



Water Management Consortium and Doncaster East IDB

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Newsletter

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IMPORTANT NOTICE In accordance with Government advice, our offices at Manby, Epworth and Newark are now closed and staff are working remotely. We have, therefore, decided to withdraw the facility to make payments in person and would encourage you to either send a cheque, make payment through your bank, or telephone to make a card payment. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause and if you have any problems with the above payment methods, please call the office. Thank you.

Maintenance Works

2019/20 was a difficult year with many of us personally affected by localised flooding across the area and we are now faced with further challenges in respect of Covid-19.

As IDBs are classed as key workers, we continue to operate but have made adjustments to ensure the safety of our staff and others with whom we may come into contact. We are following the social distancing and self-isolation rules for our vulnerable staff as well as other Government guidance.

Our teams out on the ground are continuing to work, concentrating on making sure that our systems are operating satisfactorily and undertaking early cuts on all strategic watercourses. Bank slips caused by the excessive rainfall over the winter are also being repaired on many watercourses to ensure the free flow of water.

Most of our office staff are now working from home; this arrangement is working well and was achieved with minimal disruption.

Our thanks must go to all our staff on the ground and in the office, who are dedicated to providing a high standard of service to protect their local communities.

Flooding

Last year saw more flooding across the country, a situation that seems to be recurring year on year. Regular annual maintenance and desilting of watercourses is essential to ensure that water can be evacuated as quickly as possible and we have a programme of works to make sure this is carried out on all our watercourses.

When planning the work we also take into account improvements required to cater for new development, climate change and where necessary increased water storage.

Flooding of homes is devastating to those affected but there is also a massive cost implication in terms of emergency response, repairs to damaged property, loss of crops and the longer term effect on grazing and agricultural land. We need to make sure that there is a plan in place with adequate funding to ensure the maintenance of all assets to enable flood protection and water level management throughout the area.

The Steeping Catchment Action Plan has been released and details further measures to reduce the risk of a reoccurrence of flooding in the Steeping catchment. These include an annual programme for weed control in the channel,

LMDB Thorpe Culvert Pumping Station - June 2019



Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board

Isle of Axholme and North Nottinghamshire Water Level Management Board

Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board

desilting of some sections of the river, improved community and infrastructure resilience, and strengthening and maintenance of the embankments and walls. Additional flood water storage is also being considered together with options for the sluices within the catchment. Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board has committed £200,000 towards the work, Lincolnshire County Council £150,000 and East Lindsey District Council £50,000. Other funding avenues are being investigated to see through the recommendations in the Action Plan.

Both the Lindsey Marsh and Doncaster East Boards have received some reimbursement under the Bellwin Scheme for additional costs arising from last year's flooding. This is a Government Scheme which allows local authorities dealing with flooding to apply for reimbursement of certain costs. Although IDBs are not currently able to claim independently, successful claims were made through East Lindsey District and Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Councils. Although the Boards hold balances to cater for unforeseen events, these are not sufficient to deal with continued flooding and the resulting repairs to our assets.

Partnership Working

We continue to face challenges, one of which is the lack of funding available for maintenance of the highland systems. The Boards are working closely with the Lead Local Flood Authorities and the Environment Agency and continue to push for increased maintenance on the main rivers.

Maintenance work is carried out by the Boards on some Environment Agency (EA) main rivers on behalf of the EA under a Public Sector Cooperation Agreement; this allows one risk management authority to undertake work for another to deliver flood risk maintenance works. All the work we carry out on the main rivers is done to the same standard as our own maintenance and the cost of this work is recharged to the EA. The Boards are keen to take on more work as long as there is no detriment to their own systems and no additional cost to the ratepayer.

Last year, the Isle of Axholme and North Nottinghamshire Water Level Management Board took over responsibility for Snow Sewer Pumping Station and drain from the Environment Agency. This was a pilot demaining project and the transfer included a commuted sum from the Environment Agency towards future running costs.

Planned Investment 2020/21

Annual maintenance - Isle of Axholme £245,852, Lindsey Marsh £691,375, Trent Valley £588,560, Doncaster East £189,747.

Pumping stations - Isle of Axholme £288,406, Lindsey Marsh £495,414, Trent Valley £216,880, Doncaster East £178,908.

Engineering projects - Isle of Axholme £318,700, Lindsey Marsh £2,913,125, Trent Valley £237,000, Doncaster East £1,974,000.

Anticipated grants and contributions - Isle of Axholme £95,000, Lindsey Marsh £1,131,450, Trent Valley £25,000, Doncaster East £1,731,000.

Examples of some of the projects ongoing across the Consortium are detailed below.

