



Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal

46 Miles and 43 Locks
From Stourport Basins
To Great Heywood Junction



BROADSHEET

April 2021

The Cross Bridge. Hatherton Junction



Photo Ian Cowdale



www.swcanalsociety.co.uk

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Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Society 2019-20

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BROADSHEET

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Diary Dates Bradmore Meetings

A series of talks and presentations, usually waterways orientated but with occasional eclectic contributions on a variety of other subjects - open to the public free of charge.

Meetings held at the Bradmore Community Centre, Birches Barn Road, Wolverhampton starting at 7:45pm

Meetings will resume when Bradmore reopens

Upcoming bank holidays in England and Wales 2020

25 December	Friday	Christmas Day
28 December	Monday	Boxing Day (substitute day)

Upcoming bank holidays in England and Wales 2021

1 January	Friday	New Year's Day
2 April	Friday	Good Friday
5 April	Monday	Easter Monday
3 May	Monday	Early May bank holiday
31 May	Monday	Spring bank holiday
30 August	Monday	Summer bank holiday
27 December	Monday	Christmas Day (substitute day)
28 December	Tuesday	Boxing Day (substitute day)

Events

Electronic Broadsheet

We are now making all future copies of Broadsheet and loose inserts available electronically. This would be by "opting in" for those members who chose to receive Broadsheet electronically.

There is no intention of discontinuing the sending out of "hard copies" to other members.

Please contact Steve Gray by email to wharfinger@blueyonder.co.uk with your name and email address if you wish to "opt-in".

Note:- email addresses will only be used for the communication of society information and will not be passed to any third party.

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WHY NOT GIVE HER A CALL!

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could be included in the recording.

Stewarts & Lloyds and Gosty Hill Tunnel

In 2019/20, Alarum ran a project in the Black Country called I Dig Canals, making oral history recordings with women involved in campaigning and restoration in the 1960s and 70s. These original stories include references to towing old Stewarts & Lloyds boats through Gosty Hill Tunnel; the poor condition of Hawne Basin and how local councillors were taken on boat trips to be entertained and educated about the vital work of preserving the canals. New memories will be added to these snippets, together with a soundscape to bring the area to life. The finished product will then be available for people to listen to whilst walking along the canal or as a way of transporting anyone from anywhere in the world to this unique Black Country landscape, rich in history.

Your memories

Do you have stories of living and working in the area around this section of canal? Please get in touch with your memories by emailing yournmemories@alarumproductions.org.uk. For more, see Alarum Theatre on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and their website www.alarumtheatre.co.uk.

Notes: For more information contact Alarum Directors

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This project is supported by Creative Black Country as part of Arts Council England's Creative People and Places scheme, Paycare and Black Country Living Museum.

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Press

Release – 4th March 2021

Walking Through Waterways History

Alarum Productions are delighted to announce that they have been commissioned by Creative Black Country to run a project to engage and connect local people during lockdown. The company specialises in telling true life stories of the UK canals and bringing history to life, through performances, publications and recordings. Leading the project is Alarum Co-Director, writer and musician Heather Wastie, who was involved with her family in campaigning for the restoration of canals in the Black Country from the 1960s onwards. She is joined by vocalist, harpist, theatre maker and sound designer Sam Frankie Fox, who is based in Smethwick.

Audio trail

The aim of the project, called Walking Through Waterways History, is to involve the local community in gathering material for an audio trail celebrating the Dudley No 2 Canal between Windmill End Junction and Hawne Basin, an area once lined with industry, including the once huge Stewarts & Lloyds where over 2000 people worked. As well as meeting up online with local groups, Alarum is keen to hear from anyone familiar with the area with suggestions as to what

Hawne Basin 1965



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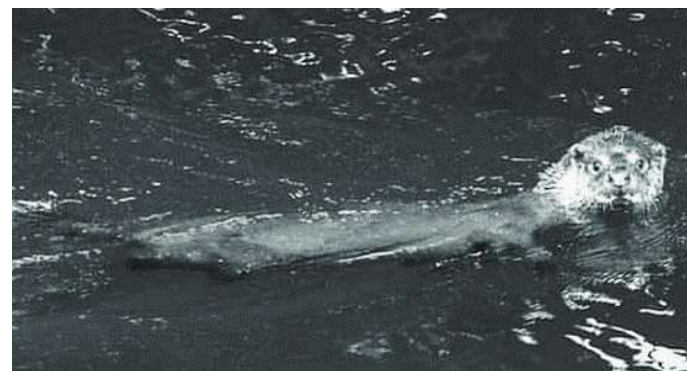
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Otter spotted swimming in Wolverhampton Canal

The otter swimming in the Wyrley and Essington Canal at Bentley Bridge, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton.



