

Upper Medway Navigation

Delays to works at East Farleigh Lock - Update 2

5 May 2017

We are sorry to inform boaters that we have had to further postpone the re-opening of East Farleigh Lock to traffic. The earliest that we now plan to re-open the lock to public use is the 21 July but there is the possibility of further delays. We have issued a revised Notice to Mariners to confirm this.

A pair of Grey Wagtails have made a nest and laid eggs within the construction site at East Farleigh Lock. Birds nests and their eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The location of the nest means that we are unable to undertake certain activities near the nest until the young birds have fledged and the nest is no longer in use.

We have sought expert advice and modified our plans to ensure we can continue working on site without damaging the nest and breaking the law.

Grey Wagtails can lay a second clutch of eggs whilst still rearing the first. This makes it difficult for us to know exactly when we can resume all activities in the area near to the nest. If they only lay one clutch of eggs then we plan to re-open the lock on the 21 July, if however they lay two clutches of eggs we may not be able to re-open the lock until the beginning of September. We are closely monitoring the nest and when we confirm it is no longer being used, we will complete the remaining works as soon as possible.

We understand the impacts that the delay to the re-opening of East Farleigh Lock is currently having on the boating community and apologise for the ongoing inconvenience.

Progress since last newsletter

Since the last newsletter we have made good progress at the site. The works to stabilise the wall behind the tail lock gates have progressed well. We have installed the steel sheet piling, excavated the ground and will be pouring the new reinforced concrete wall on the week commencing 8 May. We have almost completed the remediation works to the wall behind the head lock gates. We have also completed the new reinforced concrete walls in the main lock chamber and have started fitting the timber fenders.

Next steps

We are working extremely hard to re-open East Farleigh Lock as soon as we are able to do so. We cannot be sure of the date when the nest will no longer be in use but we are monitoring this closely and will provide a further update in June.

Please note a further Q&A document accompanies this newsletter.

For any further queries please email our enquiries inbox: KSLE@environment-agency.gov.uk.

