

# Time-lapse released of Calder Valley line flood protection work

November 30, 2021



Impressive footage has been released showing major work to protect Calder Valley line passengers and surrounding communities from the risk of flooding.

Network Rail and the Environment Agency have joined forces at Littleborough near Rochdale to build a new culvert to drain water underneath tracks when the River Roach bursts its banks.

This happened during Storm Frank on Boxing Day in 2015 leading to homes and roads being swamped.

The new culvert will enable the Environment Agency to direct water away from causing damage to communities or causing travel disruption.

During a nine-day closure of the Calder Valley line last month, railway track was ripped up and the embankment excavated so a precast concrete drainage system could be lifted in by crane.

The time-lapse shows the sheer scale of the ambitious engineering project to build the culvert and relay track back over the top in time for trains to run again.

Emma Gray, scheme project manager for Network Rail, said: “Flooding in the Calder Valley can cause huge disruption to people’s lives, risking not only the railway but people’s property and livelihoods.

“Working together with the Environment Agency is hugely important to make sure projects like this can protect us all from more frequent and extreme weather events. We thank passengers for their patience while the railway was closed for this essential work to be carried out.”

Ben Scott, area flood and coastal risk manager for the Environment Agency, said: “It is always immensely satisfying to see flood risk management schemes start to progress. This £56m project is incredibly important to residents of Rochdale and Littleborough who live with the very real worry of homes and business premises being flooded.

“This is a complex scheme, which has taken time to design, and strong relationships have been developed with a range of key partners. Once completed, the project will be one of the biggest flood alleviation schemes in the north of England. It will protect people, property and key infrastructure such as the railway line, which is the life blood of the community, from the risk of flooding as well as enhancing the natural environment.”

During the culvert installation:

- 35 metres of track was temporarily removed
- 2000 tonnes of spoil was excavated
- 16 base slabs and 39 culvert units each weighing 24 tonnes were installed

To minimise disruption to passengers, the scheme was done at the same time as work to replace track inside the nearby Summit Tunnel between 23-31 October.

- [Read more: Major track upgrade complete on Calder Valley line’s Summit Tunnel](#)

This flood protection scheme is part of Network Rail’s commitment to run a safe, green and reliable railway.

Tens of millions of pounds is invested each year to make the railway more resilient to changing weather patterns as a result of climate change.

To find our more visit: [www.networkrail.co.uk/sustainability/climate-change/](http://www.networkrail.co.uk/sustainability/climate-change/)

*Photo and video credit: Network Rail*