

Reducing flood risk in Reading and Caversham

December 2021

Scheme update

We have concluded our review of the proposed scheme for Reading and Caversham of flood walls, earth embankments and a bypass channel to reduce the risk of flooding to homes and businesses. This included a review of the scheme costs and benefits.

We found that there is an increase in costs and a reduction in the economic benefits the scheme could provide. We follow the [Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Appraisal Guidance](#) which assures how public money is spent. Necessary increases in scheme costs, including the construction of the bypass channel and associated works and reduction in the economic benefits means the proposed scheme is not cost beneficial and will not be eligible for Government funding.

The scheme would lead to a slight increase in flood levels to a small number of properties elsewhere, which is not acceptable.

We have looked at various options to reduce flood risk in the north Reading and Lower Caversham area. We have not been able to find a cost beneficial option and recommend that the scheme is not progressed.

What does this mean for people and property at risk of flooding?

We have carried out robust assessments including site investigations, updated flood modelling, and ground and property surveys to look at which communities could benefit from a scheme. This work has given us an improved understanding of how flooding would occur in north Reading and Lower Caversham and what it means for the community. Steps being taken to increase flood resilience in the area are:

- We have share our improved flood risk data with Reading Borough Council as part of the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum to support local flood response plans
- We will continue to warn and inform the community when a flood is expected, through our [Flood Warning Service](#) to allow time to act.
- We will keep working with the community to make sure those who are at flood risk are aware of it and know how to prepare and respond to a flood.
- We will continue to work with Reading Borough Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority by supporting their surface water schemes and explore whether there are any smaller scale opportunities they can do to manage flood risk in the area.
- Reading Borough Council are carrying out clearance work on Christchurch Ditch, also known as the Danall, which runs through the Christchurch and Hills Meadows. The ditch is fed by a pipe from the River Thames and provides minor flood alleviation. The council have an annual ditch clearing programme across the borough which is underway.



Floodline 0345 988 1188

Incident Hotline 0800 80 70 60

What can I do to be prepared for flooding?

Sign up for flood warnings - it's free.

There are over 1.52 million properties in England signed up to our Flood Warning Service. The service sends a message directly by voice message, text or email when a warning is issued. You can sign up by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings> or by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188

Remind yourself what to do if you receive a flood alert or flood warning.

Taking steps to prepare and knowing what to do in a flood can significantly reduce the damages to a home and possessions, reduce risk to life and reduce the likelihood of suffering from mental health impacts in the future.

Download our [‘Prepare. Act. Survive.’ flood plan](#) to help reduce these risks.

Other news

We are looking at ways to reduce flood risk across the whole of the River Thames and its tributaries. This includes from its source in Gloucestershire to the tidal limit at Teddington in west London. The Thames Valley Flood Scheme will complement existing and planned schemes. It aims to reduce flood risk to communities where it has not been possible to develop a scheme.

- We consulted on 17 possible approaches which could be developed on a large scale across the Thames Valley. You can find out more about this work here [Thames Valley Flood Scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thames-valley-flood-scheme)
- It is unclear at this time whether Thames Valley Flood Scheme would provide benefit to the Reading and Caversham area. We will provide regular updates on the approaches and benefits to geographic locations as we develop them. To be kept up to date with the Thames Valley Flood Scheme please contact TVFS@environment-agency.gov.uk. and ask to be added to their mailing list.

Contact us

If you would like to get in touch, please email us at: readingandcavershamscheme@environment-agency.gov.uk



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