An otter - one of the UK's rarest mammals more commonly at home in Britain's rivers - has been spotted in a Wolverhampton canal. The semiaquatic animal was caught on camera by eagle-eyed walker =, swimming along the Wyrley and Essington Canal at Bentley Bridge, Wednesfield.

Largely absent from our waterways for more than half a century, the otter was seen catching a fish along the stretch of canal at the rear of the Nickelodeon pub. A designated Local Nature Reserve (LNR) since 2008, the canal is already home to swans, Canada geese, kingfishers and a variety of other wildlife. Evidence of badgers using the towpath has also been reported recently.

Paul Wilkinson, senior ecologist at the Canal & River Trust, said: "Its wonderful to hear that one of our most enigmatic mammals has been spotted swimming along the Wyrley and Essington Canal so close to the city of Wolverhampton.

"The fact that we're even talking about otters on formerly industrial canals is incredible and a real testament to all the hard work that so many people have put into improving the water quality in the region.

"We know we have about 10 otters with territories along our canals, and its amazing that they're now being seen in areas where they have been absent for over 60 years.

"The canals have been transformed in recent years and this could be the first time otters have been seen on some of our waterways since the Industrial Revolution," he added.



canal boat rides due to Tier 3 restrictions, despite tickets selling out weeks in advance.

Traci Dix-Williams, chief executive officer, said it was essential it is able to open up and to stay open, adding: "We cannot stay closed much longer – it is simply not viable for us.

"We need to be open, we need people to get out and visit attractions but we also need to ensure we all stay safe. "Attractions have put incredible investment and time into adapting their business so they can offer protection and instil confidence in their visitors.

"For many attractions timing is key to having a successful year. Missing out on Easter will have a big impact – we need to make the most of the time we have left in the coming season."

In the roadmap out of lockdown, outdoor attractions including zoos and theme parks are due to reopen from April 12, while indoor attractions could be open as early as May 17. And bosses across the region are hoping this could be the final extended closure – after a year of uncertainty and financial difficulties.

Dudley Zoo and Castle is also looking to reopen on Monday, April 12. During the first national lockdown, the attraction had to issue a rallying cry for support after bosses revealed it was losing £100,000 a week while it was closed.

The Black Country Living Museum aims to open on Monday, May 17, alongside its vaccination centre. The vaccination centre, which opened at the Tipton Road-based site back in January, will continue to operate when the museum re-opens.

Editorial

Welcome to April's Edition of Broadsheet. As I write this, we have had our first proper taste of spring (followed by a cold snap), we are on British Summer Time and we have embarked on the long Roadmap out of lockdown, which I'm sure we all hope is a one-way journey. In fact we have included some guidance inside on what can be done and when on canals.

Unfortunately we are gradually hearing of larger canal events that the organisers have reluctantly decided to cancel for this year due to current restrictions, and in the light of potential longer-term social distancing requirements. In fact to my knowledge, most events from Easter to June appears to have been cancelled or postponed and I suspect there will be a bottleneck of planned events around August.

Chris Dyche's letter to us all last month, about the consequence of a grave lack of new committee members willing to keep the Society operating, has elicited some response from our membership which is summarised in a positive letter you can read inside from Tony Gregory. You can also read a letter penned by our President, Steven Gray which concisely summarises the committee roles required, and the challenge members now need to respond to as a matter of urgency. We are still unsure when, or even where our next AGM will be held but your Committee will notify members as soon as they know.

Walking along various bits of the Staffs and Worcs Canal I have seen that all the planned works and some high priority additional work have been completed in time for the delayed cruising season. Considering the constraints that CRT and the contractors have had to operate under over the last six months, it is really quite an achievement.

