

Temporary flood barrier review: Wey Road, Weybridge

December 2022

Why are we reviewing our temporary flood barrier plans?

We have been carrying out a review of the safety of our temporary flood barrier plans throughout the country. The review focuses on ensuring safety both for the public and those involved in barrier deployment. Our highest priority is the safety of the public, our partners, our contractors and our staff.

We are focussing on how we deploy our temporary flood barriers following learning from deployments in previous flooding throughout the country. We are using the latest engineering good practice and accounting for the impact of more extreme weather due to climate change.

We must ensure that our barriers have an appropriate level of stability, designed to suit each location, and are safe for our contractors and staff to deploy and manage. We must be able to deploy them within the time provided by flood forecasts.

As part of the review, we are also analysing the latest flood risk information for each location to make sure that we only deploy them in locations where we have confidence that people and property will benefit from a reduction in the risk and impacts of flooding.

This briefing provides an update on the position with the temporary flood barrier plan for **Wey Road in Weybridge** and what this means for the community.

If you would like support and advice on how to prepare and plan for flooding, including improving flood resilience in the community, this can be provided by our local Flood Resilience Engagement Advisor, Mat Lloyd.

We continue to provide our 24/7/365 incident response and flood warning service for the community.

Temporary flood barriers: what are they and our approach



Temporary barriers can be deployed when flooding is forecast and are removed once flooding has subsided. They require 24/7 security, maintenance and seepage pumping, so they are only appropriate as a short-term measure whilst floods are ongoing. They are appropriate for use in minor to moderate flooding, which happens more frequently than extreme or severe floods. The barriers are not suitable for severe flooding where water levels will outflank the barriers or exceed their height.

Temporary barriers can be a useful tool to mitigate flood damage in some locations, but we cannot guarantee communities the level of flood protection provided by them.

We consider deploying our temporary flood barriers when; it is technically and economically viable, where it is safe to do so, where resources allow, and where forecasts provide sufficient notice of flooding. It is not possible to guarantee that temporary barriers will always be deployed, either before or during a flood and to any particular location, as this depends on the circumstances at the time.

Temporary flood barrier at Wey Road Weybridge

The temporary flood barrier plan at Wey Road Weybridge was still in development before the commencement of the safety review.

Initially we need to complete our analysis of the latest flood modelling and property threshold surveys. This will establish whether a temporary flood barrier will provide flood risk reduction benefits to the community, and not result in an increase in flood risk elsewhere.

We do not expect the outcome of the flood modelling and threshold surveys for several months. Therefore we will not be able to consider deployment of a temporary flood barrier in Wey Road Weybridge this winter.

Depending on the outcome of the modelling, we can complete the safety review. We will consider if additional stability measures, such as concrete blocks, water filled containers and sandbags are needed on the dry side of the barriers, to ensure they remain stable under the pressure of floodwater against them. This is critical for the safety of the public and our staff when barriers are being deployed and when in place.

At present there are no other barriers on the market that have been independently tested that we can consider as an alternative.

We will provide an update once we have concluded the reviews.

What else can we do to support those at risk of flooding in the area of Wey Road Weybridge?

- We have briefed our emergency response partners so they are aware of the position with the barrier plan at Wey Road and can update their emergency plans accordingly.
- We will continue to discuss with our partners at the local council and the local resilience forum what the current position with the plan means for emergency response.
- We have a dedicated member of staff available to offer advice and support to the community. If you would like support and advice on how to prepare and plan for flooding, including improving community and property flood resilience, this can be provided by our local Flood Resilience Engagement Advisor, Mat Lloyd.
- We monitor rainfall forecasts and river levels 24/7 and remain ready to warn partners and communities of any increases in flood risk.
- We provide an operational response in advance of and during floods to reduce the impacts as far as possible. This includes deploying teams on the ground to clear rivers and streams, enabling water to flow freely, operating weirs and flood defences to protect homes, and deploying pumps and sandbags where they can make a difference.
- We continue our annual river maintenance plan activities to reduce flood risk. Activities include weed cutting, channel maintenance, obstruction removal, grass cutting by hand/machine, vermin control, tree/bush work and structure maintenance. Our river maintenance programme can be viewed online at Asset Information and Maintenance Programme <https://environment.data.gov.uk/asset-management/>

- We provide a flood warning service to those at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea. Community members can visit <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>. The service is free and users can choose to receive notifications of flood warnings by email, text, or both.
- We strongly advise people to check whether they are at risk of flooding, and that they take action to protect themselves and their properties, by visiting our <https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/plan-ahead-for-flooding> webpage and to download our 'Prepare. Act. Survive.' [simple flood plan](#).
- The Environment Agency and Surrey County Council are working in partnership to deliver the River Thames Scheme (RTS). The River Thames scheme will reduce flood risk to people living and working near the Thames between Egham and Teddington while also providing habitat for wildlife and a new feature in the landscape for recreation. The final scope and design of the project is yet to be fully determined. It will be shaped by technical, environmental and economic factors alongside consultation feedback. A public consultation for the Scheme is runs until 20 December, with a further consultation planned for 2023. Further information on the scheme and the consultation can be found at <https://www.riverthamesscheme.org.uk/>

For further information or to make contact with our dedicated Flood Resilience Engagement Advisor please contact: Enquiries_thm@environment-agency.gov.uk

