

DECEMBER 19, 2024

 [Bridgwater Tidal Barrier \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk)

NEWSLETTER

BRIDGWATER TIDAL BARRIER

Creating a community resilient to flooding and coastal change



The Bridgwater Tidal Barrier scheme has been developed by the Environment Agency and Somerset Council due to the increasing tidal flood risk to Bridgwater town centre and the surrounding area. The scheme will deliver a tidal barrier and improvements to downstream defences on the River Parrett near Chilton Trinity, and will reduce tidal flood risk to 11,300 homes and 1,500 businesses.

The whole scheme comprises:

- Constructing a tidal barrier on the River Parrett, next to Express Park, Bridgwater
- Improving existing downstream riverside banks and constructing new secondary flood banks
- Improving fish and eel passage at 12 upstream sites on the rivers Parrett and Tone

Hi all,

It's been a while since our last newsletter, and as we approach the end of 2024, I'm proud to share the progress we've made on the Bridgwater Tidal Barrier Scheme.

As Project Director, it's my privilege to oversee this significant infrastructure project, developed in partnership with the Environment Agency and Somerset Council.

In this edition, we share updates on the progress we've made in the last few months. From establishing our site working areas at Express Park to constructing trial embankments and installing test concrete piles, we've been laying the groundwork for this transformative scheme.

Alongside the construction progress, I'm delighted to see our team's continued commitment to community engagement, through events such as the Angel Place pop-up or working with local schools via the sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), to address how to mitigate climate change challenges and inspire the next generation of engineers, ecologists and landscape architects!

As we look ahead to 2025, we remain focused on delivering this vital scheme with minimal disruption, ensuring we continue to listen to and involve our stakeholders every step of the way. I hope this newsletter provides valuable insight into the work we're doing, which will bring us one step closer to greatly reducing the risk to our communities from tidal flooding.

Thank you for your continued interest and support.

Best regards,

Jeanne Capey

Project Director, Bridgwater Tidal Barrier Scheme



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What's been happening?

Express Park (right bank)

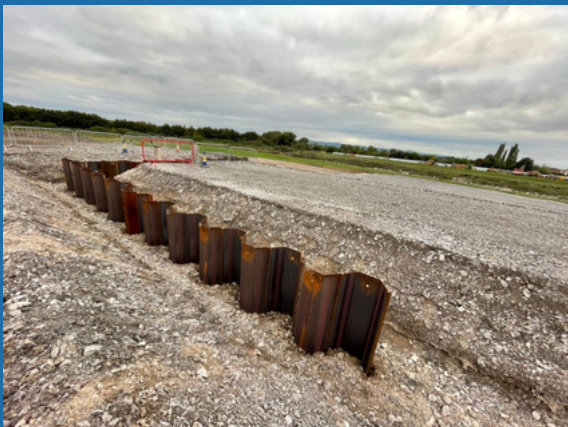
Test Piles

Construction of the tidal barrier involves many stages of works, including building a solid platform to work from along the soft, silty riverbanks of the River Parrett. Kier successfully installed four pre-cast concrete piles in August, to support the large plant required to build the barrier.

You may have seen the 65-tonne piling rig on site at Express Park, which was used to install the piles. Installing the test piles gave us a good opportunity to monitor noise and vibration levels so we can best mitigate the impact of piling during the main works.



Pre-cast concrete test pile installation at Express Park (right bank)



Seepage cut off wall (right bank)

A significant section of the existing flood defence embankment needed to be removed to allow room for the pre-cast concrete pile installation that will form part of the access to the tidal barrier. Kier installed a sheet piled wall to create a flood barrier and this has been keyed into the existing flood defence for strength. It will help protect against the potential of rising flood waters in the surrounding area and site whilst construction is taking place. Once the sheet pile works were complete the embankment could then be excavated safely.

Chilton Trinity Downstream Defences (left bank)

Managing traffic at Saltlands Lane



To access the barrier site, we have vehicle entrances located on both sides of the river at Saltlands Lane and Express Park. Our entrance along Saltlands Lane is also the access road for the recycling centre, Somerset Bus depot and Wessex Water sewage treatment plant.

To help reduce the impact of our site traffic, a third lane has been built and will be used for deliveries, and by people working and visiting our site. It will also act as a holding area for larger deliveries before safely directing them onto our site, which recently worked effectively with the large deliveries required for piling works.

When the project is completed, this temporary lane will be turned into a cycle path linking Bridgwater industrial estate with the River Parrett and its public bridleways.

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What's been happening? *(continued)*

Chilton Trinity Downstream Defences (left bank)

Trial embankment at Chilton Trinity

Did you know that as part of the Bridgwater Tidal Barrier Scheme we will be constructing 7km of flood defence embankment?

Kier is currently constructing a 370m long, 1.2m high trial embankment in Chilton Trinity. It is constructed from material which has been sourced from designated local borrow pits, in line with our sustainability commitments. We are monitoring the settlement of this bank to help us optimise construction of the remaining embankments.



Trial embankment construction

What's happening over the next 3 months?

- Installation of pre-cast concrete piles and a load bearing working platform on the left bank at Express Park.
- Across on the right bank side of the river at Chilton Trinity, the sheet pile installation at Pims Clyce Outfall structure will continue.
- Once Wessex Water have diverted utilities at Straight Drove, work will be begin on diverting the road. Further communication to those affected by this work will be provided.
- As we enter new areas of Chilton Trinity, Pawlett and Comwich, environmental surveys, ecological mitigation, vegetation clearance and boundary fencing installation will be undertaken.

The current construction activity sees increased noise levels therefore, noise and vibration monitoring is being undertaken to ensure compliance of the agreed levels within planning and the Transport and Works Order Act. Sound barriers have been installed in designated areas to protect the local community and businesses.



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Community Updates

Engagement with local schools

Earlier this year, Kier's dedicated Public Liaison Officer (PLO), gave students from Bridgwater College Academy a tour of site. The students asked excellent questions about the works and how it will protect the community. Kier's PLO also had the chance to support students at Priory Community School in Weston Super Mare, with their Year 10 mock interviews and was impressed with the professional approach of the students.



Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) for schools

The Department for Education has funded the project to design and install SuDS at four local schools. We have commissioned the Wildfowl & Wetland Trust (WWT) to manage the activities. So far, they have created a rain garden, complete with rain slide, at Eastover School, helped with the planting by the students. An opening ceremony will be held in the new year. Designs for SuDs at two more schools are developed and contractors are pricing the work.

Presentation for the Bridgwater & Burnham Business Club

It was great to meet so many people linked to local businesses at the meeting in October when Rachel Burden, Flood and Coastal Risk Manager from the Environment Agency gave a presentation about the Tidal Barrier.

Angel Place Pop-Up

We recently held a pop-up session in Angel Place Shopping Centre on 27 November. Thank you to those who came to meet the Tidal Barrier team and find out more about what's coming up in the next few months.

Institution of Civil Engineering (ICE) Presentation

The Bridgwater Barrier team presented at an ICE event held in Taunton last month, which was well attended and prompted some interesting questions from the audience.

Working Hours

Our core working hours on site are from 7am to 7pm.

There are certain activities that have been granted extended working hours and this will be communicated to affected stakeholders when required.

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Further information



Right bank

Left bank

If there is anything you would like to see or hear more about in our quarterly newsletter, raise any other questions or concerns, please email bridgwater.barrier@environment-agency.gov.uk

Would you like the BTB team to give an update at one of your events? Are a community group or school interested in knowing more about the project then please get in touch.