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MP Presses for Local Solution for Severn Stoke's Flood Defences

WEST WORCESTERSHIRE MP Dame Harriett Baldwin has called for a focus on locally delivered solutions to help get the Severn Stoke flood defences underway.

The MP has lobbied for a flood defence programme for more than ten years and has always expressed her preference for the lowest cost solution using local contractors and local materials.

Over the last five years, the Environment Agency has pledged that it would build the scheme, but it failed to secure a contractor to do the work and available funds are starting to run out.

Last year, the MP called on Worcestershire County Council to take over the whole scheme and use materials which had been donated from reclaimed soil from the Southern Link Road construction, which was carried out by Griffiths.

The contractor is now being lined up to do the road raising work and the MP has repeated her calls to add the bund building into the project.

Dame Harriett said: "At the very beginning of this project, we gathered local people in Severn Stoke village hall and committed to delivering a community-led project using local materials and local contractors.

"At some stage, the Environment Agency decided that it should build the scheme itself but after many years of dither and delay, we are no further forward.

"The chief executive of the Environment Agency looked me in the eye and pledged that he would get this scheme done but all we have is some soil piled up and newts have been rehomed.

"I am hoping that the county council will be able to take back control of this project and deliver it within the funds it has already allocated for the scheme."

ENDS