Making itself felt in a negative way, particularly over the last few months is the general shortage and increase in cost of construction products, including steel, which will inevitably affect canal infrastructure repairs. Encouragingly, it is good to see recently that the CRT Volunteers are back on our patch cutting back vegetation, albeit in reduced numbers and observing social distancing requirements.

You can read inside about the recent Government ruling on red diesel, which paves the way for private pleasure boats in England, Wales and Scotland but not Northern Ireland, to continue to use the fuel as per the last few years...ie only paying full tax on the proportion used for propulsion but still use subsidised red diesel for onboard heating and power generation. In the UK, most marinas sell red diesel on a 60/40 split of full and lower tax rates for propulsion, and heating or power generation.

A trial on different towpath cutting regimes is starting this year by CRT, who are exploring which system produces the greatest benefit. There is quite an in depth description of the options in this issue and I have added a list of where

the local trials are taking place, so you can see the results for yourself if you wish. There are none planned for the Staffs and Worcs canal.

Enjoy your well-earned new-found freedom, and I will be back with the next edition in a couple of months.

Ian Cowdale

What's Next?

In the last edition of Broadsheet our treasurer Chris Dyche outlined his intended course of action regarding the future of the Society. There is the feeling amongst some members that this is unconstitutional. Like most Society member's I hadn't seen a copy of the constitution for some considerable time, so any of its finer points had long since been forgotten. After a little digging around I was able to secure a copy of the current constitution and an original set from the inauguration of the Society in 1959. The current revision was approved at the 2011 A.G.M and is broadly the same as the original set, only being updated to reflect the provision of a website and other electronic media.

The sections relating to the governance of the Society call for, four officers who are Chairman, Vice Chairman, Hon Secretary, and Hon Treasurer, plus between two and twelve ordinary members. Unsurprisingly the founders didn't give any thought to its dissolution, as there are no rules on how to distribute any assets that remain, should it come to pass.

We have now been without a Chairman and Vice Chairman for over ten years, and this has left the running of the Society in the hands of the Hon Treasurer and Hon Secretary with an ever diminishing number of other committee members. There are only three ordinary members, one being our Editor who would like to hand the reins over to a fresh mind and retire from the committee after 32 years of service.

In the March 2020 Broadsheet Chris announced his intention to retire at the 2021 AGM. At the same time Colin Beard (membership secretary) made it known that he would also step down.

This leaves just the Hon Secretary position and the Conservator with an incumbent. In his article Chris also made the point that if the Society had a future then it needed volunteers to fill the vacant positions or the Society would have no future. Since then there has been a volunteer for the position of Hon Treasurer as long as the other officer positions are filled, whilst compiling this article a non-member has indicated that they would join and organise work parties and cruises.

As there are at this point no other volunteers for Committee posts, then it seems logical that there is insufficient interest in maintaining the Society in its present form.

So what next, Chris will complete the accounts up until the end of the financial year ready for presentation and acceptance at an A.G.M. We will continue to

Daniel Greenhalgh, North West director for the Trust, 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 Trust said 13 different permanent options had been considered.

The plans include the new side channel weir, a "tumble bay", spillway channel and stilling basin. The stilling basin will then connect with the River Goyt, at the existing location, via a channel through the park.

While the work should be completed by 2023, the reservoir will not reopen to the public until early 2024, and in the meantime high volume pumps will remain in the reservoir to manage water levels until the end of the restoration project.

The Trust was criticised last year after an official report found the partial collapse of the dam was caused by poor design and a lack of maintenance. Report author Prof David Balmforth made 22 recommendations to improve safety across the reservoir network, which were accepted by the government. At the time, the Trust said it is "acting on all the lessons learnt from this incident". The Trust previously said it was "happy" with how the dam was originally built – describing the incident in August 2019 as an "anomaly".

Come and Visit us!

West Midlands tourist venues call for post-lockdown support

Express and Star (Dudley) – 22 March 2021

Tourist attractions say they cannot afford another lockdown, warning they are on the brink financially as they prepare to reopen.

It's been a tough year for attractions like Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust

Outdoor venues will open their gates again from April 12, with indoor attractions are likely to open again in May. It means the Easter bank holidays will be missed. Bosses across the region are hoping this could be the final extended closure - and today appealed for the public to show their support by coming back in numbers.

Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust has only been able to open for 15 weeks over the last year. It now hopes to start canal trips and outdoor hospitality from April 14, with cavern trips from May 17. The attraction was forced to cancel its Christmas

ideal for limited use or disused canals.

Option 3: a single end of year full width cut with four navigational cuts. This is similar to the current mowing regime and is expected to be used across the majority of the network.

Option 4: a full width cut at the start and end of the growing season plus three navigational cuts, this regime would be best implemented in southern regions which experience longer growing seasons, more favourable climatic conditions, or sites with high soil fertility.

The success of the trial will be reviewed by the end of September, considering colleague, volunteer, contractor and customer feedback, in-year monitoring, and by determining the effect on the towpath itself. Any alterations will be undertaken over the winter period before full implementation of the new mowing approach in 2022.

The Trust is welcoming feedback throughout the trial period from boaters and towpath users:

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/contact-us>

More information, including a map of the areas covered by the trial, can be found on the website under 'National Mowing Trial 2021'.

For your information the West Mids regions are as follows - Ed

Grand Union Canal	Option 3
Daw End Canal	Option 2
Old Mainline Canal	Option 2
Worcester & Birmingham Canal	Option 3
South Stratford	Option 4
Shropshire Union	Option 3

Whaley Bridge: Dam repairs could cost up to £16m

23 March 2021

The Canal & River Trust's plans include building a weir and spillway at Toddbrook Reservoir. A public consultation will be launched in the spring and, subject to planning permission, the two-year project will start at the end of 2021. Final plans will see water guided round the north of the main dam in a new spillway

The plans mean the spillway, which was damaged in 2019, will be decommissioned and the dam slope grassed. The play park at its base will have to be remodelled but the Canal & River Trust, which manages the dam and reservoir, said it would remain an "enjoyable and open public space".

compile and distribute "Broadsheet" but on the reduced frequency of bi-monthly. There is no intention to collect any subscriptions for the coming year or until the future of the Society is decided.

At the time of writing the ability to hold an A.G.M by mid-year is looking a little more optimistic than when Chris wrote his article, (most pieces are written 6/8 weeks before they appear in print). As we now have a road map out of Covid, the earliest that an A.G.M can be held looks to be late June assuming that all the requirements have been met

As soon as it is possible an A.G.M will be organised and communicated to members.

Steven Gray
President

Letter to the Editor

Dear Ian,

I was very concerned at the letter by Chris Dyche in the last Broadsheet, as were several other Society members. The quotation that comes to mind is "Reports of my death are somewhat premature" (or similar!).

Chris and Ann have soldiered on valiantly to keep the Society going, and Chris must be feeling that with no one coming forward to help run the Society, that the time has come to call it a day.

But hold on! Any winding up, in our opinion, would require a resolution to be passed at an AGM or EGM. Also, there is the question of where any assets might be disbursed to.

With the ongoing Covid restrictions, a meeting is very difficult, if not impossible to arrange. Therefore, we can only hope that by about June a meeting might be possible. I have made an offer to host a socially distanced meeting (bring your own chair!) in our field not far from Bradmore if all else fails.

Steven Gray set up a Facebook page in the name of "The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Society" in an effort to utilise modern social media to promote the Society. I have recently joined him as a joint administrator, and the site now has over 180 followers. As yet, only some 20 are paid up Society members, but all have shown an interest in OUR canal, contributing and commenting about the history and beauty to be found along its length.

It is too early to say whether anyone following this page will actually join the Society, but I have already received one offer from someone who is willing to take on the role of Cruising Officer and/or Work Party Organiser. There is also a Society member in the wings willing to take on the role of Hon Treasurer. There may be others

The best we can hope for is a relaxing of the Covid regulations, the calling of an AGM with a good turnout of members, and maybe another one or two Facebook followers to come forward now it appears that none of the present members are willing or able to serve on the committee.

I and others feel that the Society is still relevant today and has a role to play in preserving the history and wellbeing of our canal. After all, there needs to be someone to keep the Canal and River Trust to account!

