



# fighting flood risk



An update on the Hexham flood alleviation scheme

Autumn 2006

Hexham has suffered flooding from Halgut Burn and Cockshaw Burn since 1789.

Over the last decade, a series of major and minor floods have affected Hexham. The last major flood from Cockshaw Burn occurred in 1995 affecting Tanners Row, Foundry Lane and Haugh Lane Industrial Estate. Records show that flooding is caused mainly by thunderstorms in the summer months and prolonged rainfall in the winter. Other recent events occurred in June 2000, February 1995, August 1994 and October 1993.

Now, the Environment Agency is investing over £6 million to significantly reduce the flood risk to Hexham.

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The Environment Agency looked for the **best way to protect Hexham** against flooding. Before any work began, a number of options were considered.

These included everything from diverting flood flows through pipes and raising river bank walls to storing floodwater in reservoirs and improving the river channels.

We asked for feedback on these options from local people during open days and also talked with other interested parties to make sure that everyone was happy with the proposals.

The scheme works by diverting flood water from the **Cockshaw Burn** into a large pipe which carries the water underground, down **Burn Lane** and into **Tyne Green Park** where it then flows back into the **Cockshaw Burn**.

Parts of the **Cockshaw Burn** channel bed will also be deepened allowing it to carry more flood water into a new, larger culvert at **Tanners Row**.

Other improvements include raising existing flood defence adjacent walls.

The **Wydon Burn Reservoir** will be modified to store floodwater, reducing flows which would otherwise spill directly into the **Halgut Burn**.

The scheme means that the risk of flooding from the **Cockshaw** and **Halgut Burns** will decrease from the current 20 per cent chance in any one year to just a 0.5 per cent chance.

We're very grateful to all of the people of **Hexham** and both **Tynedale District Council** and **Northumberland County Council**, not only for their patience during the design and construction of the scheme, but also for all of the thoughts and feedback that they have given on our work.

Thanks to your input, we were able to design a solution that was best for not only reducing flood risk, but also for the community of **Hexham**.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



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# working for Hex

## Where are we now?

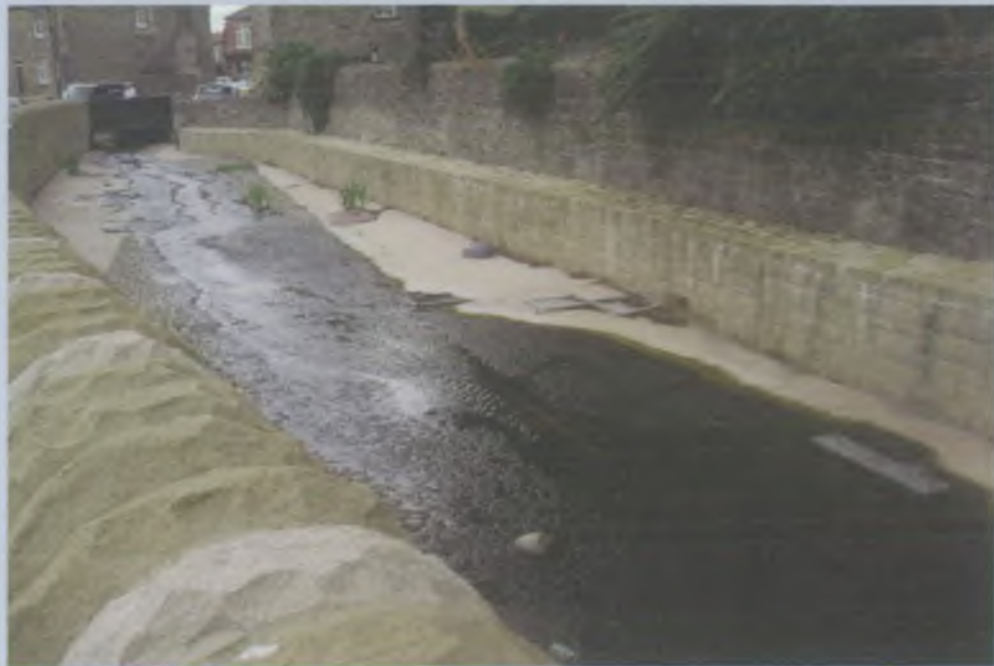
Most of the work on the flood pipe between **Tyne Green Park** and **Tanners Row** has now been finished, and work on raising walls and widening channels is also complete. Trash screens have been installed at **Selewell** and are now offering some improved protection to **Hexham**, and work at **Wydon Burn** is also well underway.

Although lots of work has already been done, some of it has taken longer to complete than we first thought. We're now working hard to make up as much time on the delays as possible.

The second of the two Selewell screens



# ham



The new channel and walls at Cockshaw Terrace

## Improving your environment

As part of the project we had the opportunity to enhance the area around the **Cockshaw** and **Wydon Burn**. The result is an improved, natural-looking river bed for the **Cockshaw Burn**.

Thanks to a very kind contribution from the **Arts Council** and **Northern Rock** we have also added an element of artist design to our work at some key locations.

The community in and around **Wydon Burn Reservoir** will benefit from a proposed new wetland and fishing amenity, and we have also carried out footpath improvement works along **Burn Lane**.

# What have we done where?



The timber-oak screen at the Selewell

## The Selewell

Two trash screens have now been installed. The main screen consists of four **sculpted timber-oak trees**, selected from a renewable source, which will stop the heavy trash and trees that can come down the channel during major floods.

Just behind these poles is a second screen, constructed from **steel tubes** which are designed to catch the smaller trash that passes through the main screen. This will help reduce the amount of rubbish entering the culverts downstream.

Both sets of screens have been designed and constructed by an artist commissioned by the **Environment Agency** in partnership with the **Arts Council**.

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about your environment?

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## The Cockshaw Burn Channel

Before we started work on it, the **Cockshaw Burn** channel was in a very poor state. Now, the channel has been deepened and overlaid with cobbles, which improves not only the appearance but the quality of the water. Most of the existing wall has also been rebuilt.

Another artist, this time specialising in stone work, has enhanced the stretch of burn between the **Selewell Foot Bridge** and **Glovers Place Bridge** by adding carved stone sculptures in the channel and walls, some of which contain water features.

Thanks to this work, the **Cockshaw Burn** has become a talking point for the community once again.

## Wydon Burn Reservoir

Acting as a full time flood defence structure, the reservoir will also provide a **fishery** and **wetland** for everyone to enjoy on a daily basis.

Planned to be stocked with a variety of coarse fish, we hope it can be managed by the **local community** in partnership with ourselves. Footpaths, seating and fishing platforms will be built around the reservoir for easy access, and some parking will also be created.

