

## PRESS RELEASE

**Issued: 16 August 2019**

### TODDBROOK RESERVOIR UPDATE – MEDIA INVITATION

#### **MEDIA INVITATION**

**Event:** Opportunity to film inside the drained dam and talk to Canal & River Trust senior manager Sean McGinley and project manager Rob Jowitt.

**Date:** Wednesday 21 August 2019, 11am

**Place:** Toddbrook Reservoir, Whaley Bridge. Park at construction site office, off Park Road, Whaley Bridge, SK23 7DP

**Contact:** Helen Hall ( 07717 760284) or Lynn Pegler (07783 686246)  
Canal & River Trust Press Office

The Canal & River Trust charity, which manages the reservoir as part of its 2,000 miles of canals and rivers, this week took over responsibility for the Toddbrook Reservoir site around the damaged dam from the emergency services.

In conjunction with its contractor Kier, work continues on the reservoir, near Whaley Bridge in Derbyshire, as experts carry out a full inspection and prepare plans for repairing the dam.

Water levels are being continuously monitored with pumps in place to keep the reservoir near empty by removing any rainwater that falls. Over the next couple of months the low water levels will gradually be reduced even further allowing most of the estimated 30,000 fish present (about 5,000kg) to be removed.



Rob Jowitt will be managing the repair project for the Canal & River Trust. He added: “Moving on from the emergency response, our job is to find out what went wrong and prepare a detailed plan for repairing the damaged dam wall. It is a huge job which is likely to take some time.

“As the emergency services leave the site, we want to assure the local community that the reservoir is safe and the dam wall is secure. Local people have been amazing during the emergency and we want to keep them to be up to date and part of the project moving forwards.

“As soon as we have a detailed design plan, we will be sharing it with everyone and inviting people on site to special open days to see what is being done.”

An initial fish rescue has taken place and a second major phase will take place in mid-October when the weather is cooler and more suitable for moving large quantities of fish. Coarse fish, such as bream, roach, perch and pike, have been captured in large nets by the Trust’s fish specialists and then transported to another Trust reservoir, Upper Bittell Reservoir, near Birmingham. Upper Bittell Reservoir, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), like Toddbrook, was drained and then refilled after maintenance works two years ago and is in a good position to re-home large numbers of fish.



Paul Breslin, fisheries officer with the Canal & River Trust, said: “We want to save as many fish as we possibly can. We have installed aeration pumps to provide the fish with extra oxygen in the water. The middle of summer is not an ideal time to move fish, as they can get distressed by the heat, but we are working hard to do our very best for the wildlife caught up in this emergency.”

### **About the emergency**

More than 1,500 residents of Whaley Bridge were evacuated from their homes on Thursday 1 August for six nights after the Toddbrook Dam threatened to breach after a period of excessive rainfall.

A major, round-the-clock response from the emergency services, including Derbyshire Fire & Rescue, Derbyshire Police and the Environment Agency, working with the Trust, managed to avert disaster and stabilise the dam wall. Residents were allowed back into their homes on Wednesday 7 August.

The Trust is posting regular updates at <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/news/toddbrook-reservoir-update>

**ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors:**

The Canal & River Trust cares for and brings to life 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England & Wales. We believe waterways have the power to make a difference to people’s lives and that spending time by water can make us all healthier and happier. By bringing communities together to make a difference to their local waterway, we are creating places

and spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, every day  
[www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk).

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