A Year of Great Progress

Councillor Haslam and Councillor Edgar mark passing the first anniversary of construction

After what has been an incredibly difficult year for the town of Hawick, it is great to see the construction of the flood defence scheme moving ahead quickly. It gives hope to over 970 properties that have the constant threat and fear of flooding. And after the year that we have all had, we all need that bit of hope.

At £91.8m, the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme is the largest capital infrastructure project currently underway in the Borders and the biggest construction project since the Borders Railway. Even while construction was halted at the start of the project in 2020, the work has continued in the backroom to plan and innovate to ensure that the flood scheme brings multiple benefits for the people of Hawick.

In addition to the protection to homes and businesses, the scheme now also offers a fantastic opportunity for us all to get more active. Walking and cycling routes are being developed right along the route of the flood protection, in partnership with Sustrans.

The network will see a shared-use, traffic-free cycleway and footpath created along the banks of the Teviot linking up areas of the town that before were only connected by roads.

This will be a brilliant addition to the town and one that will prove popular with locals and visitors alike.

As the summer progresses you will see activity increase, reaching the peak of construction towards the end of the summer months. This is likely to cause some disruption in the town, and we want to thank everyone for their patience and understanding.

We are still on track to complete the works in 2023 and know that you will all welcome the protection that it will give to over 970 homes and tenants along the length of the Teviot. We hope that you find these updates helpful. If there is anything else that you think we should include in the newsletter, or if you have any questions, then please feel free to get in touch with either of us or the Project Team.

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For more information, log on to **www.hawickfloodscheme.com**

What's Happening Around Town

Common Haugh

Work sections 1 & 2 at the Common Haugh are close to completion with the new key landscape area on the wet side of the wall really taking shape. Imminent installation of glass panels and flood gate will mean this area will soon be protected from flooding up to the 1 in 75 year event. Reconfiguration of the car park layout will happen later in the year as will the upgrading of the pedestrian crossing on Albert Road to link into the new Active Travel Network.

Commercial Road

Commercial Road works are right on track with cladding already on many sections of wall. Next month we move to Phase 3 of the traffic management set up which will see both the traffic lights removed and the new Victoria Footbridge opened to the public.

Buccleuch Road

Once the demountable flood barrier across the Volunteer Park entrance is constructed, the area will be free of all works and the defences alongside A7 Buccleuch Road complete. A commemorative oak tree will be planted back in this location on behalf of the Ancient Order of Mosstroopers.

Mansfield Road & Duke Street

Wall construction continues along the length of Mansfield Road following sheet piling operations with Duke Street not far behind. Both Mansfield Road and Duke Street will benefit from numerous large glass panels to keep connectivity with the river and trees will be planted to recreate the boulevard effect in this area. A reconfigured river access point will be created to provide easier access to the river at the same location at the top of Duke Street.

Footbridges on Their Way

March saw Victoria Footbridge removed to commence work on the new wider and higher footbridge abutments. The bridge will be returning in the same location. Both the new Victoria Footbridge and Mansfield Footbridge will arrive in the town this month. Lawson Footbridge follows in August. This is another key milestone for the Scheme so keep an eye on our social media channels for the dates if you would like to come see the crane in action.

In-river Working Explained

Many sections of the flood defences through the town can only be constructed from the river as there is no available space next to the river bank because of existing buildings. There are lots of factors involved in programming the works including adhering to the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The CEMP covers topics such as the protection of wildlife, monitoring noise/ vibration levels and maintaining quality of all watercourses.

As part of maintaining quality of all watercourses, there are restrictions around when work can be done in the river and these works have to be approved through a Controlled Activities Regulations (CAR) Licence provided by SEPA and in partnership with our other environmental stakeholders. The in-river working period runs from May until September, hence why you will see lots of activity in the river at the moment.

The In-River Working Process:

1. Section off the proposed working area with nets.
2. Carry out fish rescue - this involves removing fish with specialised equipment and releasing them back into the watercourse downstream.
3. Provide temporary edge protection for the works in the form of sheet piles or tonne bags filled with stone and install silt mitigation.
4. Create a platform by placing stone in the working area and compacting it to allow machinery to drive on it.
5. Commence construction works which includes the flood walls and footbridge abutments.
6. Conclude works and remove working platforms from the watercourse.

Fish Rescue underway between the Lawson and Albert Bridge

In-river working platform on Commercial Road

We're Invested in Your Community

McLaughlin & Harvey have been working to deliver the Community Benefits plan as part of their responsibilities under the Main Works Contract.

And they're only just getting started!

- 24 local people employed for more than 12 weeks
- 3 Build Your Future & Employability Tasters Sessions
- 2 Apprentices and 3 Graduates Employed
- 127 Training Days delivered with £14.8k invested
- Engaged with 2592 school & nursery pupils via 27 interactions and activities
- 74 engagements/ interactions with community groups
- £23,079.60 community investment
- £1,136,289.05 spent locally and in the Scottish Borders

Helping Water get back into the River

Eight underground pumping stations are being constructed along the length of the Scheme to help water on the dry side of the wall get back into the river after normal spells of rain but more importantly during a flood event. These all vary in size dependant on location and you may have already spotted some being constructed at St. George's Lane, Walters Wynd and Glebe Mill Street.

Currently, if heavy rainfall generates surface water volumes which are greater than the capacity of the road drainage network, then the excess water forms inconvenient ponds on road and low lying areas before eventually finding its way to the river, causing obstruction to pedestrians and traffic.

Construction of valve chamber before sinking into the ground

Eastfield Road pumping station consisting of valve chamber, bauer chamber, wetwell and associated pipework awaiting concrete slabs and mechanical kiosk to complete

Once the Flood Protection Scheme is in place, the new walls could create a barrier to the escape of excess water. That's why the provision of a high capacity drainage system along the back of the new walls to take excess water to a large underground chamber is being constructed. If the river levels are low (for example, the excess water is the result of a sudden summer thunderstorm), the water will discharge via gravity from the chamber into the river. However, if river levels are high (as they often are, say, during the winter months) then the excess rain water will be pumped from the chamber into the river via an underground pumping station.

The smaller pumping stations are made up of a Wetwell and Valve Chamber with the larger pumping stations (as shown) also consisting of a Baurer Chamber.

As the majority of the infrastructure is located underground, all that will be visible above ground is the mechanical kiosk which kicks in during those high water events.

Contacting the team

There are a number of ways you can keep up-to-date with the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme or contact the team to ask questions or provide comments:

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Project Update

July 2021

Hawick Flood Protection

Protecting and Enhancing Hawick

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