Tony Gregory

Dimmingsdale Wharf

Since Tony wrote this letter, he informs me that in addition to the posts mentioned above, Ann Pollard has agreed to continue as Hon Secretary and Freddie Cooke will continue as Conservator.....Any more volunteers? - Ed

RYA delighted at Government decision on tax reform of red diesel

The RYA is pleased that following public consultation, HM Treasury has today confirmed its decision to maintain recreational boaters' entitlement to use red diesel beyond April 2022.

Last year, the RYA responded to the HM Treasury red diesel consultation, making it clear that supply around the coast for recreational boaters could not be guaranteed unless the entitlement to use red diesel was removed from commercial boat operating industries as the cost of installing a second pump for white diesel would not be commercially viable in many harbours and ports. The RYA has always maintained that the simplest means of maintaining supply for all recreational boaters on the coast and on inland waterways is the use of duty-paid red diesel.

As part of the Spring Budget announcement, the Government stated that it is not changing the treatment of private pleasure craft in Great Britain where they will continue to be able to use red diesel and pay their fuel supplier the difference between the red diesel rate and the white diesel rate on the proportion they intend to use for propulsion.

In Northern Ireland however, recreational boaters will no longer be able to use red diesel for propelling their craft. This is to ensure the UK meets its international obligations under the Northern Ireland Protocol of the Withdrawal Agreement. It will also align with fuel used by private pleasure craft in the Republic of Ireland, which the Government believes will make it simpler for private pleasure craft users to access the fuel they need if they sail between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland (and vice versa).

RYA's Director of External Affairs, Howard Pridding, commented: "We are delighted with the Government's decision on the continued entitlement on the

sanctuary to many much-loved and endangered species. Due, in part, to changes in farming practises and urban sprawl, the canal network, with its linear hedgerows and verges, provides vital connecting routes between increasingly fragmented woodlands and other important wildlife habitat.

The Trust currently spends over £2 million a year mowing over 2,000 miles of towpath every four to six weeks between April and October, leaving nearly 50 percent edge or back of the path remove encroaching bushes and woody vegetation. The trial will see the mowing regime altered across 375 miles of towpaths (almost a fifth of the Trust's network with expected improvements to wildlife habitats, alongside cost savings for the Charity.

Water-birds nesting in reed-beds will be left undisturbed and it will create habitats for water voles, one of the UK's most endangered mammals. Leaving verges to grow will encourage

a greater diversity of plants and better cover and foraging opportunities for insects, birds, mammals, and reptiles. There may be an improvement in wildflowers, vital for pollinators such as bees.

Ensuring the safety of boaters will remain paramount, and the trial aims to formalise the navigation requirements for grass cutting at moorings, locks and sightlines on bends, and improve the service for boaters. It has been developed with a panel of boaters who assist the Trust on navigational issues. Millions of people enjoy the towpaths every year and the trial will preserve access for visitors, and for the charity's maintenance and inspections.

Peter Birch, national environmental policy adviser at the Canal and River Trust said "The canals have come a long way since their freight-driven origins, and are now havens for a huge variety of wildlife. During the Pandemic their role in providing 'on the doorstep access to nature for people particularly in towns and cities, came to the fore. This trial is an exciting opportunity to see if we can further improve the habitat for the species that make them home and reimagine the arteries of the Industrial Revolution as the nation's wildlife super-highways.

The waterways run through the heart of cities and towns and this is a great way of bringing wildlife into urban centres. The way we mow the grass hasn't fundamentally changed in over a decade. We are testing various methods and standards to try and find the best balance to maintain safe use, minimise cutting, save money, and get a wildlife bonus as well."

The trial will see different grass cutting options used to suit the characteristics of different areas:

Option 1: a single end of year edge to edge full width cut removing saplings and woody vegetation. This regime will be applied on canals with very low soil fertility, of high elevation, or redundant canals where towpath use is low.

Option 2: a single end of year full width cut with two added navigational cuts which ensures that grass growth where people walk and at key points, such as boating sightlines and approaches to bridges, are maintained. This regime is

Lincomb and Holt

Works at Lincomb (right) are still underway, and we're aiming to be completed by the end of April 2021.

Works at Holt are paused and will restart in spring 2021.



