

Briefing

Briefing 8- 11 April 2014

Rivers Parrett and Tone Dredging Project Part of the Somerset Levels and Moors Flood Action Plan

Progress over the last week

We have completed over 200 metres of dredging on the right bank of the River Parrett at Moorland House Farm. We have so far removed around 2000m³ of silt. This first section has shown that the amount of silt to be removed varies along the length of the river. There is much more silt on the inside of bends, for example.

We have continued to hold the drop in sessions at the Old School Rooms in Burrowbridge and have met with a few residents and Councillors as part of this. We will also be holding open community events for affected areas. More information on these, including dates, will be included in future briefings.



The Prime Minister visited the dredging last Friday.

Forward Look

Over the next week the following activities will take place:

- Dredging will continue downstream on the northern bank of the River Parrett. An amphibious excavator will be working alongside the long arm excavator.

- An additional team will set up a small compound and start load testing the bank opposite Moorland House Farm with the intention of starting dredging the following week.
- The informal access track along the left bank of the river which has been used for viewing the dredging will be closed to vehicles as a consequence of us starting our work at this location. Access for landowners will be arranged with Land and Water Services and the public footpath will remain open.
- We have submitted our planning applications for the strategic stockpiles of silt to Taunton Deane Borough Council for approval. It is intended that this material will be used later for repairs and potential flood bank improvements identified in the 20 year Action Plan
- We will continue to hold drop in sessions at the Old School Rooms in Burrowbridge on a Tuesday afternoon (15:00 till 17:00) and Thursday morning (9:00-11:00). **Please note there will be no drop in on Tuesday 22 April.**
- We will not produce a briefing note next week due to the Easter Holiday. The next update will be Friday 25 April.

Background

As a reminder to the background to this work, the Secretary of State when visiting Somerset in January asked for a 20 year Action Plan to be developed in six weeks. The plan will look at the various options for the sustainable management of flood risk on the Somerset Levels and Moors. Dredging is part of that plan and we are now progressing with a project to complete a dredge of 8km of the Rivers Parrett and Tone. The plan has now been published and you can find out more at:

<http://somersetnewsroom.com/2014/03/06/a-big-step-forward/>

The 20 year Action Plan includes a proposal to assess the effectiveness of dredging elsewhere in the wider catchment.

How will we keep you updated on progress?

Weekly updates will be sent to our partners, District and County Councillors and Parish Councils for wider dissemination. We will be including this briefing in our community update messages. We are also putting these weekly updates on the Environment Agency's website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/somerset-levels-and-moors-reducing-the-risk-of-flooding>

Information on the dredging project will also be shared at any flood surgery or public meeting. Please let us know if you want to receive these updates by email and feel free to disseminate wider.