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LAXEY FLOOD ALLEVIATION – Nov 2020 UPDATE

New Flood Management Division

Following the Transfer of Function Order approved by Tynwald at last month's sitting, the Department of Infrastructure (DOI) has formed a new team responsible for flood risk management and coastal protection. The new Flood Management Division brings together staff from the DOI, Met Office and Manx Utilities into one team. The newly formed Division will ensure that Government resources are delivered in a coordinated and cohesive manner as the team has been brought together in one central location providing closer-working.


Communication


We are committed to improving communication. From the questionnaires filled in at the recent drop-in at the Institute it was clear that respondents had a preference for communication through newsletters, via Garff Commissioners and through social media. To further assist with communication we will be launching a new website at the end of November as a central point for flood risk management information, contact, latest news and reporting any problems. There will also be an opportunity to sign up for our updates via email as we will be issuing newsletters regularly.

How to contact us:

Website *coming soon*: www.iomfloodhub.im

Email: iomfloodhub@gov.im

 [/iominfra](https://www.facebook.com/iominfra)

 [/iominfra](https://twitter.com/iominfra)

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The 24 hrs Emergency Telephone Line is: +44 1624 672000.

Laxey Flood Alleviation Scheme – Consultation Feedback

Thank you to those who spent time with us at the public consultation event in September. It was great to see that the majority of you supported the proposals. Many of you provided invaluable comments on the proposals that we are considering in the design of the schemes. It is important that we listen to those who know Laxey best.

As outlined at the event, the flood protection works are expected to take a number of years and will require a project delivery team to oversee from planning to implementation. The Department will be asking Tynwald for increased resources for flood protection so that we can keep on top of day to day maintenance as well as constructing the new schemes we showed you at the Institute; we hope to be in a position to update on this in the next newsletter. The elements of the scheme identified as high priority and programmed for construction in the summer works window 2021 are:

- 1) Removal of the MER weir, profiling of the river bed and creation of a rock ramp weir.
- 2) Completion of river flood defence wall along Glen Road. The wall up to the Woollen Mills has been structurally assessed and found to be fit for purpose. However we cannot be absolutely sure it will withstand another major flood. Replacing it is the safest option.

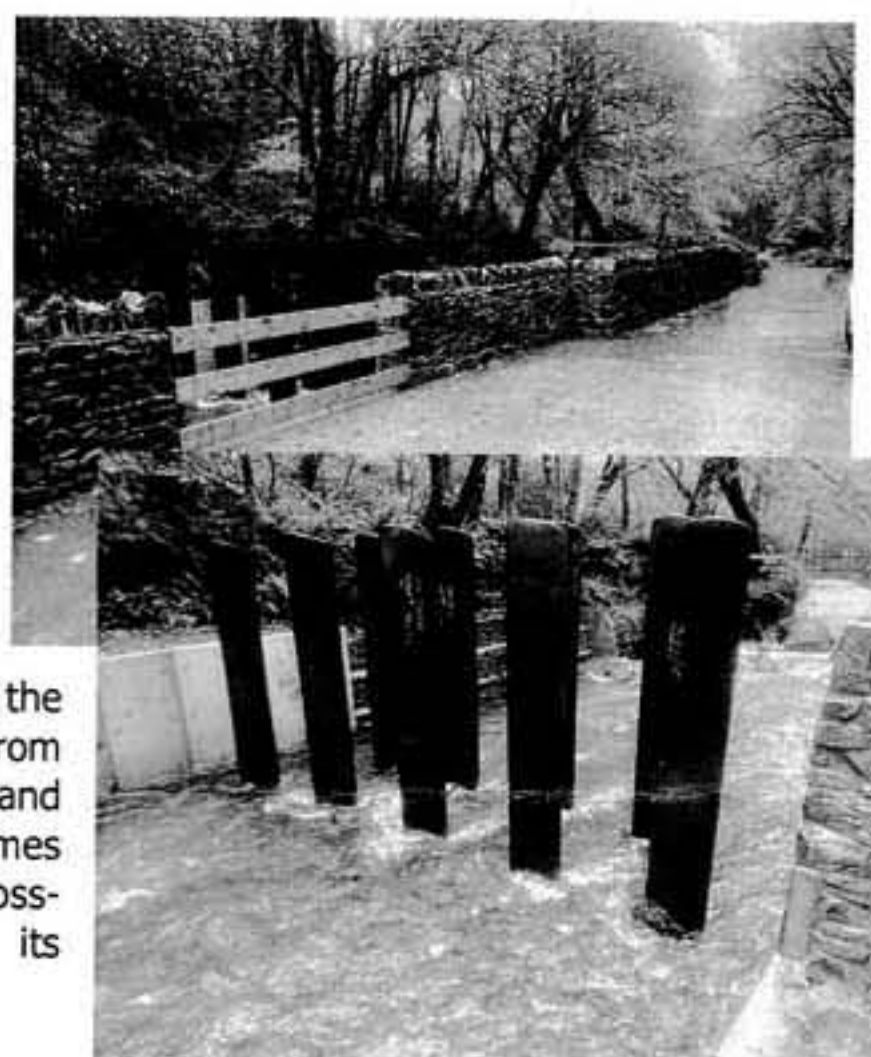
Where possible, surface water elements of the wider scheme will also be progressed in 2021.



