

PRESS RELEASE

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PUBLIC OPEN DAY OFFERS BEHIND-THE SCENES VIEW OF TODDBROOK RESERVOIR RESTORATION WORK

The Canal & River Trust charity and Kier construction company are to host a joint public open day on Wednesday 15 March at Toddbrook Reservoir in Whaley Bridge, offering visitors a unique behind-the-scenes view of the two-year, £15 million restoration project that will bring the reservoir back into active use.

Visitors can book in advance for free, one hour guided tours onto the dam crest to view work in progress at the site, with sessions being held between 10.30am and 3.40pm.

The main construction phase started last autumn and despite difficulties caused by a wet January, the plan is still to reopen the reservoir by late 2024. The project involves replacing the auxiliary spillway that was damaged in summer 2019 with a new overflow spillway structure to the north of the dam. This will include 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, the sailing club is being relocated behind the new tumble bay, where it will benefit from 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 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. Kier have created a site compound on the northern end of the town's Memorial

Park, which has been temporarily closed to the public. Hoardings have been erected, site accesses installed, and existing drainage and feeder channels are being realigned. The public is still able to walk through the park on a footpath connecting Reservoir Road to the Memorial Park Bridge, and 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.

Tom Greenwood, project manager for the Canal & River Trust, said: "We are making good progress on the construction project. Kier staff have started at the top of the site and already installed around 100 steel sheet piles at the dam crest. Further piles will be put in place over the coming months to construct the new side channel weir, tumble bay and spillway. These vary in size from 12 metres to 4 metres high and, once in place, the ground will be excavated to form the new channel, lined in concrete, forming a base for the new spillway structure.

"We very much appreciate the patience of local residents during this phase of the project, which we expect to have finished later this summer. We are constantly monitoring noise, vibration levels and air quality at several stations across the site and appointed chartered surveyors to assess the impact.

"The closure of the main road through Whaley Bridge by Network Rail for a couple of months has caused some issues for deliveries, but we currently have an average of ten lorries per day visiting the site and they are taking alternative routes where needed.

"With our Kier colleagues, we are looking forward to welcoming local residents and visitors to the site to find out more about this complex project. We are also planning a briefing day for local school children later this term and will hold further public open days as the works progress."

At the end of the project, the Memorial Park will 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%. A new playground, similar to the previous one, will also be rebuilt at the same location.

Anyone who has specific construction queries or would like to receive email updates should contact Kier's dedicated project stakeholder manager Tess Smith via email: Toddbrook@kier.co.uk.

To book a free place on Kier's Open Doors event on Wednesday 15 March, please go to the website <https://opendoors.construction/> or follow the link: [Toddbrook Reservoir | Open Doors 2023](#).

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

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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.

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