

Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme

Newsletter

April 2017

We are working with local partners on a scheme to reduce flood risk to all homes and businesses in Oxford, as well as to major transport routes into the city.

We will be lowering parts of the flood plain and widening some of the rivers and streams that run through it, to make more space for water and reduce flood risk to the city.

We are currently working on the detailed design for the scheme, which we will share with you at a series of consultation events in May 2017. This newsletter provides an update on what we have been doing since our last newsletter in December 2016 and details of our upcoming consultation.

Design update

Since December we have continued to work on the scheme design. We've had further meetings with landowners, completed environmental surveys, and met with environmental stakeholders. We will be consulting the local planning authority on the design of the scheme and will use the feedback from this and the public consultation to finalise the design before we apply for planning permission later this year.

We will be holding a public consultation from 5 May - 6 June 2017, which will be available online as well as at a series of drop-in events in Oxford:



Visitors studying the route of the scheme in June 2016

2- 8pm	Thursday 11 May	West Oxford Community Centre, OX2 0BT
2- 8pm	Friday 12 May	South Oxford Community Centre, OX1 4RP
2- 8pm	Monday 15 May	Oxford Deaf & Hard of Hearing Centre, OX1 1RL
2- 8pm	Thursday 18 May	St Luke's Church, OX1 4XB

The consultation will be an opportunity to find out how the scheme will work, see how we will incorporate environmental improvements, look at visualisations of some of the key features of the scheme, as well as giving us feedback on specific aspects of the design.

If you are unable to attend the events you can access all the information on our online consultation, from the scheme webpage:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/reducing-flood-risk-in-oxford-and-abingdon

Ground investigations

We are currently doing some ground investigation work in the scheme area. This will build on previous work carried out in 2015 and 2016 and give us more information about ground conditions to help us with the scheme design.

We will create a series of boreholes and trial pits throughout the scheme area, and complete 3 pumping tests, to monitor how water flows through the soil. These will take place in South Hinksey, above Botley Road Bridge and in the field above Willow Walk.

The majority of the work will take place between 8am and 6pm, with the exception of the pumping tests which will run continuously for up to 72 hours. The work will take up to 7 weeks and there will be a compound at South Hinksey throughout this time, from where you may see vehicles and machinery moving around the site.

If you have any questions about this work please contact us using the details below.

Next steps

We will use feedback from both the public consultation and the consultation with the local planning authority, to finalise the design of the scheme, ready to submit for planning permission later this year. We are continuing to: work on securing the remaining funding needed for the scheme; plan for construction; carry out further detailed archaeological excavations; carry out environmental investigations and surveys; and engage with local residents through public events and via social media.

Archaeology

In our last newsletter we told you about the archaeology investigation which had recently been completed on Old Abingdon Road. We now have the results of these investigations and made various findings, including shards of pottery, glass, a horseshoe and evidence of ancient culverts running beneath the road. These have given us more information about this ancient route into Oxford, which we now understand has been a crossing point of the River Thames and its tributaries since Norman or Medieval times.

This information has helped us to design the scheme in this area in a way which is sensitive to its history. We are now working with Historic England and the local planning authority to determine the best design. You can find out more about our findings on our website or Facebook page, using the details below.



The horseshoe, dating from 17th-18th Century, which was found at the site.

To request this newsletter in a different format, including large print, braille or in another language, please call the Environment Agency on 0370 850 6506.

Keep updated on the scheme

Find further information including videos of the scheme route on our Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/oxfordscheme

You can also visit our website www.gov.uk/government/collections/reducing-flood-risk-in-oxford-and-abingdon

Follow @OxfordFAS on Twitter

Or contact us at oxfordscheme@environment-agency.gov.uk to be added to our mailing list.