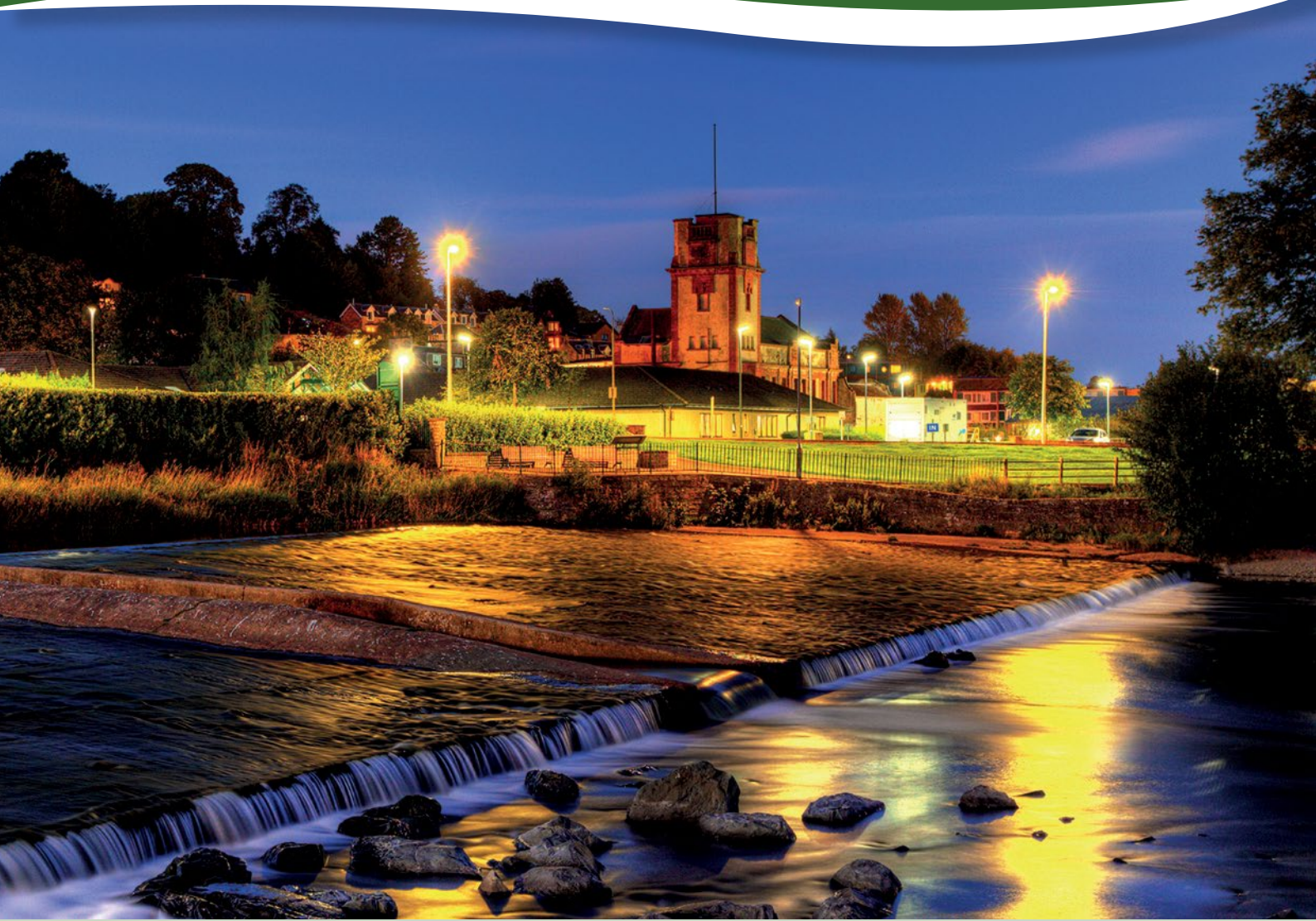


# Project Update

January 2020



## Project Director's Update

With construction work due to start in earnest early next year, here's the latest news from the Project team.

