

PRESS RELEASE

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CONSTRUCTION PROJECT STARTS TO RESTORE TODDBROOK RESERVOIR

Major construction work has now started to restore Toddbrook Reservoir in Whaley Bridge. The project is likely to cost around £15 million and take around two years to complete, with the reservoir due to reopen in late 2024.

The Canal & River Trust charity which cares for the reservoir and 2,000 miles of waterways across England and Wales, is working with its contractor Kier to deliver the restoration. Work has already begun to create a site compound on the northern end of the town's Memorial Park, which has been temporarily closed to the public. Hoardings are being erected, site accesses installed and existing drainage and feeder channels realigned.

The public will still be able to walk through the park on a footpath connecting Reservoir Road to the Memorial Park Bridge, which will feature a viewing point. New children's play equipment has been installed as a temporary measure at the top of the dam, next to Whaley Bridge Athletic Football Club.

At the end of the project, a new playground, similar to the existing one, will be rebuilt at the same location in the Memorial Park. The park will also be re-landscaped with replacement trees, wildlife habitats, extra paths and a new footbridge over the reservoir bypass channel. The project aims to achieve a net biodiversity gain of more than 10%.

Later this autumn construction work begins to create a new overflow spillway structure to the north of the dam. This involves building a side channel weir, 'tumble bay', spillway channel and stilling basin which will link into the existing bypass channel flowing into the River Goyt in the park.

To make way for the new spillway works, the sailing club will be relocated behind the new tumble bay. The clubhouse has been dismantled and will be replaced by a new sailing club slipway, clubhouse, boat storage and car park.

The final phase of the project will be to remove the concrete panels from the 1970s-built overflow spillway, damaged in summer 2019. The dam will then be repaired and grassed over. This will be followed by works to the inlet cascade, at the far end of the reservoir, to increase resilience to high flows from Todd Brook stream.

The Canal & River Trust and Kier will be hosting a free, drop-in public information evening at Whaley Bridge Primary School to explain more. This will be held on Wednesday 5 October, 4pm – 7pm. Everyone is welcome.

Tom Greenwood, project manager for the Canal & River Trust, said: “We are pleased to be starting work on the major construction project to restore Toddbrook Reservoir. This comes after extensive investigation works, two independent reports, exploring multiple design options, two public consultations and a detailed planning application.

“We’re very eager to reopen it again for the benefit of all the local community, the sailing club, anglers, walkers and all the other visitors who enjoy using it. With this summer’s dry weather, we’ve sadly been forced to close both the Peak Forest and Macclesfield canals due to lack of water, so it’s a timely reminder of why it’s vitally important to get the reservoir operational again.

“Our contractor Kier has appointed a dedicated community stakeholder manager, who will be available throughout the works to liaise with local residents. Construction access will be along Reservoir Road and we very much appreciate the cooperation of those residents in particular as we start the main construction activity. We will do our best to mitigate noise and disruption as far as we can.”

Kier’s new stakeholder manager is Tess Smith. She will be available at a new weekly drop-in community hub every Wednesday afternoon, 2.30 – 5pm, in the Transhipment Warehouse at the Canal Basin in Whaley Bridge. There will also be a noticeboard with regular updates posted both at the warehouse and by the site works, plus local letter drops to near neighbours about construction traffic and site activity.

Tess will be sending out regular updates by email. Anyone who has specific construction queries or would like to join the email list is invited to contact her via email: Toddbrook@kier.co.uk.

For more information about restoring Toddbrook Reservoir and construction updates, please go to the Canal & River Trust website: <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/restoring-toddbrook-reservoir>

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.

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