

PRESS RELEASE

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RESTORING TODDBROOK RESERVOIR – REPAIR PLAN ANNOUNCED

A permanent repair plan for restoring Toddbrook Reservoir in Whaley Bridge, was announced today by the Canal & River Trust charity (Tuesday 23 March).

The Trust, which cares for 2,000 miles of waterways, is planning to build a new side channel weir, ‘tumble bay’, spillway channel and stilling basin on the northern, Sailing Club side of the dam, at an estimated cost of between £12 - £16 million. The auxiliary spillway, damaged in summer 2019, will be de-commissioned and the dam slope grassed. Subject to planning permission, work is likely to start at the end of 2021 and take around two years to complete.

The reservoir, which supplies water to the Peak Forest and Macclesfield canals, has been out of action and near empty of water since the spillway was damaged. Ahead of the permanent repair, the Trust, and its contractors Kier, have carried out a major project to make safe the damaged spillway and add a protective waterproof nib to the dam crest.

The long-term repair design was informed by feedback from residents who took part in the public consultation last September, when two different options were put forward from an initial 13 potential proposals which had been considered by the design team.

Working with specialist engineering design consultants Arup, the Trust’s project team has carried out extensive technical investigations and design work, listened to all feedback and tried to accommodate the best engineering option within the landscape. They continue to develop the details of their proposals to ensure the most effective design solution is adopted.

A second public consultation into the proposed plan will be organised for later in the spring, probably online, in advance of a planning application to High Peak Borough Council this summer.

Daniel Greenhalgh, Canal & River Trust North West Director, said: “Repairing the reservoir is a huge engineering challenge and public safety is our top priority. The permanent repair design has been shaped by local feedback and guided by modern engineering best practice.

“The new spillway will unfortunately require the relocation of the Sailing Club’s clubhouse and slipway. We appreciate this will have a substantial impact on the club but we are committed to working with them to ensure we provide suitable replacement buildings, boat storage and slipway to support their continued use and enjoyment of the reservoir once the project is complete.

“The proposed work will also require some changes to the northern area of the park. The play area will have to be re-positioned, and we will carry out landscaping works to ensure that when finished, the park remains an enjoyable and open public space. We are working to develop our plans to ensure this happens as sensitively as possible.

“During the construction phase, part of the park will unfortunately have to be closed, but we hope to be able to move some of the play equipment to an alternative location so it can continue to be available.

“These changes are necessary to construct the new side channel weir, ‘tumble bay’, spillway channel and stilling basin in an optimum alignment, both within the landscape and for reservoir safety. The stilling basin will then connect with the River Goyt, at the existing location, via a channel through the park.

“The use of a side channel weir allows us to connect the existing reservoir bywash into the top of the tumble bay, which will mean water flows down the spillway at all times. We were guided in this design modification by public feedback indicating that a continuous flow of water down the spillway was preferable to having a predominantly dry channel.”

The construction project on the dam will be followed by works to the inlet cascade, at the far end of the reservoir, to increase its resilience to high flows from the Todd Brook stream.

Subject to planning permission, the Canal & River Trust is hoping to start work on site at the end 2021 and for the reservoir to be re-opened to the public in early 2024. High volume pumps will remain in the reservoir to manage water levels until the end of the restoration project.

To view more detailed information about the repair plans, please go to the Canal & River Trust website:

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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.

For further media requests please contact:

Lynn Pegler

m 07783 686246 e lynn.pegler@canalrivertrust.org.uk

or Helen Hall,

m 077177 760284 e helen.hall@canalrivertrust.org.uk

NW Communications Managers, Canal & River Trust