

# The Bourn Flood Risk Management Scheme (FRMS) – 2<sup>nd</sup> Winter Edition, February 2024

## Stay Informed, Stay Prepared - Engaging for a Resilient Future

**We hope this newsletter finds you well. As part of our ongoing commitment to keeping you informed about the Bourn Flood Risk Management Scheme, we want to share some information.**

We understand that recent discussions surrounding the Flood Risk Management scheme on the Bourn have raised valid concerns within your community. We want to assure you that we are committed to addressing these concerns collaboratively and transparently. At this early concept design stage, your input is invaluable, and we are eager to hear from both groups and individuals alike.

### Why the need for this scheme?

The necessity for implementing this scheme arises from our current modelling, which indicates that approximately 200 residents and 100 businesses face the adverse impacts of flooding in the community. Without intervention, these individuals and enterprises are vulnerable to significant disruptions and damages caused by large scale flooding events as seen in 2008 and 2016. Therefore, this scheme is indispensable as it offers crucial protection against the devastating impacts of flooding, safeguarding livelihoods, properties, and the overall well-being of community members.

### Engagement Initiatives: Shaping Our Future Together

To address concerns raised and foster community involvement, we are working on how we can best engage with the local community, understanding who in the community wants to be involved is a priority for us. Our aim is to ensure transparency and inclusivity throughout the scheme proposal process. One of our key initiatives involves hosting an engagement mapping session with key stakeholder groups. This session will enable us to identify who we need to contact and collaborate with throughout the project. We will carefully consider venue locations and develop the best engagement process tailored to fit the needs and preferences of your community. This session is designed to bring together community members, local businesses, environmental experts, and public officials. Its aim is to foster a collaborative environment where ideas, concerns, and innovative solutions can be shared openly.

### Register for Updates

To stay informed about project developments and upcoming engagement opportunities, we encourage you to register for our mailing list. By doing so, you will receive regular updates directly to your inbox. Additionally, we urge you to reach out to us via email if you have any questions or concerns. Your feedback is crucial, and we want to ensure that your voice is heard every step of the way. Please contact us using the email address found in the further information section.

**customer service line**      **03708 506 506**

**incident hotline**            **0800 80 70 60**

**floodline**            **03459 88 11 88**

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## Addressing key Concerns

Following our first community drop-in session on 18 January 2024 we have noted several concerns raised by the community, and we want to address them directly:

- **How long will the scheme potentially take:** The scheme is due to be completed by October 2028 and the programme of works milestones are (albeit subject to change): -

Concept Designs Complete	Sep-23
Modelling- Baseline Review Complete	Jan-24
Modelling- Design Scenarios	Feb 24-May 24
Ground Investigation Work onsite	Feb 24-Jul 24
Outline Design	May 24-Aug 24
Costing and Economics	Sept 24-Oct 24
Gateway 2 Business Case Activities	Nov 24- Feb 25
Detailed Design and Pre-Construction Activities	Feb 25-Nov 26
Construction	Nov 26-Oct 28

- **Loss of Local Parkland and Wildlife:** There are no plans for significant loss of local parkland and wildlife. The flood storage areas will serve the essential function of managing floodwaters during periods of heightened risk, such as large-scale events like the 2016 flood, to the local community and safeguarding infrastructure. The area will only hold flood water during large flooding events outside of flood events, the parks will continue to be used as they currently are by the surrounding communities. Our goal is to minimize environmental impact while effectively managing flood risks, aiming for a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain. Although some tree removal is inevitable for project completion, we are committed to planting replacements at a ratio of one lost tree to five new ones. Additionally, initiatives like planting flower meadows can further enhance biodiversity. **We are also committed to explore other environmental improvement opportunities such as those identified in the Rea Landscape Visioning work. These plans can now be found on our scheme web page [Bourn and Lower Rea Flood Risk Management Scheme - Environment Agency - Citizen Space \(environment-agency.gov.uk\)](#)**
- **Increased Flood Risk to Properties Bordering the Park:** These parks provide strategic locations for implementing flood storage areas, crucial for protecting approximately 200 residential and 100 business properties in the Bournville and Stirchley area. In urban areas it is difficult to use traditional flood measures such as flood walls. The Environment Agency must complete a full flood risk assessment to ensure there is no increased risk of flooding to properties in the location of the scheme or above or below the scheme. **Area of Choice for Future Flooding Events:** The flood management for the whole of the catchment area has been separated into two projects. This scheme has been designed for the protection of the Bournville and Stirchley area.
- **Potential Reduction in House Values and Saleability:** We understand concerns about property values, but studies have shown that well-implemented flood risk management schemes can enhance

property values by reducing risk. Our aim will be to enhance the park landscapes and increase their biodiversity value whilst reducing flood risk to homes, communities and infrastructure including the local road and rail network.