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## No Stranger to Flooding

We take a look at the history of flooding events in Hawick down the years.

**Page 3**

## Prepare to get active

Hawick's exciting new 'Active Travel Network' will be the envy of all other towns. Find out more!

**Page 6**

## Protecting and Enhancing Hawick

## Four projects in one

Welcome to the first edition of the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme's new "Project Update" newsletter.



Delivered to every home in the TD9 postcode area, our intention with this regular publication is to keep local people and businesses fully up-to-speed with progress on this vital civil engineering project which will do so much to protect Hawick from the damaging floods which have been a fact of life for the town throughout much of its history.

After many years in the planning and design stages, the project is about to get underway in earnest. This will be one of the most comprehensive flood protection schemes ever built in the UK. With flood events seldom out of the news these days, we intend that the Hawick scheme will become a benchmark, both in terms of its design and modern construction methods, for many other flood protection schemes being planned up and down the country. After an exacting tendering process carried out last year, in early 2020 we will appoint the main contractor responsible for the construction of Hawick's new flood defences. Construction work will begin shortly thereafter and is scheduled to last three years. The Flood Protection Scheme is planned to be



Common Haugh under water again in 2015

operational and providing flood protection by the autumn of 2022 with final construction work due to be completed a few months after that.

Excellent progress has been made with the advanced construction works since they began in March 2018. These have mainly involved diverting public utilities such as gas supplies, telecommunications connections and water pipes which would otherwise get in the way of the main works and risk holding up construction progress.

But this isn't just about flood protection. This will be four projects in one. First and foremost, clearly, will be the new flood defences stretching all the way through the town from Volunteer Park to the Recycling Centre. Secondly, there will be the creation of a unique and exciting Active Travel Network of footpaths, cycleways and footbridges along the length of the scheme. We are partnering with Sustrans, the well known national cycle and footpath charity, in the detailed design of this network (read more on page 6). For the first time, people from all parts of the town will be able to get active and access other areas using dedicated, traffic-free paths, in the process drawing people down to the River Teviot in a way which hasn't happened before. Thirdly, we will be upgrading the A7 Commercial Road, making it more suitable for the traffic levels it has to cope with and thus improving access to the businesses situated

along its length. And, finally, a new state-of-the-art, high capacity pumping station will be built which will further alleviate the risk of future floods.

It is inevitable that construction works of this scale will lead to some disruption to traffic and pedestrians. A comprehensive traffic management scheme involving a number of temporary diversions has been designed in consultation with Scottish Borders Council. The aim is to minimise any disruption and allow the ordinary day-to-day life of Hawick to carry on as normally as possible. Information to help local people, businesses and through-traffic will be posted through various communications channels including the newsletter, social media, email, local press and door-to-door leaflets. Information is also available 24/7 on the project's website at [www.hawickfloodscheme.com](http://www.hawickfloodscheme.com).

The entire project team is committed to building the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme to the highest possible standards, in as environmentally sensitive a way as possible and on schedule. It is a privilege to be carrying out these works on the town's behalf.



**Conor Price**  
**Project Director**



## NEWS IN BRIEF



### Royal visit

During a visit to Hawick on November 1<sup>st</sup>, HRH The Prince of Wales was briefed on the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme by (l-r) Ewan Doyle from Scottish Borders Council, Conor Price, Project Director, from CPE Consultancy and Steven Vint, Design Manager, from Jacobs. The Prince is well aware of the severe difficulties caused by flooding in many parts of the country and took a close interest in the Hawick project, promising to follow progress in the years ahead.

### New project website

Work is underway on a new project website. This will provide access to the latest information about the construction works, including the all-important traffic management arrangements. It will also give details of the design of the flood defences under construction as well as information on the history of flooding in Hawick, the background to the scheme, a database of project-related documents and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section. It will be launched in February.

A *Contact Us* link will allow local people to contact the project team. So, keep an eye on the website and keep up-to-speed!

