

FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT SCHEME NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme Newsletter, providing you with an update on how Phase 1B of the scheme is progressing.

Progress update

A total of 287 steel sheet piles are now in place at Grove Lodge, marking a key milestone in the Littleborough Flood Risk Management Scheme. This sheet pile flood defence wall will improve the standard of flood protection for the railway line and help manage flow paths from the River Roch. The sheet piles were installed using specialist low-vibration equipment to minimise disruption to the railway. The next phase will be to work on the south embankment at Grove Lodge.

Ealees Brook

We have now completed the first phase of enabling works at Ealees Brook however, during this phase, a number of site constraints were identified which require further assessment before the scheme can progress here. These include the need to investigate a potential gas diversion to progress the proposed work, as well as addressing building-related constraints within the area.

Shottwood Fold

Our contractors have finished installing Property Flood Resilience measures at three properties in Shottwood Fold and are carrying out the final landscaping work where reinstatement is required.



Footpath Update

We understand how important the footpaths, temporarily affected by our scheme, are to the Littleborough community. We are currently reviewing our work programme to minimise disruption where possible and will provide an update on the footpaths as soon as we can. Thank you for your patience and understanding. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.



GALE WEST

Recent Progress

Over the past three months, significant progress has been made across the Gale West area. The major earthworks on the west embankment of the flood storage reservoir have been completed, with the placing and shaping of thousands of cubic metres of clay to form the embankment and prepare it for its final stages. Drainage networks and pressure management infrastructure have also been installed and inspected, helping to ensure the long-term stability and performance of the reservoir. In addition, work on the Greenvale Brook diversion has progressed well with channel excavation, vegetation clearance and river restoration work completed alongside improvements to areas around the east and south embankments.

Upcoming Works

Over the next three months, construction will focus on completing key infrastructure and preparing the site for its long-term operation. This includes installing and commissioning the remaining pressure management infrastructure, completing drainage works, constructing permanent access tracks for future maintenance and carrying out landscaping activities. A major part of this phase will be the grassing of the embankments which will help establish wildlife friendly vegetation and blend the completed areas more naturally into the surrounding landscape.



› Aerial image of the site

Sixth Form College visit

Geography staff and students from Rochdale Sixth Form College visited the Littleborough scheme in June 2026 for an educational field trip.

The project team welcomed around 60 students and staff. They were given an update on the history of the scheme, along with an overview of its progress, achievements, and the impact it will have on reducing flooding for the community. Students gained a greater understanding of the importance of flood risk management and how projects like this help protect residents and businesses from flooding.

GALE EAST

Recent Progress

Work on the embankment of the Gale East flood storage reservoir is continuing; drainage is being installed and pressure management infrastructure work activities have progressed to support the long-term stability of the reservoir. Work has also advanced around Greenvale Brook including channel improvements, site clearance and environmental enhancement works.



➤ New channel built for the diverted Greenvale Brook

GNG Foam Converters

Given the success of the gas diversion work at GNG Foam Converters, the flood wall construction has now begun with completion expected within the next three months. Minor defects identified during inspections are being fixed; this will help improve the wall's condition, ensure effective drainage behind the structure and enhance its long-term durability. Once completed, the retaining wall will provide improved resilience and a better overall appearance for the area.

Centre Vale

Following detailed planning of the works at Centre Vale, it was found that the current design for the scheme has challenges in its construction. We are therefore considering options in the area to ensure that we have an economically viable and environmentally sensitive scheme which is constructable and provides effective protection to residents and businesses in the area. We are currently progressing through this assessment and hope to have an update for the community in 2027.

A reburial at Littleborough

During groundworks on the Littleborough Scheme in 2023, Environment Agency teams made an unusual find: **a small decorative pot containing ashes, carefully buried beside a public footpath.**

Following examination by the Environment Agency senior archaeologist, the pot was identified as a mid-20th century sugar bowl containing what was likely the cremated remains of a much-loved pet, probably a small dog, with evidence suggesting the burial happened in the early 1960s.

Recognising the care and affection behind the original burial, the project team agreed to preserve and respectfully rebury the pot once works were complete. In August 2026, we reburied it close to its original location beneath a newly planted tree.

The discovery offers a poignant reminder that heritage is not only about major historical events but also the personal stories of remembrance, companionship and connection to the landscape that shape our communities.

RESILIENT ROCH UPDATE



Over 260 properties have now had Property Flood Resilience Measures installed through the scheme free of charge, and the remaining will be completed soon. These measures are designed to reduce the impact of surface water flooding and fluvial flooding.

Students from Heybrook Primary School, Holy Trinity CE Primary School and Hamer Community Primary School have been visited by members of our team and local artists 'Magphai' to learn more about flooding and how to be prepared. Classes from each school have helped to create a short stop-motion animation video on the theme and have done some fantastic creative work. Stansfield Primary School will be the next school to participate in this project.

We have installed Sustainable Drainage planters (SuDS) at Heybrook Primary School, Holy Trinity CE Primary School, and Olive Standing Court. In total, the water storage capacity of these is over 8,700 litres the equivalent of 17,454 standard water bottles. This will help to slow the flow of rainwater entering the drainage system and they are now home to some lovely plants for students and residents to enjoy in any weather.

If you would like to be involved or require further information, please get in touch with us on

 resilientroch@rochdale.gov.uk

Unpave the Way

Unpave the Way is an innovative and collaborative project between the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, the Environment Agency, United Utilities, and Lancashire County Council. Unpave the Way seeks to address and raise awareness of the impacts of an increasing national trend of householders choosing to create impermeable front gardens to accommodate motor vehicles and other needs.

This increasing trend is contributing to flood risk and challenges for surface water management on both a localised and catchment scale.

Unpave the Way aims to educate and inspire

householders to include permeable driveways, consider the use of sustainable drainage components (SuDS), collect and store rainwater for reuse, and to encourage climate resilient planting schemes into their front gardens.

For more information on the following, please visit the website here: www.thefloodhub.co.uk/unpave-the-way

- Permeable paving options and cost comparison
- Low maintenance planting
- How to choose a driveway contractor
- Rainwater harvesting ideas
- Sustainable (SuDS) featured with DIY guidance
- Tips for managing a waterlogged garden

CONTACT US How will we keep you updated and involve you?

We plan to keep communities up to date via updates on the Flood Hub and newsletters, all future newsletters will be posted on the Flood Hub <https://thefloodhub.co.uk>. We will also continue to use the Littleborough Flood Action Group to share information with residents.

In addition, the latest updates around our works can also be found on the Volker Engage app. The app allows you to receive regular updates of ongoing works and communication directly to your phone. You can also use the app to send any queries or provide feedback to our updates. Instructions to download the app can be found below.

If you have any queries or concerns and would like to speak to a member of the project team, please email:

rochdaleandlittleborough.FAS@environment-agency.gov.uk

Appointments available on request.



Scan the QR Code or search 'Volker Engage' to download

