

## Helston Flood Alleviation Scheme



Helston in West Cornwall has experienced a long history of flooding events. Phase 2 of the Helston Flood Alleviation Scheme looked to reduce flood risk from the River Cober and Loe Pool. Working within Covid-19 restrictions, the project was successfully completed before the first winter storm. Combined with the Phase 1 work, the scheme will help to better protect 121 homes from flooding.

- **Date of completion: Dec 2020**
- **Cost: £3.4m**
- **Location: Helston, Cornwall**

### Challenges and solutions

Phase 1 of the Helston Flood Alleviation Scheme was completed in 2019, providing additional capacity to discharge the river downstream at Loe Pool out into Mounts Bay. Phase 2 looked to reduce flood risk from the River Cober and consisted of reinforced earth flood embankment, road ramp, floodwalls, two stop log access ways and a flood gate on an access bridge which will be closed when a flood warning is issued.

Work started on site only a month before the first national COVID-19 lockdown in February 2020. With additional safety protocols in place, work continued throughout 2020, except for a four-week period in April when material could not be sourced. With most of the construction of the floodwalls taking place within small private garden areas during times of national lockdown, care was taken to minimise the amount of disturbance to local residents whilst maintaining positive relations. Environmental restrictions for river working timescales also had to be managed.



## Benefits and achievements

The River Cober project has been designed with efficiency in mind and sympathy to the surrounding environment, using lightweight concrete shuttering blocks for construction of the wall section and leaving existing trees in wherever possible for the embankment. This continued during construction by enabling the use of a waste fill material for the embankment, reducing the carbon footprint of the scheme by a significant amount, avoiding thousands of miles of haulage to West Cornwall and saving 5,000t of primary materials. Local resources and materials have been used wherever possible, supporting the local area of Cornwall.

Public and stakeholder engagement was crucial throughout the scheme. Drop-in sessions were held during the different project stages to address any concerns and a public liaison officer was on site throughout construction. Numerous praise letters were received regarding the works from local residents, noting how polite, courteous and meticulous the workforce was, in extremely difficult situations and conditions.

Combined with the Phase 1, the Helston Flood Alleviation Scheme has reduced flood risk in Helston town from a 20% to 1% chance in any one year.



## Fascinating facts

- ❑ Overall 99% by weight of material used in the project was sourced in Cornwall.
- ❑ The second phase of the project was completed one month before the worst flood event in eight years, better protecting homes from flooding.
- ❑ 5,000 tonnes of locally sourced soil waste material from another site was used to construct the flood bank.

## People who made it happen:

- Client: Environment Agency
- Designer: Jackson Hyder Ltd
- Contractor: Kier
- ECC PM: Arcadis
- ECC Site Supervisor: Jacobs