

Dear resident

On 3rd August we shared the Post Incident Review into the Beales Corner Temporary Barrier System. There were 23 recommendations and many actions which needed to happen before we were able to redeploy the temporary barriers again at times of flood.

We are pleased to announce that we are now able to start using the temporary flood barriers again at Beales Corner from today should they be required.

Over the last few months, teams across the Environment Agency in the West Midlands have been working hard to implement the review recommendations and put in place all the additional resilience measures. These measures were successfully tested last week during a controlled exercise at the site which you may have seen.



Extra measures have included the use of concrete blocks to reinforce the barriers against sliding, and using a different alignment for the barriers, as well as the road resurfacing carried out by Worcestershire County Council.

We would like to thank Worcestershire County Council, Wyre Forest District Council, Bewdley Town Council and Severn Trent water for the way they have been proactively working with us to enable the barriers to be redeployed before this winter.

As you would expect, the additional resilience measures do take longer to put in place. We have good plans and procedures in place to manage this. It should however be noted that these barriers have always been deployed on a best endeavour basis, and whilst we will do our best to deploy them on time, there always remains a higher risk of non-deployment compared with more permanent flood defences. Whilst we will also do our best to minimise local disruption, it is inevitable that these extra measures will cause earlier and longer disruption to local people at times of flood.

One of the review recommendations related to the flood warning system and messages. Please note the following changes to the public flood warning system:

All river levels listed are for the Bewdley gauge, which can be viewed at:
[River level information for River Severn at Bewdley - GOV.UK \(flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/flood-warning-information-service.gov.uk)

- A barrier deployment notice is to be issued by 4m.
IMPORTANT – please ensure cars are moved from Millside Court when this is received so we can put the barriers in place.
- It will be our aim to issue a non-deployment notice by 4.1m if we are not able to deploy the barriers safely within the time available. (If this were to occur, we will be still be on site to support residents with their individual resilience, where operationally possible).
- At a level of 4.3m we will issue a Flood Warning to inform residents that the barriers have water against them.
- At a level of 4.5m we will update the Flood Warning for action to be taken to protect property and lives. At this level only essential operational activities will be carried out behind the barrier under a Safe System of Work and we do not want people behind the barriers, whether that is in the streets, gardens or lower floor levels of properties at risk. Whilst the barriers will have a good industry standard engineering factor of safety, temporary barriers do have a higher risk of failure compared with permanent flood defences.
- At a level of 4.8m all personnel and residents are to evacuate and we will again update the Flood Warning accordingly.
- The barrier will be expected to overtop at a level of approximately 5m and a Barrier Overtop message will be issued.
- Please be aware that once construction of the barrier commences residents should be escorted by Environment Agency staff in order to gain access or leave properties in Millside Court and Stourport Road. This is for the safety of the public and staff during the construction phase of deployment.
- To ensure that you receive all available information in a timely manner please sign up to the Flood Warning Service.

<https://gov.uk/check-flood-risk> or call Floodline on 0345 988 1188

This email has been sent to those residents who have asked us to keep them updated. A letter will also be sent shortly by post to ensure all those households at risk receive this information.

Our view is that the redeployment of these temporary barriers are an interim measure, and we will be working hard to deliver a permanent flood scheme for the community to a higher standard of flood protection. The temporary flood barriers only provide a low standard of flood protection so we will unfortunately see larger floods overwhelming them.

For information on long term plans for a more permanent scheme please see [Beales Corner, Bewdley, Flood Risk Management Scheme - Environment Agency - Citizen Space \(environment-agency.gov.uk\)](#)

Anthony Perry
Operations Manager
West Midlands Area