

## FLOOD BARRIER UPDATE FROM ECC - DEC 2021

Essex County Council's delivery team mobilised on site to begin delivery of the flood alleviation scheme on the w/c 08th November 2021.

The time between this post and initial mobilisation has been spent carrying out preparatory work on site and the temporary flood defence that will protect the construction site/properties during the first phase of work is nearing completion. On the run-up to the Christmas holidays the delivery team will be completing these preparatory works in readiness for starting the major construction works early in the new year, that include replacement of some existing flood protection walls and installation of the reinforced concrete foundation.

We spoke to the Chairman of the Old City Flood Gate Group CIC, Mr Ian Draper about the scheme who said: *"We are pleased that we can see positive progress with the barrier works. The start of the works were delayed for a few months and we were all impatient for the scheme to move ahead. The good news is that the works are underway and hopefully we can build up a 'head of steam' to keep this pace of progress. Local residents were surprised at the scale of the works. The temporary barrier is much more robust than we expected and we are beginning to get an idea of the sheer scale, and hence timescales of the scheme. We recently suffered a surprisingly higher tidal height than forecast and this almost flooded some of the local cottages. If this had been combined with a tidal surge, then the situation could have been worse than the terrible flooding of 2013. Occasions like this are a constant reminder of why we need the flood barrier and according to the expert's predictions this is only going to get worse. We are all hoping that the present settled weather will continue to help the project move forward."*

The former chair of the Old City Flood Gate Group CIC and long-standing resident of the Lane, Mrs Jill Keene also said: *"As the original instigator of the request for funding for the flood protection works and former chairperson of the Old City Floodgate Group, I am greatly relieved to see work is now getting underway. My property, The Old Victory, is a former pub which is now grade II listed and has been in my family for four generations. During my childhood we suffered regular flooding incidents as did many of our neighbours in the surrounding cottages and houses. Although we were spared major flooding for several years, since the surge flood tide in December 2013, we have seen an increasing number of very high tides. These have regularly reached my back door step and some have once again made it into the house. Following the 2013 flood, we had eight inches of sea water throughout the entire ground floor of the house and outbuildings. The resulting insurance claim totalled £60,000 and I know some of my neighbours struggle to get insurance. As so many of these properties are of historical interest and within a conservation area, it is wonderful to see positive steps being taken to protect them not just for us but for future generations."*

Moving into the new year both vehicular and pedestrian access will be restricted in the local area as a full Road closure will be in place on Coast Road at its junction with The Lane. Vehicular access beyond No.138 Coast Road will be restricted, however vehicular and pedestrian access to residential properties and businesses up-stream of this point will be maintained throughout delivery of the scheme.

We have a dedicated Site Attendance Team (SAT) in place who will support residents and businesses with access to their properties. The SAT will be stationed on site, close to the Coast Road Public Car Park within normal working hours (8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) and their contact details can be found displayed on signage located around the construction site.

The temporary flood defence will be removed on completion of the first phase of work, which we are expecting to be complete by the Easter holidays 2022 and it is at this point access to the area will be significantly improved. The construction site will be closed down from Saturday 18th December 2021 to Monday 3rd January 2022 (inclusive) as the delivery team break up for the Christmas holiday.

If there are any queries regarding the flood alleviation scheme then please contact the Lead Local Flood Authority team at Essex County Council by email: [floods@essex.gov.uk](mailto:floods@essex.gov.uk)