## History of flooding in Hawick

Sitting at the confluence of the River Teviot and the Slitrig Water, and surrounded by rich agricultural land on all sides, Hawick was always ideally situated for the operation of riverside mills and continues to be one of the country's foremost textile producing towns with a worldwide reputation for quality and design.

Unfortunately, its very location also means Hawick has always been a town at risk of flooding. Flooding occurs when a river is unable to handle the volume of water draining into it from its various tributaries in the surrounding area. The excessive flow causes the water to rise above the river's banks or man-made retaining structures, thus leading to flooding.

Significant flooding events have been recorded in Hawick as far back at 1767, but most of the major and most damaging floods have occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Starting with the most recent floods which many people will remember all too well:

- In the winter of 2015/16, Hawick was hit twice with hundreds of properties in the town being damaged. Part of the road at Glebe Mill was completely washed away.



- In December 2013, the Mansfield area of the town was badly flooded.
- October 2005 saw Hawick hit by a 1 in 50 year event with walls washed away and Commercial Road and Mansfield park areas inundated with water.
- January 2005 produced another flood in the town when the Common Haugh, Duke Street and Mansfield Park were flooded.
- In October 2002, the Teviot burst its banks and inundated the famous rugby and football pitches at Mansfield Park.

Records show that there were further significant floods in 1997, 1955, 1952, 1938, and 1928. Outside of these occasions, there have been a number of lesser floods which, like the major events above, caused significant disruption and inconvenience to local people.

Experts predict that flood events are likely to become more common in the years ahead. Hence the need for action now.





## Advanced works advancing well

All major construction projects require various preparation works to be carried out in order to “prepare the ground” for the arrival of the main contractors and the start of work on the principal construction project. These are called Advanced Works Contracts (AWC) and often involve diverting public utilities such as gas supplies, telecommunications connections, water pipes and the like which would otherwise get in the way of the main works and risk holding up construction progress.

Advanced Works contractors have been on site in Hawick since March 2018 – no doubt readers will have seen them in various parts of the town and we thank you for your patience and co-operation. The work has now been substantially completed on schedule. However, a major element remains ongoing with the closure of Commercial Road expected to commence in Spring 2020. The team has been systematically working through a detailed programme of diverting roughly 7.5km of existing services for eight utilities companies (i.e. Scottish Water; BT, Scottish Power, Scottish Gas, Vodafone; SBC street lighting and Transport Scotland street lighting) from the alignment of the new flood defences. The work has also involved clearing vegetation and modifying local fences and boundaries.

This work will give the Main Works contractor the appropriate access to the new flood protection locations so that they can undertake the works in a safe and efficient manner without the risk of being “tripped up” or delayed by the need to divert these utilities. These works also ensure uninterrupted supply of these utilities to households and businesses during the main flood protection construction works.



## What is a 1 in 75 year flood?

Hawick’s Flood Protection Scheme is described by civil engineers and hydrology and meteorological experts as a project which aims to protect the town from a “1 in 75 year” flood event. But what does this term actually mean? There is a misconception that this figure refers to a flood that, on average, would happen regularly every 75 years.

Well, it’s not quite that simple. In fact, the term refers to the probability of a flood of this magnitude happening in any given year. The lower the number of years in the ratio, the higher the risk of a flood happening. So, if the figure was 1 in 10 years, then there would be a 10% chance of a flood taking place each year. 1 in 100 years would represent a 1% chance.

1 in 75 actually represents a 1.3% chance of a significant flood happening this year – and next year and the year after that and so on. This may not sound much but, in terms of national flooding statistics, it actually represents a significant risk and one which needs to be addressed.

### THE 2005 FLOOD

Remembered by many people in the Hawick area, 2015 was a 1 in 50 year flood, so there would be a 2% chance of a similar magnitude of flood happening again this winter.



