

Project Update

June 2020



NEW WEBSITE

Go to www.hawickfloodscheme.com for the latest info on this vital flood protection scheme



An unusual view of the High St from the Town Hall's famous clock tower

Project Director's Update

Round up of the latest developments including the appointment of McLaughlin & Harvey as main works contractor.

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Protecting and enhancing Hawick

The Flood Protection Scheme will prove that construction and art can go hand-in-hand.

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Map of main works

With the main construction works due to start soon, this map outlines the principal work sections in the town.

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Protecting and Enhancing Hawick

Final design presented at exhibition

The latest in the series of Community Vision Working Group public meetings took place in the Town Hall on Wednesday 26th February. Our thanks to the 150 people who came through the doors between 2pm and 8pm to talk to staff, ask questions, hear about the latest developments on the Scheme and make suggestions.

A comprehensive exhibition focused on the Active Travel Network which will be created along the banks of the Teviot from Volunteer Park all the way along to Weensland. This dedicated, traffic-free footpath and cycleway is being supported by Sustrans, the national walking and cycling charity, and will give young and old alike the opportunity to get active as they move about the town.



McLaughlin & Harvey appointed main works contractor



It was announced on 20th May that McLaughlin & Harvey have been appointed the main works contractor on the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme.

The Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, Roseanna Cunningham, said: "The Hawick scheme forms a key part of our £420m, ten-year programme of support to local authorities agreed in 2016 to significantly lessen the problems caused by flooding. The Scottish Government is very pleased to support Scottish Borders Council by contributing up to £63million and recognises the strong partnership approach with Scottish Water and Sustrans involvement. Supporting major capital works such as this is tangible evidence of the Government's commitment to climate change adaptation and green recovery."

Tracey Logan, Chief Executive of Scottish Borders Council, said: "We are proud to be working with the Scottish Government and other key partners to take forward one of the most comprehensive flood protection schemes ever seen in Scotland. The flooding caused during Storm Dennis earlier this year showed how vital the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme is to the town and the Borders. The Council has a track record of providing flood protection schemes, including Selkirk's which has prevented millions of pounds worth of damage since it was completed in 2017."

Seamus Devlin, McLaughlin & Harvey's Director of Civil Engineering, said: "We are delighted and honoured to have been chosen to carry out the works on this major flood protection scheme. McLaughlin & Harvey fully understand how important this project is to the people of Hawick. We look forward to delivering a world class flood protection scheme."

Following the First Minister's announcement on 28th May of a loosening of the lockdown conditions and indicating that construction projects may prepare for a resumption of operations, it is expected that full construction works in Hawick will get underway in early July.



Nicola Sturgeon with members of the Volunteer Flood Group

First Minister visits Hawick

Scotland's First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon MSP, visited Hawick and surrounding areas on Monday 17th February to see for herself the damaging effects of Storm Dennis. Speaking to residents in Mansfield Road, she said: "This has been an extremely difficult time for people affected and our thoughts continue to be with these communities. Reducing flood risk is a priority for the Scottish Government." During her visit, Ms Sturgeon paid tribute to the work of the local authority, the emergency services and the Hawick Volunteer Flood Group.

In early 2020, storms Ciara and Dennis brought the town to the verge of a major flood event, reinforcing the need for the new flood defences. Whilst only a few properties were flooded, the power of the Teviot and Slitrig Water caused the devastating collapse of the Bridge House Guest House.



The dramatic partial collapse of the Bridge House Guest House made headlines across the country



Hawick Royal Albert Utd ground flooded again



Keeping traffic flowing

Whilst it is inevitable that the flood protection works will have an impact from time to time on some of the town's roads, our aim at all times is to manage the construction of the project with minimal impact on traffic and pedestrian movements within the town. We are committed to keeping road and footpath users up-to-date with the latest information on road works.

Modern, comprehensive signage will be placed around the town to help drivers identify any diversions that are in place. We know we can count on the patience of local people while we carry out these essential works and are grateful for their understanding.

All decisions on the best way to manage traffic during construction of the flood works have been taken in partnership with the statutory bodies, including Scottish Borders Council and Transport Scotland, as well as local community traffic management working groups.

The Scheme's website (www.hawickfloodscheme.com) and social media channels are the "go to" destinations for up-to-date traffic management information for the project.

