

OUTSTRAYS TO SKEFFLING MANAGED REALIGNMENT SCHEME (OtSMRS) NEWSLETTER

September/October 2023

Public drop-in in Welwick Village Hall

As the end of the project's third construction season approaches, we would like to invite you to a drop-in to report progress and achievements for the OtSMRS site this year; details shown in the box below. We will also bring information about what's planned for the final year of construction and proposals for both Winestead and Skeffling pumping stations, as well as sharing our plans for environmental and amenity improvements for the site. These include bird hide design, paths and access, car parking, tree planting this winter and our ideas for interpretation boards for the site. Please join us for this event if you want an update on the scheme, have questions to ask or just want to talk to staff about aspects of our work.

Drop-in at Welwick Parish Hall

19th October

from 2.30pm to 6.00pm

We'll be showing the most recent drone footage to give you a flavour of what's been happening on the site this year. We'll also offer updates on many different aspects of the scheme, including proposals for new pumping stations at Skeffling and Winestead as well as planned environmental and amenity improvements.

Environment Agency and JBA Bentley staff will be on hand to answer questions and discuss any issues you want to raise.

Everyone is welcome.



Photo 1 from last year's autumn drop-in

Construction update

Unbelievably it is nearly the end of another construction season on site! The whole construction period this year has been rather a tale of two seasons. We had some spectacularly good weather in May and June, both drier than average, before the weather turned and the whole of England saw the wettest July since 2009. Many areas of the country saw the wettest July since records began in 1891. The figures on the page below paint a convincing picture of the extent of this rainfall.

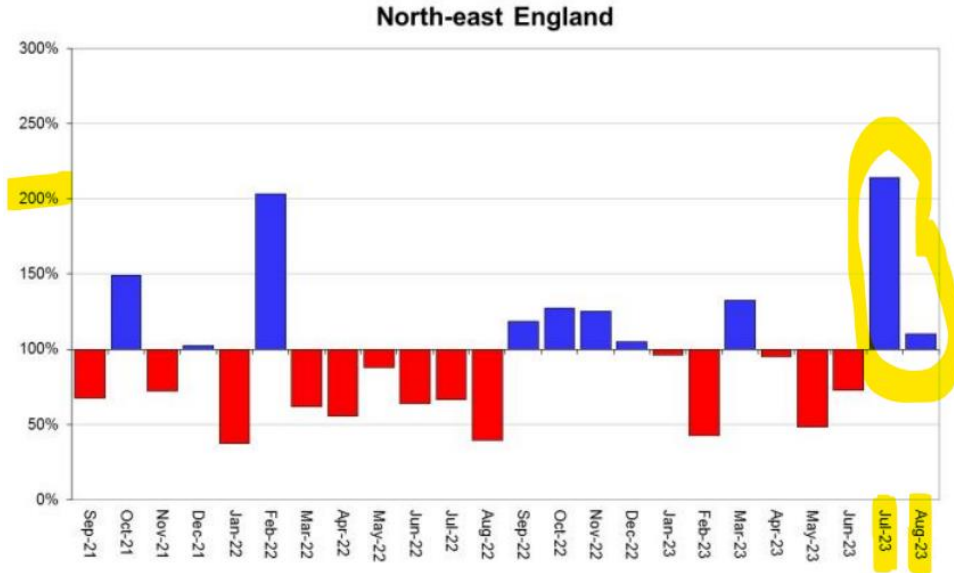


Figure 1: Monthly rainfall totals for the past 24 months as a percentage of the 1961 to 1990 long term average for each region and for England – notably high for July 2023.

July 2023

Map Legend

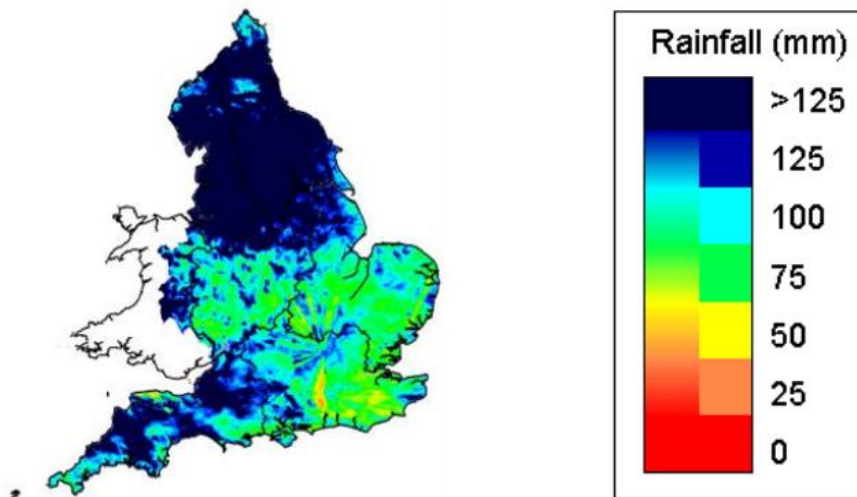


Figure 2: Monthly rainfall totals visualisation

Figures 1 and 2 from the [Monthly Water Situation report for July 2023 \(Environment Agency\)](#)

