

Work completed on Ouse Washes protects thousands of homes

Press release

Cambridgeshire property and land retain flood protection.



Environment Agency staff train with Jackson Civil Engineering to put the demountable flood barrier up

A multi-million pound project to raise the Middle Level Barrier Bank of the Ouse Washes Flood Storage Reservoir has been completed.

Following 6 years of construction, the project maintains the standard of flood protection to more than 2,000 properties and 67,000ha of agricultural land. The raising of the bank on the vitally-important reservoir was carried out between 2017 and this year.

As the Washes are an internationally-important habitat, construction work was carried out during summer and early autumn each year to avoid disturbing breeding and over-wintering birds. New bird hides were installed during the project to help visitors continue to enjoy this important landscape.

This summer, work was carried out to enable the installation of a demountable flood barrier outside the village of Welney. The barrier will be used to prevent water spilling from the reservoir into Welney village. It will replace the use of large sandbags to create a temporary barrier across Welney Wash Road, the A1101. The barrier will be installed when the water level in the reservoir reaches a predetermined level and the road has been closed by Norfolk County Council.

The works ensure compliance with recommendations made by the reservoir inspecting engineer under the Reservoirs Act 1975.

There will now be a further two years of maintenance at the site to establish grass cover. This is needed to ensure the stability of the newly-raised bank.

Nicola Oldfield, a project executive for the Environment Agency, said:

This has been a vital long-term investment and refurbishment programme.

We know the impact that flooding can have, which is why protecting people and communities is our priority.

The results of this work will help to protect thousands of homes and businesses in the area for years to come.

Everyone should know their flood risk and sign up for free flood warnings by going to <https://www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk> or calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188. You can also follow @EnvAgency on Twitter for the latest flood updates.

- The total cost for this project was around £40 million.
- Between 2015 and 2020, we invested more than £1 billion on maintaining flood and coastal defences nationally. This included investing in developing technology and direct maintenance work such as dredging, inspecting assets, and carrying out repairs.

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Published 23 November 2022