

# Totley Brook Road - DG5 & Area Flooding

## delivering solutions within an urban landscape

by  
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**R**esidents of the suburb of Totley in Sheffield have suffered from property and area flooding for a number of years. Funding was made available from Yorkshire Water to resolve internal flooding at eight properties and area flooding at sixteen sites located across the catchment. The scheme that would deliver the benefits would also affect many of the 20,000 residents. The challenge was to deliver these regulatory outputs with the co-operation and goodwill of the community.



Totley Brook Road: Twin 1800mm pipes being installed in urban area

*courtesy: ETM & Yorkshire Water*

### Delivery philosophy

During the early design phase, it became evident that the delivery of twentyfour outputs spread across the 400ha catchment would result in considerable disruption to the community. Site work that was required would include the construction of twin 1800mm diameter off-line storage pipes within the public highway and private land, a 1500mm combined sewer replacement within the public carriage way under a road closure, a pumping station, several new sections of gravity sewer and the relining of existing assets.

Deadline to deliver the scheme was tight and would require some of the works to be undertaken simultaneously at several sites. The extent of the works and their geographical location would have a considerable impact across the suburb, with the potential to cause significant disruption from road closures and traffic management. Residents would be further inconvenienced by the close proximity of works to housing and by vehicular access to these properties, together with the general nuisance the works would generate.

During the design phase the delivery team developed a strategy to engage with the community. The opinion of the team was that the co-operation and goodwill of the local community were essential to success of the project. With this in mind the Delivery Team decided

to engage at the earliest opportunity by informing, encouraging and generating interest in the project amongst the community. The message being ‘these works are being undertaken for the benefit of your community’.

### Implementation

Working in partnership with the client’s customer communication department the process of implementation began with a series of public meetings in the local community hall. These were designed to introduce the project, provide an opportunity to meet the Delivery Team and establish a partnership with the community. These meetings were supplemented by frequent letter drops to those residents who were directly affected by the works. Meetings were also held with local councillors and other community groups. Information boards were also erected outside the site offices.

Once the work had commenced on site, communication was continued with letter drops, supported by visits from the site team to those residents who were directly affected by the works. This reduced the possibility of misunderstandings with regard to issues such as property access. In addition, by addressing a query or complaint quickly on the ‘doorstep’ the potential for escalation was reduced.

Every opportunity to inform the community was taken. Unfortunately, some unforeseen situations arose, such as a delay to reopen a highway to vehicles. However, it was the Delivery team's belief that such information should be made available in a timely manner for the benefit of residents and to maintain the relationship with the community.

**The 'extra' mile'**

On a project such as Totley, which covered a large geographical area and affected a large number of people, it was inevitable that some residents would be severely affected by site works. In these circumstances, arrangements were made to mitigate the effect on these residents. One group of elderly residents were particularly affected by a three month road closure which restricted their access to public transport. Arrangements were made with a local taxi company to provide complimentary transport to these residents. In addition, once a week a courtesy bus was provided to take these residents to the local supermarket.

The Delivery Team also took every opportunity that arose to publicise good news through the media. The discovery of a 280 million years old fossil within one of the scheme excavations generated a huge amount of interest within the media. The fossil was donated to a local natural history group.

By establishing a partnership with the local community, the scheme has not only benefited from their support but the profile of the water industry has been positively raised. ■

**Note:** The author of this article, Ian Parke is a Team Leader with ETM, a 50/50 joint venture formed by Earth Tech Engineering and Morrison Construction Services, the Capital Solutions Partner for Yorkshire Water's Southern Wastewater Area on AMP3.

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*We are delighted to have been involved with BVC on the Lewes C.S.O. contract, and look forward to working with the 4D consortium on Southern Water's K4 programme.*

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