

Press release: Sandwell Valley Park remains open during construction works

Access preparation for the construction of phase 2 of the Environment Agency's Perry Barr and Witton Flood Risk Management Scheme started late January and will continue for the next couple of months. The main construction for the scheme will begin late spring/early summer and will reduce the risk of flooding to 1,400 properties in the area.

Over the next few weeks park visitors will see tree felling operations and some movement of HGVs through the access routes by Forge Mill Farm and the railway bridge by the RSPB centre. Any HGV movement will be carried out within normal working hours Monday to Friday. Priority will be given to park users, to keep disruption to a minimum. Both Forge Mill Farm and the RSPB will remain open during construction, and a path between the 2 buildings will remain available throughout the construction of the scheme. Handsworth Golf Course will be modified to support the scheme, but it will remain open as usual.

Recent Environment Agency drop-in sessions updated the public about progress of works, and received valuable feedback from local community members and representatives of user groups in the park. Another drop-in session is being planned in the near future. Staff will be on hand to answer questions and confirm information such as timescales, footpath closures and traffic management. Attendees will also be able to view the plans and get an overview of the programme as a whole.

Rachel Kelly, Environment Agency project lead for the scheme said:

This is a very exciting scheme that is going to reduce the risk of flooding for 1,400 properties in the area. We have been working closely with our partners and the local community to ensure that we minimise disruption to the park users and keep the community informed as we progress through the construction phase.

Councillor David Hosell, cabinet member for highways and the environment, said:

Council officers have worked hard with the Environment Agency to ensure that the scheme has minimal effect on visitors to the Valley.

We are delighted that part of the scheme and work in the Country Park will include new fencing for improved animal pens at Forge Mill Farm, extending it as a visitor attraction. There will also be improvements to the entrance into the park for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders entering from the Old Newton Road.

More information about the Perry Barr and Witton Flood Risk Management Scheme is available [online](#). Alternatively contact the Environment Agency project team at witton.frms@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Along with flood defences and flood management schemes, knowing your flood risk is also important when protecting your family and property from flooding. People can check their risk and register to receive free flood warnings by visiting the Environment Agency's [flood information pages](#) or calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

Transparency data: Exmouth Marina dredging and disposal at Sprey Point

Updated: Extended suspension of the licence until 18 January 2019.

The MMO granted a marine licence in August 2017 for maintenance dredging of Exmouth Marina and disposal of materials at the Sprey Point disposal site. The Sprey Point disposal site lies off Teignmouth Beach.

Dredging began in late February 2018 and concerns were raised by users of the beach that black-silt like material was being washed ashore following the disposal of dredged material.

The MMO provided an [update on 15 February](#) in which it addressed a number of issues raised by local residents. This includes an explanation about choice of disposal sites. It also explains that testing of material was carried out prior to disposal as part of the application process. This was carried out in line with the OSPAR guidelines. This showed that the material is safe for disposal at sea in line with international conventions.

On 26 February 2018 [the MMO announced](#) it had suspended the marine licence for dredging at Exmouth Marina and subsequent disposal activities at Sprey Point while it investigated the source of the material seen on Teignmouth Beach.

On 6 March 2018 [the MMO clarified](#) that the suspension of the marine licence remains in place while it continues its investigations and provided further information, including that we have mobilised our scientific and technical advisors at the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) to carry out modelling relating to use of the Sprey Point disposal site with the aim of better understanding likely pathways for sediment transport from the disposal site to the beach.

A number of site visits have been undertaken at Teignmouth Beach. In late February, the Environment Agency attended the beach following reports of pollution and the MMO undertook further site visits on 27 February and 5

March. Neither organisation observed significant discoloration and it appears that minimal black material is on the beach following storm events. We have received no further evidence to indicate additional material has been washed up and any clean-up activities are not deemed necessary at this time.

Suspension of licence

On 9 March 2018 the MMO extended the suspension of the marine licence to 14 June 2018. A copy of the suspension notice is published on this page. In addition, a condition of the original marine licence is that dredging does not take place between 1 June and 31 August in any year. This means activity cannot take place while the licence is suspended and/or during this period. The suspension was subsequently extended to 30 September 2018.

On 12 September 2018 the MMO extended the suspension of the licence to 18 January 2019. The MMO continues to work with the applicant on how to proceed after this time.

Information about the marine activities and licence documents are available online via the [MMO's public register](#) (case reference MLA/2016/00372).

[News story: Update on marine licence: disposal of dredged material at Sprey Point](#)

The MMO is continuing to look into concerns about Teignmouth beach and the disposal of material dredged from Exmouth Marina at the Sprey Point disposal site.

The Sprey Point disposal site lies off Teignmouth Beach and concerns were raised by users of the beach that black-silt like material was being washed ashore following disposal of material dredged from Exmouth Marina. The material from Exmouth Marina was previously analysed for a range of contaminants, in accordance with OSPAR requirements. This showed that the sediment was uncontaminated and suitable for disposal at sea.

In response to concerns, and as a responsible marine manager, [on 26 February the MMO announced](#) it had suspended the marine licence for dredging at Exmouth Marina and subsequent disposal activities at Sprey Point while it investigated the source of the material seen on Teignmouth Beach. This suspension remains in place whilst the MMO is continuing its investigations.

The MMO's investigation into the issues raised was affected by last week's severe weather and [related weather warnings in place](#). However, officers from the MMO and the Environment Agency have inspected the beach and MMO is

carrying out a further visit this week. The MMO has mobilised our scientific and technical advisors at the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), to analyse any material we find on the beach that appears to have been disposed at the Sprey Point disposal site. The MMO has also asked Cefas to carry out modelling relating to use of the Sprey Point disposal site with the aim of better understanding likely pathways for sediment transport from the disposal site to the beach.

No disposal activity as part of this licence has taken place at the Sprey Point site since week commencing 19 February. The suspension of the Exmouth Marina marine licence will stay in place until we have concluded our investigations. The MMO is also aware of reports of a number of marine animals being washed ashore over the past week. This has been seen elsewhere in the country and we do not believe is related to the dredging and disposal activities of this marine licence.

Correspondence and requests for information will be responded to in line with [the service standards published](#) on the MMO's website and related legal frameworks for requesting information.

The MMO does not expect to have any further updates this week. Any new developments will be announced via the MMO website.

Notice: SG17 5QB, Myfresh Prepared Produce Limited: environmental permit application advertisement

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for waste operations, mining waste operations, installations, water discharge and groundwater activities. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- how you can view the application documents
- when you need to comment by

The Environment Agency will decide:

- whether to grant or refuse the application
- what conditions to include in the permit (if granted)

Notice: IP21 4QF, Mr Duncan West and Mrs Claire West: environmental permit application advertisement

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for waste operations, mining waste operations, installations, water discharge and groundwater activities. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- how you can view the application documents
- when you need to comment by

The Environment Agency will decide:

- whether to grant or refuse the application
- what conditions to include in the permit (if granted)