

Flood defence badger exclusion and mesh works

We delivered mesh installation and sett relocation to protect flood infrastructure at a site which is part of an area identified for sustained flood risk management.

In summary

- Badger activity had compromised a flood embankment at a site covered under Policy 4 of the Louth Coastal Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP)
- Restoring flood resilience, we constructed an artificial sett, excluded badgers from the original tunnels, and reinstated the bank with a reinforced clay core and permanent steel meshing.
- Post-installation monitoring confirmed successful sett adoption and embankment integrity, with Stonbury committed to supporting ongoing maintenance across the next 12 months.

The need

The area had fallen below target condition due to an active badger sett within the flood embankment. As a Policy 4 location under the Louth Coastal CFMP, the site required proactive intervention to maintain long-term flood risk management in the face of urban growth and climate change.

Without action, the sett risked further weakening of the bank, potentially compromising flood resilience. In line with environmental guidance, the badgers needed to be safely relocated and excluded before remedial works could begin.

The solution

Temporary exclusion mesh and one-way gates were installed over the original sett, encouraging badgers to migrate into a purpose-built artificial sett. After a 21-day exclusion period, the team returned to begin phased works.

The old sett was deconstructed by collapsing and chasing out approximately 30 linear metres of tunnel. A fabric barrier was installed at the water's edge to prevent debris from entering the watercourse, and materials from the temporary setup were put aside for reuse.

The bank was then stripped of topsoil over a 100-metre section and excavated to 150mm depth. A compacted clay core was

installed in layers to reinforce the embankment and withstand floodwater pressure.

Permanent meshing was re-laid in one-metre-deep sections to either side of the former sett, secured with reused ground pins, and all gaps were re-proofed. The team reinstated the topsoil, compacted and reprofiled the bank, and seeded it using a client-approved mix to encourage strong grass coverage.

During a follow-up visit, two new entrances were observed at the artificial sett – confirmed by the ecologist as natural expansion and positive evidence of sett usage. The embedded mesh continues to protect the embankment from future damage.

The benefits

- Safely excludes badgers while supporting successful sett relocation
- Reinforces flood defences with compacted clay and permanent meshing
- Reduces risk of embankment failure and supports CFMP Policy 4 objectives
- Demonstrates ongoing ecological value and commitment to long-term site care

100

metres of bank topsoil reinstated

30

metres of badger tunnels reproofed