# Project Information at a Glance

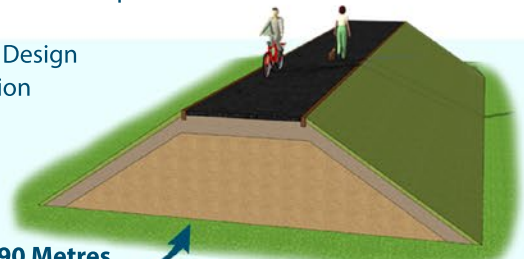
970 buildings provided with formal flood protection

15 years  
in Planning, Design  
& Construction

**5,600 Metres**  
of Flood Defence Wall with  
glass viewing panels



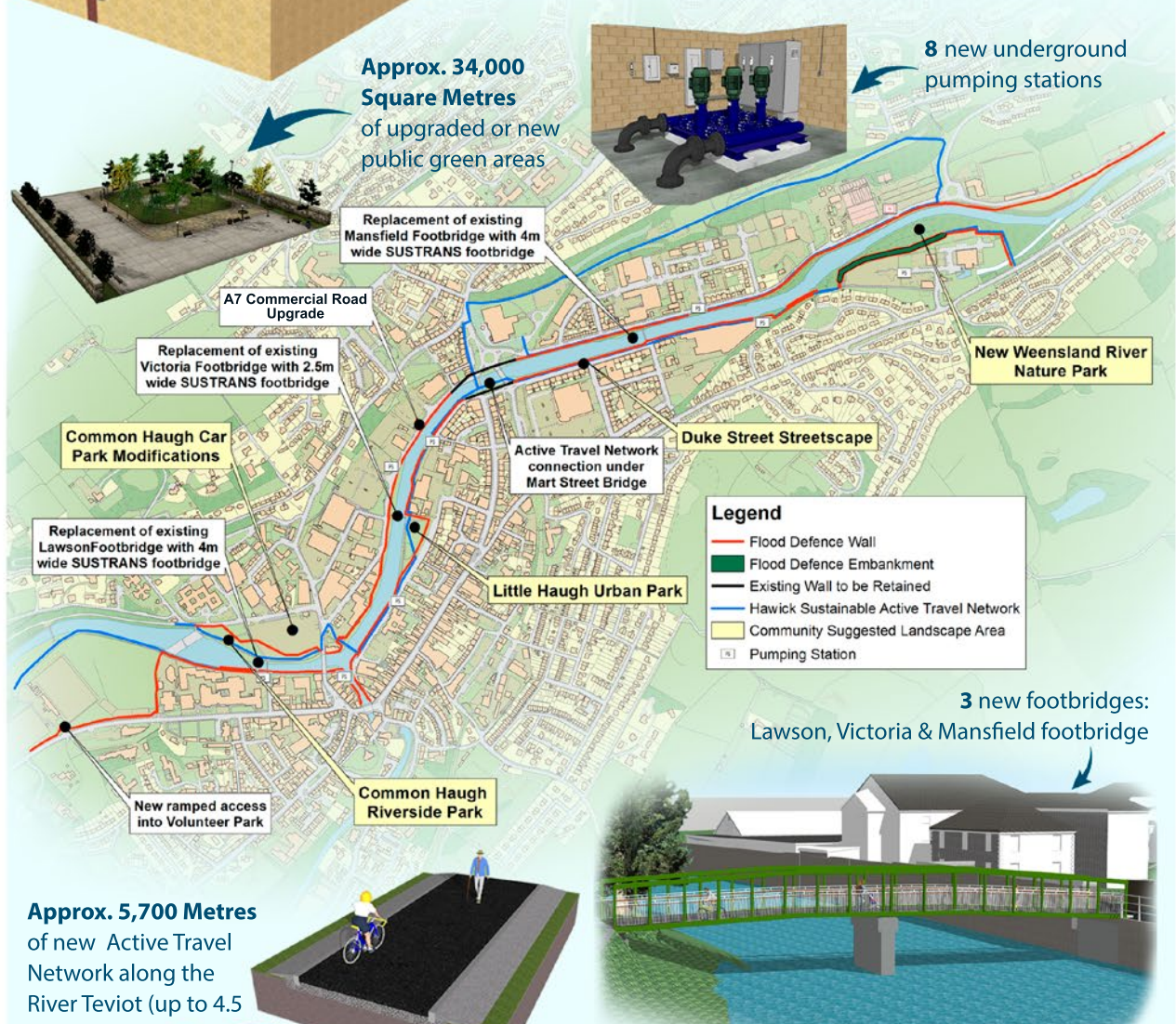
**290 Metres**  
of Flood Defence Embankment with public footpath