Saltfleet Pumping Station (LM)

The Board's pumping station is shortly due for refurbishment. As the Environment Agency's systems also provide land drainage and flood defence in this area, the Board is working with their officers to see whether a joint scheme to improve protection across the whole catchment would be feasible.

Park Drain Culvert (DE)

Following issues with the culvert flowing to Cuckoo Lane Pumping Station, the Board and Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council have designed a scheme to cut a new channel adjacent to the culvert. This will also give increased storage capacity to take additional water from the new Hatfield Road link. The scheme is being funded by the Coal Authority.



Park Drain - New Channel

Hydraulic Modelling Project (DE and IOA)

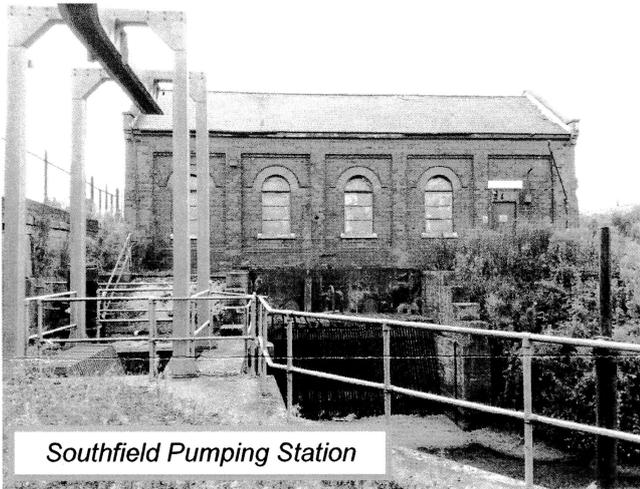
A review of all assets covered by the Isle of Axholme Strategy is being undertaken by the Environment Agency with a view to providing a more sustainable system for the future, possibly linking systems and modifying pumping arrangements to increase efficiency. The study in the Doncaster East area is now well underway with modelling of 3 of the 5 catchments nearing completion. The Boards' Officers are liaising with the modelling team and providing additional data in relation to the Doncaster East area. Once the review is complete, meetings will be arranged with the local landowners to discuss the findings and ensure that any local knowledge has not been overlooked. Investigations are being funded by the Board, the Environment Agency and the Coal Authority.

In the Isle of Axholme area, a review will commence shortly on the Heckdyke, Three

Bridges and Four Bridges catchments to investigate the possibility of combining these systems and the Doncaster East Langholme catchment. If this proves feasible, additional work at Drain Head and Heckdyke Pumping Stations and significant improvements on the watercourses within the catchments will be required to ensure they can cope with the additional flows. Again, meetings will be held with local landowners to discuss the proposals.

Southfield Pumping Station (IOA)

Work includes replacement of two submersible pumps and refurbishment of the third, installation of a new control panel, upgrade of the power supply and refurbishment of the automatic weedscreen cleaner. Once all work is complete, the diesel pumps will be dismantled for use at other stations and the old adjacent building will be demolished.



Egmanton Flood Relief Scheme (TV)

Work on the new flood storage area which will provide increased flood protection to the village of Egmanton is due to start this summer.

Telemetry

The four Boards currently have different bespoke telemetry systems in place and although these give us remote viewing and control, costs are increasing due to the age of the equipment. Tenders are therefore being sought for one system using up to date technology and parts which are readily available. The new system will give us increased visibility and a more robust system for the future.

Technology

Electronic working is due to be introduced in the Lindsey Marsh and the Isle of Axholme areas this year. As well as saving time for the workforce out on the ground and in administration, this will give improved access to Officers for monitoring costs and progress. This is Phase 1 of a process which will eventually enable all our staff to access live data and record information such as asset

condition and environmental sightings, in real time wherever they are.

Staffing

The Boards continue to be managed from the headquarters at Manby but retain area offices at Epworth and Newark.

Most of our design and modelling is now undertaken in-house. This is cheaper than employing contractors, allows us to apply our local knowledge and to adjust scenarios/schemes to reflect local situations. As well as sharing engineering, environmental, health and safety, and administration, the workforces out on the ground also provide cover during flood events and are sharing skillsets.

Finance

We are aware of the continued pressure on finances, both in the public and private sectors, and, in particular, on local businesses due to the recent restrictions on trading due to the Covid-19 pandemic. If you have been affected by this and are experiencing difficulties paying your drainage rate bill this year, please discuss this with the Rating Officer.

The Boards continue to seek efficiencies, some of which are possible through efficiencies of scale, e.g. joint purchasing of plant and equipment and combining tenders for work at pumping stations across the four Boards' areas. New ways of working are also being sought to make sure we are carrying out our work as effectively but efficiently as possible and staff are encouraged to find new ways of working to achieve this.



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