

Work on our weir at Caversham

We are going to upgrade part of our weir complex at Caversham in Reading, making it safer and easier for our staff to operate, and reducing the risk of vandalism.

The improvements will be made to the 'Last Hopes' weir. This is a small weir on the Mill Stream between View Island and Heron Island, about quarter of a mile away from our main weir complex on the River Thames at Caversham Lock.

We plan to start work in November and be finished in January, depending on weather conditions.

We will need to close the footbridge over the weir to carry out these works. This means that while the work is happening there will be no pedestrian access to or from Heron Island via the footpath that runs across our main weir complex and the downstream lock gates at Caversham Lock. Anyone needing to cross the Thames to get to or from Heron Island will have to use Reading Bridge instead.

We apologise for the unavoidable inconvenience the works will cause. Please be assured that we will aim to complete the work in the shortest time possible.

What exactly we are doing?

The Last Hopes weir is made up of three vertical lift or 'buck' gates. We're replacing these as they've reached the end of their operational lifespan. We are also including modification to improve the safety of our staff. A pass for eelers (young eels) will also be added to allow them to travel upstream.

How we will carry out the work

Because access to the Last Hopes weir is restricted, we intend to bring to site as much as possible of the equipment and materials we need by barge.

While we are carrying out the work, we will have a small site compound on the riverbank nearby, mainly to house the welfare facilities for the contractors.

We will need to install temporary dams either side of the weir while we replace the gates. We currently plan to lift out the old and drop in the new gates using a barge mounted crane.

Contact us

If you would like more information, or have any questions or concerns, you can call the project manager on 0118 953 3140 or email weirimprovements@environment-agency.gov.uk

If you would rather contact us by post, please write to Environment Agency, ncpms, 3rd Floor, Kings Meadow House, Kings Meadow Road, Reading RG1 8DQ.