**Approx. 34,000**  
**Square Metres**  
of upgraded or new  
public green areas



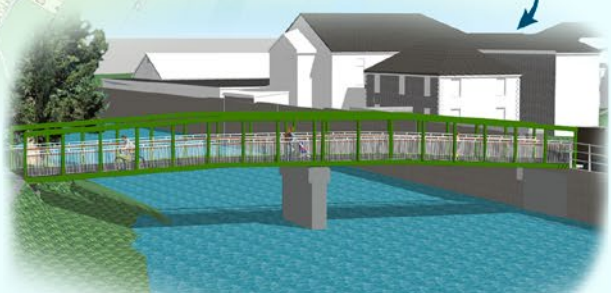
**8 new underground**  
pumping stations



**Legend**

- Flood Defence Wall
- Flood Defence Embankment
- Existing Wall to be Retained
- Hawick Sustainable Active Travel Network
- Community Suggested Landscape Area
- PS Pumping Station

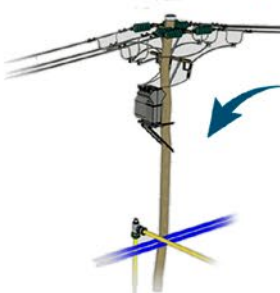
**3 new footbridges:**  
Lawson, Victoria & Mansfield footbridge



**Approx. 5,700 Metres**  
of new Active Travel  
Network along the  
River Teviot (up to 4.5  
m wide)



**Over 7,500 Metres**  
of public utilities diverted



**Approx. 2,500**  
trees planted to replace those lost during the construction of the Scheme (approx. 2.5 trees planted for every 1 felled)



**"4 Projects in 1"**  
Flood Protection Scheme  
Sustrans Active Travel Network  
New Scottish Water Pumping Station  
A7 Commercial Road Upgrade

# Chance to get active along the river!

The Hawick Flood Protection Scheme includes the creation of a new shared-use cycleway and footpath along the entire length of the project. The initial plan was for this 'Active Travel Network' to feature pathways of varying widths (typically between 1.5 and 2.5m). Following approval of the Scheme in December 2017, the Project team was delighted when Sustrans (the respected cycling and walking charity) approached the Council to explore how the proposed cyclepath could be enhanced so that it meets their objective of ensuring that all routes are suitable for a competent 12-year-old to use safely unaccompanied. This included increasing the proposed width of the track to 4m where feasible.



We have been working closely with Sustrans on the design and scope of this exciting, environmentally friendly addition to Hawick's network of footpaths.

The design of the Active Travel Network involves widened paths, new widened footbridges and ramps and dedicated passageways around bridges, all intended to keep users as much as possible separate from traffic on the main streets (see images on page 5).

In most cases, the increased width of the track could be successfully achieved through small changes to the existing design.

When completed as part of the Flood Protection Scheme, this network will represent a major enhancement to the facilities and infrastructure of Hawick, making the town the envy of other towns



across the country. It will provide significant potential to reduce car use and increase active travel – on foot or bicycle – as an everyday mode of transport into and around Hawick, delivering benefits to health, air quality and quality of life to local residents and visitors. And it will do so in a totally safe environment. The network will be accessible to all, linking many areas of the town from Volunteer Park all the way along to Weensland.



## 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:

✈ [www.hawickfloodscheme.com](http://www.hawickfloodscheme.com)  
 ✉ [hawickfloodps@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:hawickfloodps@scotborders.gov.uk)

🐦 @HawickFPS  
 📘 @hawickfloodprotectionscheme  
 📷 @hawick\_flood\_protection

