

Flood defences go on show in Alcester

A MAJOR milestone was marked in Alcester on Monday (June 13) as the town's new flood defences were officially unveiled.

Coun Mike Gittus, Alcester's Flood Champion and member of the Regional Flood Defence Committee, initiated a demonstration of the power of the five pumps which have a capacity to take away 120 tonnes of water a minute.

The launch marked the culmination of a four year battle to improve flood defences in the town following the devastating events of July 2007 which saw more than 200 homes left uninhabitable and hit businesses. Although river levels dropped in the days after the disaster, the floodwater remained as it was unable to find its way back into river courses.

Work on the project began in October last year and has cost more than \$1million with contributions from the Regional Flood Defence Committee's Local Levy, Warwickshire County Council, Stratford District Council and Alcester Town Council. Two pumping stations have been installed on the allotments at Bleachfield Street and in Gas House Lane. They will be used when the drainage system cannot cope and the river is high.

In support of the scheme, work has also been carried out by both Warwickshire County Council and Stratford District Council inspecting and cleaning the existing drainage system, while private landowners have also improved drainage where it runs through their property.

Coun Gittus said he was grateful to the agencies involved in carrying out the project.

"This project has only been made possible due to the firm commitment Alcester Town Council gave to its residents after the 2007 inundation. These Pumps are an incredible piece of engineering and I can honestly say we all felt the earth move when I pushed that button, it was a remarkable experience."

The next phase of the project is the sewage alleviation scheme which is due to start in September.



District Coun Susan Adams, Eric Payne, chairman of Stratford District Council, Allison Hampson, project manager for the Environment Agency, Mike Gittus, Warwickshire County Councillor, Lennox Cumberbatch, Mayor of Alcester, and District Coun Susan Juned at the opening of the Alcester Flood Defence Scheme. Picture by Alex Bradbury 2411015ABR