Unlocking the Full Biodiversity of the Towpaths
CRT Press Release – 26 March 2021

The Canal & River Trust, is beginning a six-month trial looking at the benefits of changing the mowing regime along its towpaths.

The trial, which starts in April, seeks to balance the needs of boaters, anglers and others accessing the water, with the benefits to wildlife and biodiversity that a change in mowing frequency will bring. A different mowing regime could save the Trust money which it can use elsewhere on important maintenance to look after the nation's 200-year-old network of former industrial waterways.

A legacy from the Industrial Revolution, canals are unique ecological corridors that offer tremendous benefit to the Nation's flora and fauna by providing

use of red diesel for recreational boaters. Availability of fuel at the waterside and the safety implications that that may have meant for boaters has always remained our primary concern. We have a long history of engaging with Government on this issue, and we are grateful to HMRC officials who have listened and taken pragmatic decisions.

"However, we are disappointed that the same allowances have not been granted for recreational boaters in Northern Ireland. We will work with our colleagues in RYA Northern Ireland and continue to maintain dialogue with Government on the practical difficulties that it is going to present."

Stafford Riverway Link - Basin & Bridge Fundraiser Project

9 March 2021



Pictured alongside is work ongoing at the Mooring Basin taken by Kevin Degg. Work has started in earnest again now that phase 1 of Stafford's Riverway Link project has been given the go-ahead from Stafford Borough Council. The project wants to link the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal to the River Sow at Baswich and

once again bring narrowboats into Stafford town centre.

The council has also acknowledged it in the Town Plan as a potential waterways attraction that could eventually boost tourist traffic and generate an estimated £250,000 - £300,000 annual revenue for local businesses and the hospitality sector in Stafford and Baswich.

Plans for the current phase, completing the Mooring Basin and constructing a bridge in keeping with the traditional bridges along the canal, over the inlet of the canal and the Basin. The bridge footpath will be suitable for walkers, including those with mobility issues and cyclists and it will run alongside an access road for occasional farm traffic.

A spokesman for the project said: "We made great progress in 2019 however, because of the combined impact of coronavirus and waiting for planning approval confirmation, we've struggled to move things forward as quickly as we would have liked.

"However, thanks to the efforts of local Architect, Andrew Martin, who donated a considerable amount of his time to produce the Plans and obtain planning

approval from the Council in November 2020, our volunteers have really made up for lost time and the full extent of the Mooring Basin can now be seen.”

The first phase will provide overnight moorings for up to twelve narrowboats. The SRL Committee estimates that this phase alone could, through the holiday season, bring around 5,000 extra tourists and up to £100,000 a year into Stafford, Staffordshire.

Environmental work also features largely in the project. This includes hedgerow and tree planting alongside the borders of the Basin and along the established footpath that takes walkers down onto the River Sow’s riverside walk into the town centre. Bat and bird boxes will also be provided by the Woodland Trust.

The group are looking to raise £10,000 towards the project. Details can be found on the GoFundMe site under Stafford Riverway Link - Basin & Bridge Project

Bridge demolition marks another major step forward for Metro extension

Midland Metro Alliance - 19 January 2021

Work to extend the West Midlands Metro from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill has taken a further step forward following the demolition of another aged structure along the keenly-anticipated route.

The Tame Valley canal bridge is the fourth in a series of redundant structures to have been removed along the 11km line in recent months and follows the demolition of a similar installation on the Walsall Canal late last year which was completed ahead of schedule. The Old Main Line Canal bridge in Tipton will be the last of the canal structures to be cleared as part of the scheme with work expected to get underway in February.

Canals get gradual release from Covid lockdown

Canal Junction - March 9, 2021

Canals will get a gradual release from lock-down over the next few months, provided that the level of Covid infections keeps dropping. What does that mean for your canal holiday and cruising this year?

We try to summarise how all canal activities will be affected in 2021, based on the implications of the 22nd February announcement by the UK Government. Dates are provisional ‘no sooner than’ dates which assume no unexpected developments. This covers England only, Wales and Scotland may differ. Some facilities and operations may take longer to respond. Check with operators before making your plans!

The Canals

8th March – emergency boating use only. Towpaths open for socially distanced users.

which have adapted to swim past boulders and waterfalls as they travel upstream to spawn. Whilst shad can swim through fast-flowing water, they avoid turbulent patches and are disorientated by complex flows.

