

Bridgwater Tidal Barrier Scheme

Creating a community resilient to flooding and coastal change



Somerset Council



Environment Agency



Somerset Rivers Authority



Department for Education



HM Government



A recap of the scheme

The Bridgwater Tidal Barrier scheme has been developed by the Environment Agency and Somerset Council. As Bridgwater town centre and the surrounding area is subject to increasing risk of tidal flooding, the scheme will deliver a tidal barrier and improvements to downstream defences on the River Parrett near Chilton Trinity.

The scheme 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 flood banks and constructing new secondary flood banks

Improving fish and eel passage at 12 upstream sites on the rivers Parrett and Tone

You can see visualisation of the tidal barrier and its operational building in this video – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfEm7RaC4jI> .

We will complete the detailed design before the end of the year and have started enabling works for the barrier and downstream defences. We're on programme to start constructing the temporary bypass channel and barrier foundations in 2024.

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Western access track

We started the construction of the western access track (to be known as Barrier Way) in May and it is near completion. As part of these works, we have constructed a stone trackway from Saltlands lane, over the historic landfill site, to the main Western compound. This track will act as the main route for all construction traffic to the barrier site and associated Chilton Trinity downstream defences, thus reducing interface with the local road network in line with the traffic management plan that is publicly available.

Kilns preserved while constructing the main barrier compound

The establishment of the main barrier compound is now well under way. As part of this work, we have cleared and removed the foundations of two kiln structures, removing underground voids and obstructions, which will enable us to construct the river bypass channel. The material from the structures was broken out, crushed, and placed back in position, providing a stable surface to work from. Further to removing the two kilns, we have also excavated and protected a third kiln structure, thought to be the oldest on the site. This kiln has been carefully backfilled and covered to allow possible uncovering in the future. If external funding becomes available the site could be linked with a riverside park on the east bank.

As part of last year's archaeological investigations, all kilns on the site were fully documented and photographed as a record for generations to come.



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Test piling works

We will be undertaking test piling works in September. This will allow us to confirm and finalise the design. Additionally it will allow us to understand the noise and vibration impacts and how we can deliver the piling works efficiently, when they are required later in the programme.

During the test pile, we expect the impact of noise and vibration to be higher than the level experienced during construction. We'll be monitoring throughout as we work to establish the most effective mitigation to employ during the main works.

Our piling subcontractor will arrive on site in early September, taking several days to get set up. When we have more certainty on an exact start date of these works, we'll contact those who will be most affected.

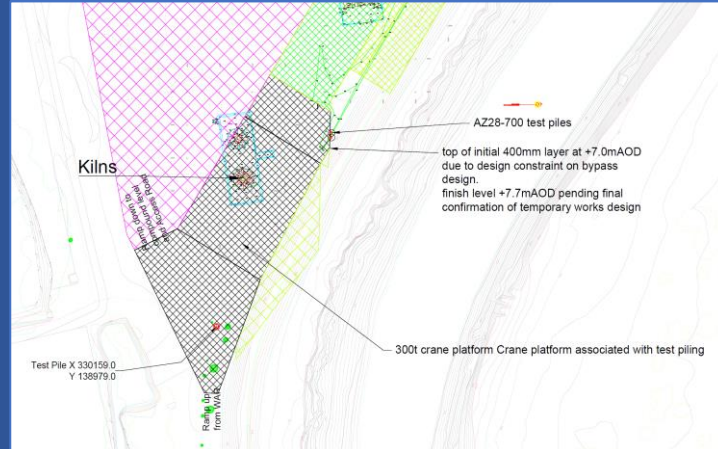


Diagram showing location of test piling works



A representative image of test piling works

What can you expect to hear or feel during the test piling works?

The initial stages of test piling will be carried out by vibrating the pile into the ground until this method is unable to drive it any further.

The pile will then be struck with repetitive blows by the hammer.

It will sound and feel like persistent droning machinery noise with loud and repetitive hammering.

Vibration might be just perceptible in the most sensitive situations.

We are committed to carrying out these works in a way that minimises disruption to local residents, businesses and visitors.

For any further information please contact

Bridgwater.Barrier@environment-agency.gov.uk or call

Kier's Public Liaison Officer on **07714 683609**. Thank you for your patience.

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Community engagement

- A drop-in session was held in November 2022 in St Mary's Church, Bridgwater town centre to give an update on the scheme.
- We have held meetings with individual landowners.
- Engagement has been carried out with the Chilton Trinity Parish Council to update them on the scheme.
- A drop-in session was held for Chilton Trinity community in May 2023.
- We met with businesses and local organisations at Express Park in July and shared the latest news on project progress and the test piling planned for September. We look forward to working with the community and businesses throughout the construction of the scheme.

We're planning activities for local schools and youth groups

We have been fortunate to attract funding from the Department for Education to engage with four identified local schools who are at risk of flooding. We have now held sessions with most of the schools, where the students learned more about flooding and what the barrier will do. We are looking forward to visiting Chilton Trinity School in the autumn. In addition to this, we are keen to involve students from Chilton Trinity and other local schools, including primary and nursery schools as well as youth groups to get their ideas on how the barrier would look and display it on the hoarding on site. This is a great opportunity to see how the young generation envisions the barrier. It will be a fun learning experience for the students. We also plan to preserve this creative vision as a memory in the form of the hoarding.

If you're part of any such organisation and would like to get involved, please reach out to us on Bridgwater.Barrier@environment-agency.gov.uk.



Bat fencing

Temporary bat mitigation fencing has been erected in locations where we have had to remove hedgerows to facilitate our embankment and road raising works along Straight Drove and north of Chilton Trinity. The structures provide a vertical and horizontal surface, mimicking the shape of a hedge, allowing the bats to detect using echolocation (*location of objects by reflected sound*) and enabling them to continue to navigate along the hedgerow network.

Find out more



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



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Bridgwater.Barrier@environment-agency.gov.uk



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