Construction and Art Go Hand-in-Hand

The Flood Scheme is not just about protecting the town from damaging floods, though that's its most important role obviously. Through a series of public consultation exercises, we have always been keen to ask local people for their views on how we could include elements designed to enhance the town so that, once construction work is finished, Hawick will be an even more attractive place for residents and visitors alike.

This partnership approach has led to various important design changes being included in the final design. The new riverside Active Travel Network of footpaths and cycleways is one exciting result. The installation of public art works along the Teviot is another central element of the project. These are being co-ordinated by Project Artist, Andrew Mackenzie, and are supported by CABN (Creative Arts Business Network), part of Live Borders.

Andrew recalls that it was clear from meeting local people in 2017

and 2018 that they saw nature as the most important theme. Members of the public have been active in putting forward ideas for the artistic elements of the project and their ideas have been most welcome.

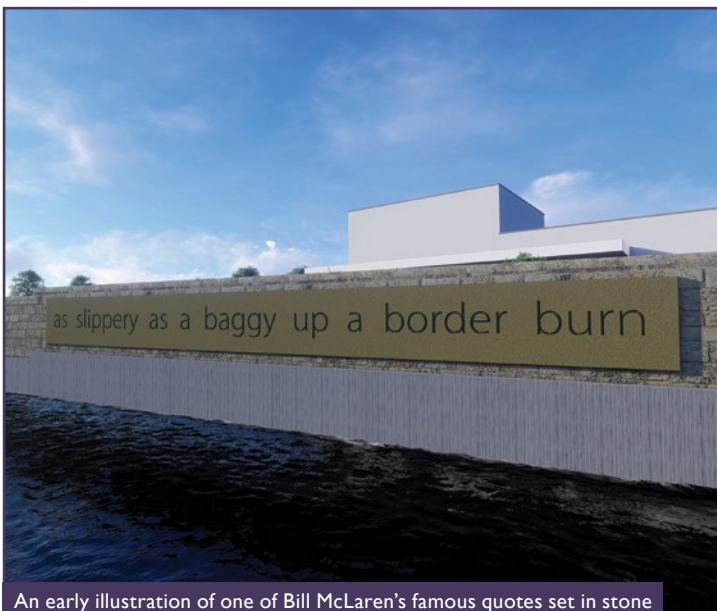
Perhaps the most prominent items of public art that people will see will be the large glass viewing panels to be set at intervals into the new flood walls. In all, there will be 45 such panels, each 2.5 metres in length, some being paired together to make 5m long windows. 30 windows will feature artwork called Teviot Water, including 13 specially commissioned "river maps" – etchings of some of the many tributaries which flow into the River Teviot, drawn by artist Gill Russell. The map-drawings are paired with glass panels showing the place names associated with each tributary. Sitting alongside these will be text and poetry by poet, Alec Finlay, reflecting the rich language and heritage for which Hawick and the surrounding area is famous.



Andrew Mackenzie at work in his studio

For each tributary featured in this way, a tree will be planted on the banks of that tributary, in partnership with Tweed Forum. The glass panels will include a map reference so that people, if they so wish, can go to the very spot and see the new tree (known as a "tributree") for themselves.

And, in an acknowledgement of Hawick's proud sporting heritage, another thing which all Hawick people will be sure to welcome is the inclusion of one of Bill McLaren's most famous quotes. Arising from a suggestion from local people, and chosen in a public vote, the words "slippery as a baggy up a Border burn" will be set in stone into the existing River Teviot wall near the North Bridge. We are sure the great man would be delighted.



An early illustration of one of Bill McLaren's famous quotes set in stone



A new illuminated glass viewing panel at the Wittergate

Preparing for start of main construction works

The main works will be delivered via 42 separate work sections and 8 new pumping stations. This illustrated map gives an overview. Further details available on the Scheme's website.

McLaughlin & Harvey were appointed main works contractor in May. Their principal site offices will be located at Mansfield Road – see PS-07 on map.

McLaughlin & Harvey's are finalising their construction works programme which will be announced by early July. We will keep all residents and businesses up-to-speed on progress via the Scheme's website, social media channels and the quarterly "Project Update" newsletter.

For further details of the main works contract go to www.hawickfloodscheme.com where you will find further information on the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme.

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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