The solution

Our ‘Unlocking the Severn’ project will create fish passes at six barriers on the Severn and its River Teme tributary. Fish passes provide fish with a route around an obstacle on the river, such as a weir. One example is a ‘deep vertical slot fish pass’. This is a series of ascending pools running along the bank next to the weir. It allows the shad to swim up above the weir in small, manageable steps.

In total the work will restore 158 miles of river habitat. As well as helping the shad, this will allow free passage for other important and endangered migratory fish species, such as salmon and eel. Having more fish eggs and very young fish (fry) in these higher areas of the river - including shad spawning for the first time in 170 years - will also provide more food for insects.

More insects and young fish on the river provide food for other animals and birds. This positive effect cascades through the food web and benefits all the wildlife in the river’s ecosystem.

Fish pass Updates

Diglis

The river has over-topped at Diglis several times recently, but despite this we’re still on track, and really excited to be nearing completion. The works in the fish pass itself are almost there and we’ve had a few tests of opening and closing the pen stocks. The last piece of the puzzle will be installing the light panel that will provide a backlight to the viewing window.

Work continues with fitting out the viewing gallery - the wooden cladding was taken off the windows, and audio-visual work is underway getting the space ready for visitors. We’re still aiming to have this finished in time for monitoring and some initial pilot visits during the shad run.



Diglis fish pass after steel pilings cut

Day Hire Boats

12th April – day hire allowed by a single household or bubble.

17th May – day hire allowed for up to 6 people or 2 households/bubbles.

21st June – restrictions lifted.

Weekly Hire Boats

12th April – weekly or short break hire allowed for a single household or bubble.

17th May – weekly or short break hire allowed for up to 6 people or 2 households or bubble.

21st June – restrictions lifted.

Hotelboat Cruises

12th April – boat charters allowed for single household or bubble.

17th May – cruises available for up to 6 people or 2 households/bubbles.

21st June – restrictions lifted.

Skippered Trip Boats

29th March – trips may operate provided compliance with social distancing and distancing rules.

21st June – restrictions lifted.

Outdoor events

17th May – outdoor events like boat rallies and gatherings may take place with limitations on attendance numbers and compliance with current social distancing and distancing restrictions.

21st June – restrictions lifted.

Indoor attractions

17th May – Indoor entertainment and visitor attractions such as museums and landmarks can reopen provided they comply with social distancing and distancing restrictions.

21st June – restrictions lifted.

This is our interpretation of information provided by Canal and River Trust, British Marine Federation and HM Government.



UNLOCKING THE SEVERN

Hundreds of thousands of twaite shad used to migrate up the River Severn each year to reach their natural spawning grounds. But weirs installed in the mid-19th century blocked the shad's

route and the population on the Severn crashed. Today they are one of the UK's rarest fish.

Shad don't have the ability to leap over obstacles in the river, unlike salmon,



29th March – local boating journeys only allowed.

12th April – locks and facilities fully open and cruising can be done freely with overnight stays. Requirement reinstated for all boats to move every 14 days unless on their home mooring. Some closures possible due to the effect of Covid on winter maintenance and repair works. Social distancing restrictions relaxed.

21st June – restrictions lifted.

Marinas and Boatyards

8th March – access for emergency visits to your boat only, no overnight stays, prior permission may be required.

29th March – marinas open and you may travel to your boat for general maintenance. Must comply with social distancing and no overnight stays.

12th April – overnight stays allowed. Boat brokerage can operate.

21st June – restrictions lifted.

Private boating

8th March – emergency boating only.

29th March – local cruising with no overnight stays, single household or bubble on board.

12th April – overnight stays allowed for single household or bubble.

17th May – up to 6 people or 2 households/bubbles may stay onboard overnight.

21st June – restrictions lifted.

Liveaboards

8th March – emergency travel only, to get water or empty rubbish etc.

12th April – all movement allowed, normal mooring restrictions reinstated so boats must move every 14 days.

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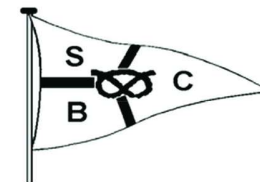
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