

WICKHAM PLAYING FIELD FLOOD STORAGE BASINS: Information and FAQs

Creating space for water to reduce flooding

Wickham Playing Field is being improved to help reduce local flood risk.

Greenwich Council is installing **two new ‘retention’ or flood storage basins** on the green space between Woodbrook Road and Bostall Woods. These shallow basins will temporarily hold rainwater during heavy rainfall, helping to slow the flow of water towards nearby homes and roads. They may look similar to ponds after wet weather, but they are designed mainly to create extra space for water when it is needed.

Site layout



Works Schedule

Works started	Monday 20 July
Expected duration	10 weeks
Weekdays working hours (initial phase)	08:00 – 16:30
Weekdays working hours (later phase)	08:00 – 19:00
Saturday working hours	08:00 – 13:30

Parking

To reduce disruption to residents, any parking restrictions required will be kept to a minimum. The restricted length will be marked with high visibility cones. Residents are advised to not park in the “No Waiting” coned area, as this will delay progress.

Construction plan

Every effort will be made to complete the work as planned, and keep inconvenience to an absolute minimum. However, at times, it is possible that works may be delayed; for example, due to adverse weather conditions or emergency traffic incidents.

In the event of delays, residents’ cooperation and patience will be much appreciated, as we endeavour to deliver the improvements.

HAVE A QUESTION?

ISSUE OR CONCERN	WHO TO CONTACT	CONTACT DETAILS
In case of any difficulties with the works	Greenwich Council’s Customer Service Centre	Call: 020 8854 8888 quoting “Wickham Playing Field Ponds”
For questions or concerns regarding the works	Greenwich Council’s Flood Team	Email: Flood-Team@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
Emergency (outside office hours or at weekends)	Greenwich Council’s Careline Office	Call: 020 8854 8888 (for emergencies affecting public safety)

Learn more about the wider project

These improvements are part of the wider **Greenwich Natural Flood Management Project**, which is restoring rivers, woodlands and wetlands to help reduce flood risk while creating healthier habitats for wildlife.

Interested in learning more? Visit the **Thames21** project page to discover how these works fit into the wider project, keep up to date with progress, explore upcoming volunteering opportunities, and find out more about natural flood management: [Greenwich Natural Flood Management \(NFM\) Project - Thames21](#)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following Question & Answer section responds to the main questions, comments and concerns raised by residents about the planned works

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & CONCERNS	RESPONSE
On 17 July 2026 I received a letter from Greenwich Council, informing Woodbrook Road Residents, that works will start on July 20 to build ponds at Wickham Field. Why were residents informed with very late notice?	The late notice to residents was due to the construction paperwork being completed more quickly than expected. Contractors then needed to begin work on site while the ground conditions remained suitable.
Are ponds a good protective measure?	Ponds/retention basins are a good technique for flood prevention. The area of land they are being built-in, although historically part of the river, now act like a storage basin for water that comes off the steep land in the woods. Adding the ponds in helps increase water storage capacity, meaning less rain water will get into the concrete river channel and into people's properties Ponds also help keep the ground wet, which is a good thing for water storage. Water cannot soak up into dry ground very easily, so it ends up flowing elsewhere which leads to flooding.

What will the ponds look like throughout the year?	These features are not ponds in the traditional sense. They are dry infiltration that will only be wet during heavy rainfall periods, or when the watercourse overflows.
What are the plans for the regular maintenance of the ponds once they are built? If the ponds are not regularly maintained, they can become a flood risk in themselves.	The Council will be responsible for maintaining the basins, and a maintenance plan is already in place. The site will be maintained in line with standard guidance for sustainable drainage systems, as set out in the CIRIA SuDS Manual. The manual sets out the requirements for drainage features of this kind and is widely regarded as the gold standard for SuDS design and management. For this project, the main maintenance activity will be grass cutting. There are no additional drainage features, such as pipes or flow control devices, that would require more complex maintenance. Initially, maintenance will be carried out by the Council. They have also said they are open to exploring community involvement in the future, if this is considered appropriate and safe.
The concrete river channel behind the odd-numbered houses on Woodbrook Road is often filled with dumped waste, fallen trees, branches and other detritus. It would be helpful if this area, where water once flowed freely, were kept clear. Such blockages, including rubbish and vegetation overgrowth, contributed to flooding during heavy rainfall in 2022.	Thames21 staff have been visiting the concrete channel monthly to test water quality, flow and levels. During these visits, any detritus or blockages observed by staff have been reported to Greenwich Council for removal. Where possible, Thames21 has removed items directly.

This area was formerly publicly accessible and used for a range of activities. Will it now be permanently closed to the public?	The area will remain inaccessible to the public
What measures are being taken to reduce dust from the work site and prevent it from entering nearby homes?	• Type 1 stone has been laid along the alleyway to reduce dust generation. • The dumper is covered with a sheet during material transportation to minimise dust. • Water is sprayed during excavation to suppress dust.