



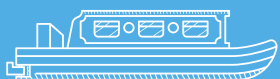
Guildford Flood Alleviation Scheme

July 2024 Newsletter



In this issue

Find out more about the scheme, including how we plan to reduce flood risk in the town centre, make the River Wey better for fish and how we are working with the community.



Welcome



Hello everyone. I'm Jon Mansbridge, the Project Director for the Guildford Flood Alleviation Scheme, and I would like to welcome you to the first issue of our newsletter. This month, we are updating you on the public information event we recently held, plans for fish passes along the scheme, and what the team is currently up to.

This year, we have had an incredibly wet spring, with higher rainfall than usual. This project is part of a range of work the Environment Agency is doing to help reduce flood risk for communities throughout England.

In the meantime, if you haven't already, [please sign up for flood warnings here](#) and stay tuned on our social media to find out what you can do to better protect yourself from flooding.

If you have any questions, you can contact us at Guildfordfloodscheme@environment-agency.gov.uk



Jon Mansbridge,
Project Director

The Environment Agency works to create better places for people and wildlife, and support sustainable development.

Public information event



Thank you to everyone who attended our public information event at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre on 18 April. We had a great turn out and spoke to many members of the community about their experiences of flooding. According to our survey responses, the vast majority of people said they agree that Guildford needs a flood scheme.

At the event, we presented pictures of historic flooding in Guildford, and showed how, with climate change, these events are likely to occur more often. We explained how a flood defence scheme in the town centre could reduce the impacts of floods into the future and gave visitors the opportunity to complete a survey giving their views about a potential flood scheme.



A bridge in the town centre collapsed during flooding in 1900 (credit: David Rose collection)



Attendees were able to view information boards and ask questions about the scheme



Flooding in 2013 caused impacts to recreational facilities including the Odeon cinema

Your views



We invited visitors to our public event to complete a short survey about the scheme. People could also complete the form online for a month following the event.

In addition to reduced flood risk, we asked what other benefits you would like to see as part of the scheme. You said you would like a focus on active travel routes, green open spaces and improving the riverside environment. Some people also provided their own ideas and suggestions of how a flood scheme could work. We will feed this back to scheme designers who will look at how we use this feedback to inform the design of the scheme, reflecting the needs of the community.

We have published a full feedback report which you can view on [our website](#).

Share your experiences

If you have been impacted by flooding in Guildford and would like to share your experiences or photos, please contact our team at Guildfordfloodscheme@environment-agency.gov.uk



Surveying the area



Our team has been busy completing various surveys of Guildford town centre to help inform how the scheme might progress. This is standard practice for any large project to check a scheme is feasible. Read on to find out more about the type of things we have been looking at.



We have recently completed **topography surveys** in the town centre. These look at the natural and built features of a site to understand their size and elevation to allow us to design flood defences, understanding how high they may need to be.

We have completed **landscape and heritage assessments** for the scheme. A landscape assessment looks at the quality of a landscape including land form, land cover and settlements. A heritage survey assesses the historical, cultural, architectural and archaeological significance of places, and makes sure any work we do considers these features.



Our team are continuing to carry out **environmental surveys** throughout the scheme area. This has included a tree survey, assessing the condition of the river and land based habitats, and looking for evidence of important animal species to help mitigate any impacts a flood scheme could have.

We will continue to visit the scheme area to collect **additional information** to help the community understand what a potential flood scheme could look like in Guildford. Over the summer, we will be collecting drone footage to obtain photos and videos to help inform the scheme.



Leading the Way for fish



There are a number of fish species in the River Wey, including chub, trout, roach, perch and pike. They are essential for keeping the ecosystem balanced and maintaining river health.

Numerous weir structures have been built on the River Wey over the centuries. This has created significant obstacles to fish passage.

Guildford Flood Alleviation Scheme is considering 2 new fish passes, upstream of Guildford.

Locations are:

- St Catherine's Weir (near Shalford)
- Unstead Weir (near Peasmarsh)

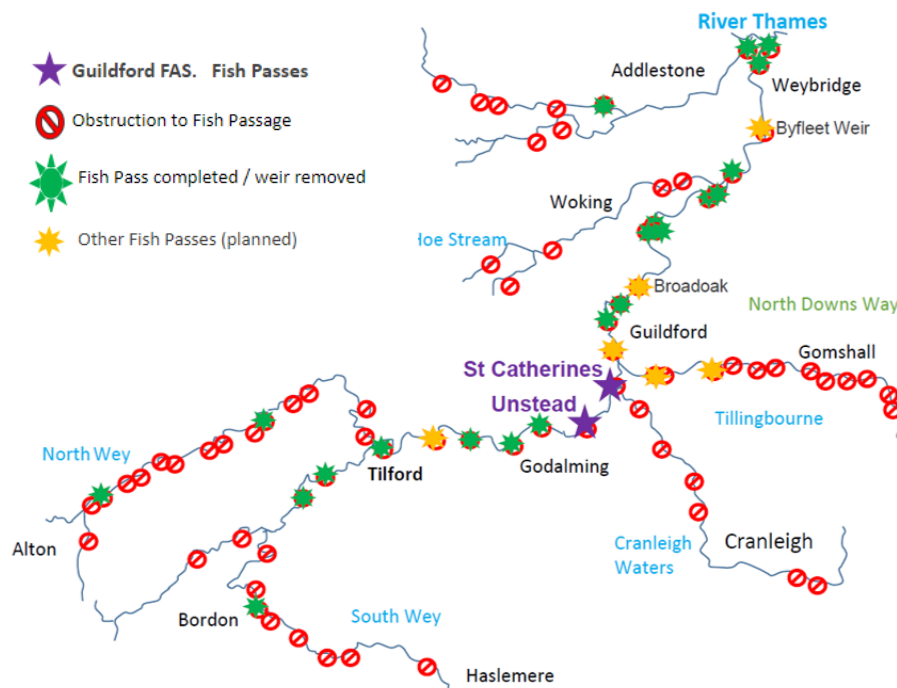


Fish and eel pass on River Wey, Thames confluence



Buckfast Abbey fish pass, River Dart, South Devon

Fish passes allow fish to safely navigate through structures such as weirs, enabling them to move freely throughout the river to breed, feed and find refuge. Naturalistic type fish passes also enhance the river by providing lengths of high-quality habitat.



What's next?



We are using the feedback from our survey to inform the design of the scheme. We will aim to return with another public information event in early 2025 where we will be able to share more details about the design options and gain feedback on these from the community.

Before our second public event, we are planning a roadshow of engagement activities to speak to as many people as possible.

Get in touch!

If you would like us to visit your community group, school, or business, please write to us at guildfordfloodscheme@environment-agency.gov.uk

We are keen to share the work we are doing and how you can get involved.



Follow us on  @GuildfordFS