- **Views of High Reservoir Mounds:** While there may be changes to the landscape, we are committed to minimising visual impacts and preserving the character of our community to the greatest extent possible. The concept drawings referred to show the maximum size of embankment and amount of water that can be stored. The aim is to scale these works down, so we are getting the most benefit compared to the cost of the measures.
- **Insurance Costs and Insurability:** Proper flood risk management can lead to more favourable insurance terms and ensure that properties remain insurable. On previously developed flood schemes we have no evidence to indicate that insurance costs have increased or that there has been a loss of the ability to insure. We will work closely with residents and insurance providers to address any concerns.
- **Lack of Communication with Directly Affected Residents:** We understand why some residents may be frustrated with our communications and are committed to improving transparency and engagement moving forward. It is important to recognise that we are at an early stage in the process and have only just started engaging with the local community now that we are developing the designs. We welcome feedback and want to work closely with the community and key stakeholders and are keen to engage with affected residents and partners throughout the project.
- **Loss of Privacy to Rear Gardens:** We will take measures to minimise impacts to residents' privacy during project implementation and design. We will always discuss any options with people that this will affect and thoroughly consider the needs and concerns of the surrounding community and residents throughout the design.
- **Exploratory Work and Disruption:** We understand that exploratory work may cause inconvenience, but it is necessary for gathering essential data. We will strive to minimise disruption as much as possible and will work with the community around key events that are planned in the parks. The initial work will involve visual surveys of the parks followed by ground investigation work. The ground investigation work is planned from March and is expected to take around 2-3 weeks per park site. The work will take place Monday to Friday and will involve borehole drilling, which is a process used to create holes or wells in the ground. These boreholes are for groundwater extraction, geotechnical investigations, mineral exploration, or environmental monitoring. Samples of the subsurface materials may be collected at various depths for analysis. We will provide information to the community in advance and who they need to contact if they have any questions or concerns when this activity is happening.

## Frequently asked question document (FAQ)

We have produced an FAQ document for this scheme, which is located on our online information page - the link is in the 'Further information' section below. This FAQ document will be added to and updated as the scheme progresses, so please continue to refer to it in the first instance if you have any questions. The FAQ document has been produced to provide you with clear and concise answers to frequent questions about the flood risk management scheme. Its aim is to help you understand the project's objectives, scope, and potential impacts.

## Upcoming Dates and How to Get Involved

- **Engagement Workshops:** We will be sending invitations for the engagement mapping session. Your insights will help shape the future of flood risk management in your community. If you want to be involved with this session, please email us to express your interest.
- **Stakeholder Sessions:** If you belong to a specific stakeholder group (businesses, Associations, local authorities, etc.), keep an eye out for invitations to your tailored sessions. These sessions will be scheduled based on stakeholder feedback and availability.
- **Community Drop-in Session:** we will be arranging further drop-in sessions, and we will invite you to attend.
- **Online Feedback Portal:** For those unable to attend in person, an online feedback portal will be launched via us on our [TheBournFRMS@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:TheBournFRMS@environment-agency.gov.uk). Your opinions matter, and this platform will provide a convenient way to share your thoughts and suggestions.

## Together Towards a Resilient Future

As we move forward, your participation and insights will play a pivotal role in shaping the Bourn Flood Risk Management Scheme. We are committed to creating a comprehensive and effective plan that safeguards our community against future flooding while fostering a strong and united town. Stay tuned for more updates and opportunities to get involved.

## Further information

We will continue to provide regular updates about the scheme through our newsletters and online information page which can be accessed through <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/west-midlands/bourn-and-lower-rea-flood-risk-management-scheme/>. If you would like to receive our newsletter or any further information regarding this project, please contact [TheBournFRMS@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:TheBournFRMS@environment-agency.gov.uk) or call our National Customer Contact Centre during office hours on 03708 506 506 and we will add you to our mailing list.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this update.**