This, understandably, had an impact on the amount of work that could be completed in July, and also sometimes in August and September, as the rainy days are times we cannot work, but this usually continues for several days afterwards as we wait for the ground to dry out and become safe again to work across the site.

Despite around 22% of our working days this year being written off due to the weather (as opposed to 10% in 2022), the site team have worked incredibly diligently moving as much earth as in 2022 and remain on track to complete the necessary works this year that give us the best chance to complete the breach stage of works in next years' construction season. So we publicly want to thank the site team for their continued efforts in challenging conditions. This hard work has included:

- The completion of the flood embankment across its entire length (except for the 'tie-ins' to the existing embankments at either end and the small section required for access from the site compound);
- Wave bund construction (again, except for small sections);
- Excavation of the bowl area and creeks which extend out into the site;
- Completion of the landfill capping (to prevent any contaminants leaching out);
- Thousands of metres of fencing, along paths and around tree planting areas (to protect them from deer and rabbits – the trees will be planted this winter);
- Hundreds of metres of path laid for the public right of way and bridleways;
- Design work to finalise the access ramp construction to ensure it is suitable for all users and maintenance, and the bird hide designs, including liaising with Bishop Burton College students;
- Sowing grass seed on the embankment and other areas (due to be carried out prior to the end of the working season, but subject to suitable weather);
- Plus much much more, including the repeat requirement to dampen down the site when it was dry and dusty and pump out standing water when the rain turned sections of the site into lakes!



Photo 2: A dumper and dozer moving and laying material on the embankment

Looking ahead to next year, we are planning for the enabling work on the site of the breach to begin in March 2024. This will hopefully be the last year of construction; despite delays caused by the weather this season, we are still on track to complete all works relating to the managed realignment scheme in the autumn next year.

As seen this year, our site is incredibly susceptible to the impact of the weather, and despite all our very best endeavours and planning, there is still a chance that, should we see a prolonged period of poor weather at the start of next year's construction season, work on the breach could be impacted. Our foremost priority is to ensure the safety of our team, and works will only proceed if and when it is safe to do so.

Skeffling Pumping Station: planning application

As mentioned in our last newsletter, at the end of June we submitted a planning application to East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC), for our proposed new pumping station at Skeffling. We have previously shared details on our website, but you can view this application, using the reference: **23/01968/STPLF**, via the council's planning portal:

<https://newplanningaccess.eastriding.gov.uk/newplanningaccess/> .

The standard consultation period has elapsed. However, we have asked ERYC if this can be extended slightly to allow further time for any additional comments to be received. Please provide comments as soon as possible if you can. If there are any issues with this timeframe and you can't submit comments through the planning process, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us and we will try and incorporate any comments as far as possible.

Winestead Pumping Station: funding approval

Plans for a second new pumping station, to replace the existing Outstrays Pumping Station at the end of Winestead drain, have been developed to the point where we were able to submit a Full Business Case (FBC) to secure funding for construction. The FBC has now successfully passed through the Environment Agency's assurance process and funding has been approved, meaning work can progress on the detailed design elements, ahead of works beginning on site next year.

A further planning application for this pumping station will be submitted to ERYC in the coming months.

Some more photos from work on site this summer



Photo 3: building the path on top of the new embankment



Photo 4: Installing horse-friendly gates at the end of the Public Right of Way (PROW)



Photo 5: Aerial view of West 2 habitat area – an excerpt from the recent drone flyover video which you will be able to view at the drop in on 19th October (see details at the start of the newsletter)

Contact Us

Environment Agency

For enquiries, you can contact us by email: Welwick.Skeffling@environment-agency.gov.uk. Or by phone on **03708 506506** and ask for Marie-Claire Spicer, Project Manager, or Nikky Wilson, Engagement Specialist.

For more information, you can visit the scheme's webpage at:

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/yorkshire/outstrays-to-skeffling-managed-realignment-scheme/>

JBA Bentley

For enquiries about the work on site, contact Paul Craig, the site manager on **07837 454048**.