continued

In addition, an improved maintenance programme along the Kirkley Stream is being implemented by Suffolk County Council, Anglian Water, and the Environment Agency with the support of Waveney District Council. The Water Management Alliance has been contracted to do this work and you will have seen the significant clearance of bankside vegetation and works to the flood attenuation ponds alongside Tom Crisp Way. This initial work is now complete and will allow an annual maintenance regime to be undertaken which will reduce the risk of blockages in the channel.

The lasting legacy of the flood walls

Work is underway to engage schools and colleges, from primary age upwards, in a literacy based initiative. This initiative will encapsulate feelings and thoughts about flood risk and will culminate in the translation of those words onto glass flood walls, providing a lasting legacy. Work is also going in to art installations around the town which will appear in stages.

Alongside this and as part of our commitment to working with schools, the project hosted the National Schools Takeover day in November 2017, working with the Youth Council. Pupils from 6 schools came together to present ideas for a social and digital media initiative. Ormiston Denes won the top prize which was £2.5k towards filming equipment for their school which they can use to support the project team in the awareness campaign.

Flipside Festival Watertight Words Community workshops:

Flipside Festival are running a Watertight Words project and the community was invited to attend workshops outlined below to contribute to the typographic installations around the town and engraved on to the glass section of the sea wall.

Who can you contact?

Sharon Bleese
Project Manager
Waveney District Council
Riverside
4 Canning Road
Lowestoft
NR33 0EQ

Phone 01502 523346

E-mail

sharon.bleese@eastsoffolk.gov.uk



We're on the Web

<http://www.lowestoffrmp.org.uk/>

Flipside Festival Watertight Words Community workshops were held:

Saturday 12th May, 10am - 4pm: Lowestoft Library drop in.

Monday 14th May, 10am - 12pm: Surviving United, Kirkley Community Centre, London Road South. Poetry and Visual Art Workshop in one session.

Wednesday 16th May 10.30am - 12pm: Next Stagers, Marina Theatre, Lowestoft. Poetry Workshop

Wednesday 16th May 1.30pm - 3.30pm: Open workshop, Kirkley Community Centre, London Road South. Poetry Workshop

Friday 18th May 10am - 12pm: Open workshop, Sam's Cafe, Bevan Street. Poetry Workshop

Monday 21st May 10am - 3pm: FABBA (Adults with disabilities) The Seagull Theatre, Pakefield. Poetry and Visual Art workshop

Tuesday 22nd May 2pm - 3.30pm: Time Out, Lowestoft Library. Poetry and visual art in one short session!

Wednesday 23rd May 10.30am - 12pm: Next Stagers, Marina Theatre, Lowestoft. Visual Art Workshop

Wednesday 23rd May 1.30pm - 3.30pm: Open workshop, Kirkley Community Centre, London Road South. Visual Art Workshop

Friday 25th May 10am - 12pm: Open workshop, Sam's Cafe, Bevan Street. Visual Art Workshop

<http://www.flipsideuk.org/flipside-festival-outreach/20/great-places>

For more details

More information at <http://www.lowestoffrmp.org.uk/>

Who can you contact?

Sharon Bleese, Project Manager

Waveney District Council

01502 523346

sharon.bleese@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

