

February 2021

Update: Jubilee River, Black Potts weir repairs

The Jubilee River is part of the Maidenhead Windsor and Eton Flood Alleviation Scheme (MWEFAS) and is a man-made 11.6 km stretch of naturalistic river and habitats, reducing the flood risk to approximately 3,000 properties.

Black Potts Weir is the final weir on the Jubilee River, it slows down water as it moves over it allowing us to reduce flood risk and manage river levels.

In August 2020, our divers surveyed the weir and found that downstream area of the weir had been eroded and required immediate repair.

From October to December 2020 our project team of engineers and construction experts worked extremely hard to complete the first phase of works as planned. This work included removing damaged concrete from around the weir and placing new sheet piling. During this phase of the repair works we were unable to operate the Jubilee River.

Now that the first phase is complete we are able to safely operate the Jubilee River. The amount of flow we pass down the Jubilee River is determined by the level of flood risk to people and property and the safety of the weir and railway viaduct.

We have recently successfully operated the Jubilee River

- A short video has been produced that explains how the Jubilee River works and how it has reduced the risk of flooding in recent weeks. View it on the [Environment Agency River Thames Waterways Team Facebook page](#)
- The Jubilee River was operated from 27 December 2020, diverting flows from the Thames to prevent property flooding around Maidenhead. From 30 December we reduced flow in the Jubilee River as levels in the River Thames decreased. By 3 January it was no longer being operated.
- We operated the Jubilee River again on 29 January 2021, gradually increasing the amount of flow up to 100 cubic metres per second on 2 February to reduce river levels in the Thames around Maidenhead. After this, flows in the Jubilee River were slowly reduced and by 12 February it was no longer in use.
- During this second period of operation we closed the flood gates and operated the pumps at Cookham that also form part of the MWEFAS.
- Throughout these periods, our teams were working around the clock to support local communities and the environment. Our operational staff were out working to ensure water could flow through the catchment to reduce the risk of flooding. Our community information officers were out in affected areas to monitor conditions and reassure communities. Many staff worked in our virtual incident room to monitor rainfall and river levels 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including Christmas Day.
- At the current time, the Jubilee River is now no longer in operation for flood risk purposes. However, we continue to constantly monitor weather, rainfall and river flows so that we can operate the Jubilee River if necessary.



Black Potts weir showing the Jubilee River in operation 28 December

Next steps: extension to timescales

- The repair work to Black Potts has now recommenced.
- We have surveyed the first phase of the repair works following the recent operation of the Jubilee River to ensure that there is no damage.

customer service line
03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
03459 88 11 88

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- The repair work completed in December now needs to be reinforced. The next stage of the works is to create a connection between the existing weir and the newly installed sheet piles, essentially stitching them together. This activity will be done in three sections starting in the middle of the weir adjacent to the fish pass. We are starting here to minimise impacts on fish migration later in the year.
- Once this stitch detail is completed, the next and final operation is the installation of heavy rock armour. This will stop any future scour and ensure that the weir and the Jubilee River will continue operate to reduce the risk of flooding for the local community into the future.
- The design for the repairs is running parallel with the work because of its urgency. Our engineers have completed a detailed hydraulic modelling exercise and a further assessment of the riverbed. As a result, we have changed the initial design and we need a significant increase in the amount of rock armour. This is because our initial quantity estimates were calculated before work and detailed design work had been carried out.
- This means that the timescales for the construction programme will be extended. We estimate that the work will now be completed in Summer 2021. Although this is longer than originally forecast we want to ensure that the work is completed to the best standard possible and will last for many years to come.
- Timescales may also be subject to changing weather conditions as operatives on site cannot work safely in high river flows.
- We will have regular boat movements between the construction compound and the weir. We will communicate with river user groups to ensure all parties are aware to avoid any risks to boaters or our contractors during the work.

Continued protection from flooding

- We continue to carefully manage flows between the main River Thames and operate the Jubilee River if required.
- We have a revised operating procedure for the Jubilee River whilst the repair work is taking place. Should flood conditions be forecast we will pause the repair works and remove plant machinery and staff to ensure their safety before any operation of the Jubilee River.
- We will continue to operate the other elements of the Maidenhead, Windsor & Eton Flood Alleviation Scheme (MWEFAS), such as the existing flood gates and supporting pump plan that reduces flood risk to Cookham and north Maidenhead.
- We constantly monitor rainfall and river levels. The River Thames needs long and continuous days of rain to flood, providing us with ample time to prepare for any high flows.
- We maintain regular contact with local authorities and the emergency services through the Local Resilience Forum, in order to manage the situation should it worsen and to ensure we have support for communities if required.
- We have a bespoke flood warning and alert system for residents around the Jubilee River should flooding be expected.

Stay up to date with latest situation

- Follow us on Twitter @EnvAgencySE
- If you live near the Jubilee River, [sign up to Flood Alerts and Flood Warnings](#) or call Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or Download the free Flood Alert App
- Stay tuned to local news and social media channels
- See which warnings are in force please visit our <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/warnings>

Further information

Follow us on Twitter [@EnvAgencySE](#) or email enquiries_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk

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