

Former president of Institution of Civil Engineers to lead review of reservoir safety

An independent review into the Toddbrook reservoir incident [announced](#) by the Environment Secretary in September will be led by former president of the [Institution of Civil Engineers](#), Professor David Balmforth.

The Terms of Reference, [published today](#), (21 October 2019), set out the scope of the review, which will look into the events that took place in Whaley Bridge, in Derbyshire, from 1 August this year and consider what lessons can be learned by the wider industry to ensure ongoing reservoir safety.

It follows the precautionary evacuation of residents of Whaley Bridge after high water levels damaged the spillway of Toddbrook reservoir.

The [Canal and River Trust](#), which owns and operates the reservoir, worked with the [Environment Agency](#), [fire and rescue service](#), [the Royal Air Force](#) and others around the clock to reduce water levels and to repair damage to the spillway to make it safe for residents to move back in.

Environment Secretary Theresa Villiers said:

I'm pleased that the independent review into the incident at Toddbrook reservoir, which I commissioned last month, is now well underway.

I expect this review to provide valuable insight into how this incident came about, and I hope it will also offer peace of mind to local residents. The outcome of the review will help inform how we can further improve this country's excellent reservoir safety record.

The review will:

- Investigate the possible causes of the damage, and identify any issues in the operation, inspections or maintenance of Toddbrook reservoir, including the dam and spillway, in the period leading up to the incident on 1 August 2019
- Assess the dam's capacity before 1 August to survive extreme flood events without collapse
- Assess the roles of those involved in the supervision, management and regulation of Toddbrook reservoir
- Consider lessons learned from the incident on 1 August 2019 in regards to: the design, maintenance and inspection of the Toddbrook reservoir; and the application and adequacy of current regulations

Professor Balmforth will report back to the Environment Secretary with his findings on the incident by the end of the year, the details of which are expected to be made public early next year following consultation with all parties involved.

Professor David Balmforth said:

England has an excellent reservoir safety record and the speedy action of many organisations helped keep the community around Toddbrook reservoir safe during the highly unusual incident earlier this year.

However, it is important that we uncover the causes of the damage to the dam and identify any lessons which can be learned, and I look forward to taking that work forward.

The full Terms of Reference for the review can be accessed [here](#).

Since the summer the Environment Agency has ensured that water levels at Toddbrook Reservoir are monitored and remain at a safe level until full repairs are completed. The Canal and River Trust has also been assessing the damage and identifying how the reservoir can be permanently repaired in the longer term.