Lower Witham Flood Resilience Project

Project Newsletter: Issue 01

July 2022

Environment Agency

Short Ferry Road during November 2019 flooding, following a breach of the Barlings Eau embankment

Welcome to the project!

Welcome to the first issue of the Lower Witham Flood Resilience Project newsletter! We are delighted to share early details of our project on the Lower Witham to stakeholders in the area. We aim to issue a newsletter for you every few months to update you on progress.

This project aims to increase flood resilience to local communities, helping to safeguard homes, businesses, and infrastructure.

Project background and objectives

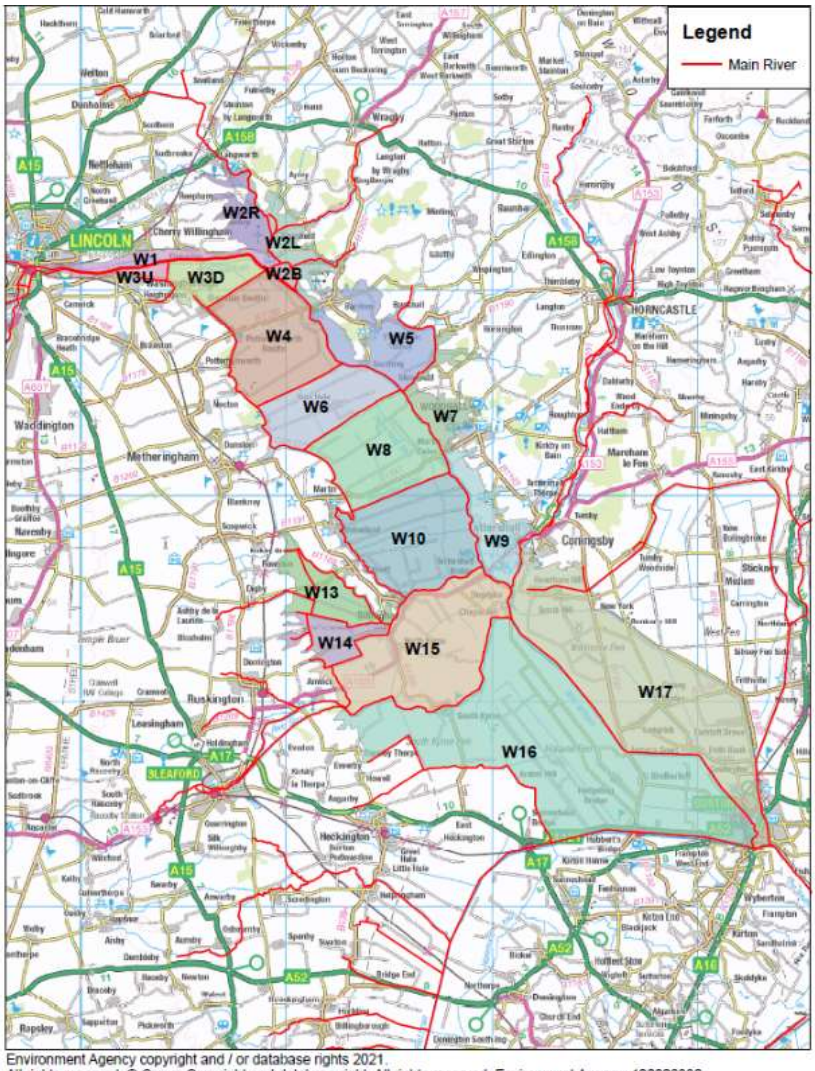
Our work is centred on the Lower River Witham Fenland where the river flows between Lincoln and Boston. This area is low lying floodplain and without its long history of human intervention, would naturally be marshy wetlands. However, due to historic drainage works and embanking of the watercourses the landscape has changed to become productive farmland.

Flooding in 2019 has again highlighted the need for a sustainable long-term plan to manage flood risk in the area.

Due to climate change, flood events like the November 2019 flood which saw record river levels on the River Witham and Barlings Eau, are likely to become more frequent and more intense.

Many of the flood defences are of significant age now and increasing flood risk is testing these structures more than ever before, putting at risk the communities and economy of the area. Therefore, it is vital that we act now to ensure these structures can withstand future floods.

The objectives of this project are to create a more resilient catchment by sustaining and maintaining critical banks and making space for water.



Map above: Compartments of the Lower Witham Fenland within the project boundary.

Work so far…

- This is a long-term project on a large scale, and we are still at the early stages. The project is likely to be ongoing for the next 10 to 15 years.
- The Environment Agency project team have commissioned consultants Arup to undertake new surveys of the channels and embankments on the Lower Witham and build a state-of-the-art hydraulic model, considering the latest predictions on climate change.
- The surveys were completed this Spring, with new modelling being delivered later in the year.
- Environmental baseline reporting to identify environmental constraints and opportunities is underway.
- Arup are providing their expertise in stakeholder engagement to the project and are preparing a comprehensive plan to ensure that everyone living and working in the area can express their views.

Working together

Engaging with stakeholders is key to the success of the project and we will be making every effort to engage with communities, landowners, businesses, and potential partners throughout the project.

In addition to this newsletter and dedicated project email address, we also have a project webpage on Citizen Space which provides information, maps, photos, and other useful material, see the link, (right).

Throughout the summer we are looking at ways to engage with stakeholders further in a variety of meetings and community events to create a more collaborative approach to managing the risks of flooding in this area, including funding solutions.

We welcome the views of all who have an interest in the Lower Witham River Fenland area.

Project Timeline

2021/2022:
- Surveys
- Modelling
- Engagement
- Appraisal

2023/2024:
- Select options
- Design
- Engagement
- Tendering

2025/2030:
- First Phase of Construction

2030/2035:
- Second Phase of Construction

Contact us!

Got a question? Why not contact our dedicated project team.

Email us at:
riverwitham.floodresilience@environment-agency.gov.uk

Or visit our website on Citizen Space:

https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/lincolnshire-and-northamptonshire/lower-witham-flood-resilience-project/

Or scan the QR code to be taken directly to the website.

SCAN ME

Be prepared

Sign up for Flood Alerts by visiting the webpage below:

https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings

Floodline 0345 988 1188

Incident Hotline 0800 80 70 60