

Managing flood risk at Lunt Meadows

Lunt Meadows has been designed to act as both a flood storage reservoir, to protect local communities and a nature reserve. When the flood storage reservoir is full, water is then slowly released back into the River Alt, taking the pressure off the river system and reducing the likelihood of flooding in more built-up, urban areas. During Storm Christoph in early 2021, the embankment separating Lunt Meadows from the River Alt was badly damaged by river water overtopping and eroding the embankment. Emergency works to repair the breach and restore the flood storage basin to the standard of protection it provided prior to Storm Christoph was completed in June 2021.

During summer 2023, the Environment Agency began works to permanently reinstate the previously breached section of embankment with a new lowered section of embankment to allow an increase in flows into the reservoir during high river levels. The works which began on 24th July 2023, included the creation of a new lowered spillway at the breach location to allow controlled overtopping of river flows safely into the nature reserve during high river flows.



Works underway mid August 2023

During construction, due to high levels of rainfall, river levels rose and overtopped the embankment on two occasions; August Bank Holiday weekend causing delays to programme and on 20th October again causing delays to our programme. Whilst these events impacted our programme of works meaning we completed later than planned, river flows were directed into the spillway area and into the nature reserve as intended. All works were finally complete 28th November 2023.



August Bank Holiday overtopping 23 – water directed into spillway area



October 20th 23 overtopping – flows being directed into spillway area



Works complete 28th November 23

Usually, areas that are topsoiled are spread with grass seed however after the overtopping event on 20th October which washed away the grass seed, a decision was made to install turf to ensure that the site was established for winter with extra matting and pegs placed over this for protection. The matting and pegs will be removed in Spring 2024.

The works undertaken also complement works being planned by Lancashire Wildlife Trust to improve the wetland habitat in this part of the site therefore creating benefits to both habitat and wildlife.

If you would like to contact us with any enquiries related to this project, please contact:

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