

River Sowy and King's Sedgemoor Drain enhancement

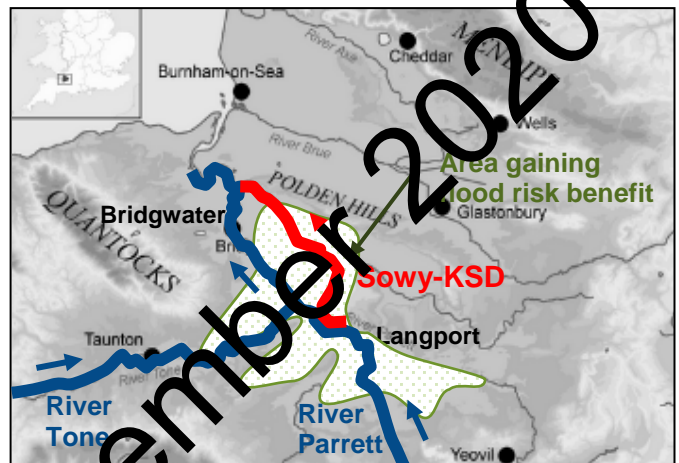
Improvements planned for 2015

December 2014

The Somerset Levels and Moors 20 year flood action plan identified that an enhanced capacity Sowy flood relief system should be investigated, to reduce the duration and/or frequency of flooding.

The River Sowy and King's Sedgemoor Drain (KSD) system takes flood water from the River Parrett, to create 'spare' capacity in the Parrett. We can then pump flood waters from agricultural and community areas into the Parrett for longer, reducing flood extent and duration across a wide area of the moors.

The flood relief channel diverts water from the Parrett via the Monk's Leaze Clyce sluice and engineered spillways near Langport. It discharges at Dunball, bypassing Bridgwater. Built in the 1960s /70s, the designed flow capacity is 17 cubic metres per second.



Background

In July 2014, we held a joint public meeting with Somerset County Council in Othery to understand your concerns and ideas regarding the Sowy-KSD system. With your feedback and input from key stakeholders including the Somerset Drainage Board Consortium and Natural England, we have identified 2 priority areas for improvement based on broad consensus of their benefits. The flood action plan partners have subsequently endorsed proposals to spend £1M of Local Growth Fund on these priority schemes in 2015.

We anticipate that the work will exceed £2M, and are seeking additional funding through flood defence budgets. We are not consulting about the work at the moment.

Proposed improvements during 2015

Improving Chedzoy 'flap': refurbishing the outlet structure where the Penzoy and Chedzoy New Cut river system drains into the KSD. This will provide greater flood risk mitigation, especially to land around Chedzoy and Westonzoyland.



Aligning river channels to the new Beer Wall culverts (A372): we will realign the River Sowy and Langacre Rhyne to the new culverts currently being installed by Somerset County Council under the A372 through the Beer Wall embankment. We will add new structures to control the inflow to the culverts. The construction is anticipated to require most of the £2M funding.

Obstruction removal at A38 bridge at Dunball: Somerset County Council will lead an investigation into the A38 southbound bridge constriction at Dunball, supported by the Environment Agency. The 'lump of concrete' in the northern bridge pier is a relic of the former sluice at this location. Currently this makes drainage less effective and causes turbulence and channel erosion at high flows. This is putting the adjacent road bridge at risk. Removing the lump would reduce peak flood levels by a modest amount and counteract the modest increases created by the work at Beer Wall. This work is not drawing from the £2M Local Growth Fund for 2015.