Example rock ramp weir

Catcher to prevent woodland debris blockages

A debris catcher designed to prevent trees, branches and large debris from causing blockages further down the river in Laxey has been completed. The catcher comprises nine steel columns spaced to stop any woodland debris from making further progress downriver. In the event that the debris catcher becomes completely blocked, it has been designed so that water will flow around the sides where it will be directed straight back in to the river. The Department will clear the catcher on a regular basis, using a new hard-stand area for heavy machinery as needed. Prior to construction, environmental concerns were dealt with through consultation with the Department of the Environment, Food and Agriculture. Fish were removed from the river before work started to preserve stocks, and construction only took place in the river during specified times to comply with environmental restrictions. The cross-Government project was delivered on time and within its £170,000 budget.



Gretch Veg culvert improvement works

The existing culvert had limited flood capacity and was prone to blockages. The culvert line was also 'dog-legged' resulting in poor flow. The new culvert is 3m wide and has a much larger capacity. The culvert has been designed to allow additional surface water to be diverted to this watercourse in future to help reduce flooding in other parts of the catchment (Minorca Hill / Minorca Vale / Quarry Road). The culvert works will continue under Glen road maintaining the capacity all the way through to the River Laxey. The new design will allow safer and easier maintenance access.



Beach front/stone management

A popular topic at the consultation event was stone management on the beach front. Five years ago the Department took advice on stone management practices from a specialist consultancy. Shingle and stone build up can be important in dissipating wave energy. Profiling is planned this winter as part of a monitoring programme although it is not expected to form part of a regular maintenance programme. Beach material builds back up very quickly following removal or profiling. To continuously carry out this maintenance would incur large costs that do not currently have the evidence to justify regular clearance, although we will continue to monitor the situation.

Landowner responsibilities

If you would like a hard copy of our watercourse management guide please get in touch and we can post one to your address. This document outlines the rights and responsibilities of riparian landowners- these are people who have a part to play in flood management because a watercourse runs through or directly next to their property. We will also be publishing this document on our website when it is launched.

Access maintenance gate

The wooden fascia on new access gate installed to allow maintenance work in the river wall has already bowed to such an extent gaps are now visible. The fascia panel will be replaced by the manufacturer. It makes no contribution to the function of the gate, which is steel. It is there to improve the appearance of the gate and will be replaced but the gate remains watertight.

Any comments?

Finally, if you have any questions or information you'd like to share then please do get in touch. We are working to improve the ways we manage risks from flooding and coastal erosion across the Island and would be pleased to have any feedback at any time.

Yours sincerely,



N J Black

Chief Executive

Department of Infrastructure