

Somerset Levels and Moors Update – February 28th 2023

Current Situation

Following flooding on the Somerset Levels and Moors in January, we want to provide an update on our work. Field teams are carrying out extensive inspections of banks and other assets in areas that were affected by flooding. Repair work to any Environment Agency assets that sustained damage will follow; we will keep you updated on progress.

We are also reviewing the flood and its impacts. This involves examining data from several sources, including information about meteorological conditions leading up to and during the flood, the use of pumps and other assets, the costs of the operation, and observations received from communities and partners.

Public Drop-in Events

We are continuing to work to answer the many questions that we received from residents and members of the public during the flood event. Some of these questions will take more time to answer, but we plan to hold engagement events and activities in the coming months when we have more information to share.

In the meantime, our partners at the County and District Councils are organising multi-agency drop-in events. These events will provide people with useful information and the opportunity to ask questions. We will also be attending these drop-in events. Please come along and talk to us if you have information to share. We will also be sharing information on flood resilience and ways that communities can be better prepared for flooding.

As soon as the times and locations of these events have been confirmed, we will let you know. These events will also be promoted by our partners at County and District Councils.

Temporary Pumps

The pumping operation in January and early February removed huge volumes of water from the levels and moors. Since October, the Wessex area has had an average rainfall of 530mm, which is the eighth wettest for this period since our records began in 1891.

However, since mid-January, we have had an exceptional period of sustained dry weather. Most rain gauges across the area have received less than 20mm of rainfall since January 16th, which is very unusual for this time of year. This dry weather has allowed catchments to dry out and river levels to recede.

The moors are designed to store floodwater, which can then be removed when river levels are low enough. The forecast remains dry, and there is now a great deal of capacity in this water storage system.

Our temporary pumps are a national resource and need to be ready to deploy wherever needed at short notice. Many of the smaller temporary pumps have already been returned to their storage locations, and the enhanced pumps at pumping stations are no longer required. This means we are now starting to remove the larger temporary pumps as planned.

Work to demobilise temporary pumps at Dunball will start this week (w/c 27 February). Demobilisation work will then progress over the following weeks to remove temporary pumps from Haymoor, Elson's Clyce, Saltmoor, Northmoor and finally Currymoor.

Road Closures

The works at Elson's Clyce will require an overnight road closure, and the works at Saltmoor will require between 1 and 2 overnight road closures. We will provide as much notice as possible for these closures and will use our social media channels to keep you updated. We are sorry for any disruption this may cause, and appreciate your understanding while we carry out these works.

Repair Work

During the flood, large volumes of water were diverted from the River Parrett down the Sowy through Monksleaze Clyce. This helped maximise our pumping operation to reduce property flood risk. However, this caused damage to the banks of some rhynes downstream including slumped banks. This has not increased flood risk anywhere in the system, and repair work is underway to fix this damage.

Additional Information and advice:

Prepare for flooding in advance and stay up-to-date on weather information and warnings: <https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/plan-ahead-for-flooding>

Follow us on social media:

[\(1\) Environment Agency - Wessex | Bridgwater | Facebook](#)
[Environment AgencySW \(@EnvAgencySW\) / Twitter](#)

Or visit:

[Home - Somerset Rivers Authority](#)

We know that recent events may trigger feelings of anxiety, fear or worry, particularly for those who have been previously affected by flooding. Mindline is Somerset's emotional support and mental health helpline which is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: 01823 276 892 (local) 0800 138 1692 (freephone).

Information to help you on what to do during a flood is on the [Somerset Prepared website](#) or the [SRA website](#). Remember: Always stay safe. In an immediate flood emergency or where there is a risk to life, follow the advice of the emergency services.

For more information, please contact WessexEnquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk