

# National Highways helps bring 'Capability Brown' pool back to its former glory

Vital restoration work of the 16-acre pool at Berrington Hall, near Leominster in Herefordshire, started in autumn last year and finished in February this year.

The conservation work included careful woodland management and thinning of trees and shrubs around the pool which now complete, will provide open canopy and improve water conditions.

Collapsed trees which were causing detrimental impacts to the structure of the dam were also removed.

National Highways Head of Service Delivery Andy Butterfield said:

At National Highways, our work goes beyond operating, maintaining and improving roads, and through our Environmental and Well-Being Designated Funds, we're investing in the environment and communities surrounding our road network.

We've worked closely with the National Trust to realise this small but important project which will help support aquatic biodiversity at a location close to the A49. We look forward to seeing nature flourish now that the work is complete, and we're pleased that we've been able to play a part in helping to restore the pool to its former glory.

National Highways Head of Service Delivery, Andy Butterfield and National Trust Countryside Care Manager Iain Carter in front of the 16-acre pool.

During the repair activity, specialist teams re-homed carp from the pool so that crucial desilting works, and reed clearance could take place once the water had been drained away.

The pool has since been restocked with a mix of smaller fish including rudd, common roach and northern pike which are a rich source of food for waterfowl. The introduction of these new species will also support biodiversity and a large herony which nests on the pool's island every year.

The pool is a key feature of the parkland at Berrington and was originally designed by prolific landscape architect, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. Brown loved water in the landscape and often included curving, serpentine lakes as part of his designs. The pool, parkland and garden make up Brown's final

complete estate before his death in 1783.

More than 200 years later, the pool is now a haven for wildlife and visitors alike; it is a Site of Special Interest (SSSI) due to the large heronry which nests on its island every year. It is one of only two heronries in Herefordshire and the largest in the West Midlands.

During the project, ecologists Will Watson and Giles King-Salter completed a detailed survey of the wildlife present in the pool and were able to identify 35 different types of invertebrates including swan mussels.

These mussels rarely grow bigger than 180mm, however the largest rescued from Berrington's pool was 203mm.

In total, there were 38 species of bird identified, including the great white egret, water rail, green sandpiper and kingfisher. The footprints of an otter were also discovered during the work, suggesting that they also use the pool to source food.

National Highways Head of Service Delivery, Andy Butterfield learns about the wildlife at Berrington Hall from National Trust Countryside Care Manager, Iain Carter.

National Trust Countryside Manager Iain Carter said:

We're delighted that, thanks to National Highways, we've been able to complete this vital conservation project. The biodiversity of the pool had been adversely affected over the years due to the spread of reed cover and accumulation of silt.

Large carp had become the dominant fish species and very few smaller fish remained which may have impacted the heronry, for which population numbers had sadly declined over the last 10 years. It was therefore vital that we intervened to restore the pool and ensure the survival of the SSSI and the heronry.

The National Trust consulted with Historic England and Natural England as part of the project.

[Find out more information about the project.](#)

While the project work has finished, visitors cannot walk around the whole lake yet because the ground is still recovering and it will reopen later in the year.

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## Media enquiries

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# [Statement on the introduction of the Northern Ireland Legacy Bill](#)

News story

The Ministry of Defence's statement on the Northern Ireland Legacy Bill.



We are pleased to announce that yesterday, the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill was introduced to the House of Commons. This Bill, brought forward by the Northern Ireland Office, is a Government pledge to address the extremely complex and sensitive legacy of Northern Ireland's past, helping society look to the future, not the past.

It delivers on our commitments to those who served in Northern Ireland, whilst implementing a process that provides answers for families. For too long, veterans and former service personnel have lived in fear of prosecution for actions taken whilst serving their country in order to uphold the rule of law. We are pleased that the Bill not only gives veterans the protections they deserve, but provides better outcomes for victims, survivors and their families. Key is the establishment of a new Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery, that will allow individuals and communities affected by the Troubles to seek and receive information about Troubles-related deaths and serious injuries.

Following publication of the Command Paper in July 2019 we have listened to what people have said about keeping open the prospect of criminal justice outcomes, and we have adjusted our approach to remove any automatic access to immunity for those involved in Troubles-related incidents. Instead, the independent body will grant immunity based on an individual's cooperation

with the body's enquiries. This approach gives our veterans the certainty that they deserve but leaves open the route of prosecution if individuals are not deemed to have earned their immunity. For those who do not come forward, the possibility of prosecution will remain.

We are confident that this legislation will deliver for those most impacted by the Troubles; providing answers and accountability for many families, delivering on our commitments to those who served in Northern Ireland, and helping society in Northern Ireland to look forward

Published 18 May 2022

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## [Drivers urged to get training to tow trailers and caravans safely](#)

News story

From today (18 May 2022), drivers in England, Scotland and Wales can take newly-accredited training to learn and improve the skills they need to safely tow.



The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is urging drivers who are planning to tow a trailer or caravan to take a training course before getting behind the wheel.

There are newly-accredited trainers running courses to suit every level of ability, including:

- towing for the first time
- returning to towing after a break
- towing larger trailers
- refreshing and formalising your skills if you already regularly tow

DVSA is recognising expert organisations who are approving the individual

trainers joining the scheme. They must all follow the [learning to drive a car and trailer syllabus](#), which DVSA has developed with industry experts.

## **Find an accredited trainer**

You can take training that will teach you how to tow:

- large trailers
- small trailers (under 750kg MAM)
- specific types of trailers such as caravans or horse boxes

You can find a training provider or course by contacting one of these organisations:

- National Register of LGV Instructors
- Safe Towing Scheme
- Skills for Logistics

Check with the trainer to find out:

- what type of training they specialise in
- how much the training costs (trainers set their own prices)

## **Help to keep Great Britain's roads safe**

Baroness Vere, Minister for Roads, Buses and Places, said:

Towing safely is an important issue and I urge drivers to access the training to help keep Britain's roads safe.

The new accreditation scheme, will help them to get targeted training and improve their driving skills.

I want to thank the trailer training industry, stakeholders and our partners for their commitment and support in developing this training scheme over the last few months.

Mark Winn, DVSA's Chief Driving Examiner, said:

With the summer holidays fast approaching, we know many families will be looking to tow a trailer or caravan so it's vital you have the skills to do this safely.

We'd encourage anyone who plans to tow something, whether it's a caravan on holiday, or a trailer to the tip, to get training from an accredited provider. They will be able to make sure you have the skills and knowledge to keep everyone on Britain's roads safe.

## National Highways working to keep fish on the move in Devon

Following the completion of a fish pass scheme on the River Lemon last year, the company has just confirmed its investment in a project to assist the migration of fish through Ashburn Check Weirs within the Dartmoor National Park.

Westcountry Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency have identified an issue whereby fish – including salmon and eels – are unable to move upstream due to the four stepped weirs close to the A38 eastbound entry slip road at Buckfastleigh.

As a result, National Highways, the company responsible for England's major A roads and motorways, is investing £450,000 from its Environment and wellbeing fund, to adapt the weirs to enable fish to navigate their way upstream to their traditional spawning grounds.

Tina Barrington, National Highways' Environment Funding Manager, said:

Our work goes beyond operating, maintaining and improving roads, and through our Environmental and wellbeing fund, we're investing in the environment and communities surrounding our network.

We're delighted to be able to support such a worthwhile project which will help to support aquatic biodiversity close to the A38 – a glowing example of how this funding and partnership working can make life better for communities, wildlife and the environment around our roads.

The investment underlines our commitment to reducing the impact of our roads on the environment – in this case by modifying a structure originally provided during the construction of the road.

The scheme, designed by Kier, is to be delivered by idverde UK in conjunction with the Westcountry Rivers Trust, Castleford Engineering and Fishtek Consulting, and following initial preparatory work, the scheme will start on Monday, 6 June and complete by October in time for the start of the spawning season.

The area around the weirs is an environmentally significant location, sitting within the National Park. The verges around the A38 eastbound entry slip road at Dart Bridge contain species rich grassland of county-wide importance, and

are also home to rare orchids.

As the location also sits within a bat conservation area, no overnight work will be taking place to avoid disturbing bat activity.

The programme will require daytime closures of the A38 entry slip road on weekdays, with a short local diversion route in place to allow National Highways to manage construction and help teams protect the natural habitat. These closures will be lifted at weekends.

Olivia Cresswell, Aquatic Services Manager at Westcountry Rivers Trust, said:

We are excited these four fish and eel passes, which are located at the entrance to the River Ashburn are to be created.

Fish survey records from the Environment Agency suggest that salmon have been restricted from most of this river since 1999, making this a much-needed construction to improve access to important salmon, trout and eel habitat.

WRT will be providing fisheries expertise and support during the construction phase of the scheme.

Thanks to its Designated Funding programme, National Highways was last year able to assist the Westcountry Rivers Trust to install the specially designed fish passes on the River Lemon under the A38 dual carriageway near Newton Abbot.

Elsewhere in the South West, the company also announced further investment last month for Cornwall Wildlife Trust to deliver environmental enhancements to the Cornish landscape bordering the A30.

National Highways confirmed £785,000 from its Environment and wellbeing fund for the Trust to restore and recreate 16.8 hectares of woodland, orchard, grassland and heathland around Ladock to Gwills and Benhaven to Lambourne Mill, north of Truro.

The company manages four designated funds, allocated by the Government, to deliver benefits above and beyond building, maintaining and operating England's strategic roads.

Currently in its third year, the funding programme, which was allocated £936m for Roads Period 2 (2020-2025), is divided into four funding streams aimed at making the biggest difference and delivering lasting benefits; Environment and wellbeing, Users and Communities, Safety and congestion and Innovation and modernisation.

From protecting the environment and enhancing the landscape around roads, to improving safety, reducing congestion, and supporting communities, the aim is to make a positive difference to people's lives.

And as part of its national biodiversity effort, the company announced an investment earlier this week of nearly £6 million from its Environment and Wellbeing fund into the country's Wildlife Trusts' Network for Nature programme.

The funding will enable the Trusts to deliver a total of 26 biodiversity projects to enhance, restore and create more than 1,700 acres (690 hectares) of woodlands, grasslands, peatlands and wetlands across every region of England.

Wild areas which have been fragmented by highways will also be improved and restored for nature, with another South West scheme reconnecting isolated populations of dormice alongside the M5 in Somerset and helping them spread into the wider landscape.

[Find out more information about National Highways' Designated Funds programme.](#)

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## **[UK government leads global transport transformation as it takes over ITF presidency in Germany](#)**

- UK Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps, will assume presidency of international organisation on transport policy
- He will use the summit to call for a united response against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, as well as focusing on priorities on decarbonisation and road safety
- transport ministers from around the world will support a call to action committing to ending all International Transport Forum cooperation with Russia and Belarus

Today (18 May 2022), the UK government will assume the presidency of the [International Transport Forum \(ITF\)](#), leading its work to improve people's lives across the world through cleaner, safer and more innovative solutions.



In a ceremony held in Leipzig, Germany, the largest gathering of transport ministers in the world will see current president, Morocco, hand over the reins to UK Transport Secretary Grant Shapps.

The ITF is a world-leading intergovernmental organisation for transport policy bringing together 63 countries from around the world, hosted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

In a keynote speech, Mr Shapps will lay out 5 priorities for the UK's tenure: leading global transport transformation by making transport more connected, greener, inclusive, safe and resilient, and innovative.

He will also use the forum to bring nations together in solidarity against the invasion of Ukraine, uniting his counterparts in condemning Russia's heinous acts and atrocities committed against Ukraine's civilian population.

Transport ministers from around the world will back a [call to action committing to ending all ITF cooperation with Russia and Belarus](#).

In a speech at the summit, the Transport Secretary is expected to say:

Transport binds nations together for the common good. But access to the international transport network is a privilege. It requires countries to act in a responsible and respectful way to each other.

So we cannot stand back when one state, entirely unprovoked, attacks another, killing thousands of innocent people, violating international law and breaching the UN Charter.

The targeted destruction of one nation's infrastructure, in particular its transport system, clearly contravenes the very foundations on which the ITF is built.

The United Kingdom stands with our partners in condemning the outrageous actions of Vladimir Putin and the Russian military in Ukraine.

The summit will also be a chance to demonstrate how innovations in crash avoidance technology can save lives and meet the United Nations' goal to halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2030, which ties in with the UK's own objectives on road safety.

At the summit, Mr Shapps will take part in a demonstration of autonomous emergency braking (AEB) – new technology that monitors the road ahead and automatically brakes the car if the driver fails to respond to a collision threat – as well as anti-lock braking system (ABS) for motorcycles.

Such technologies are not only being considered for UK vehicles – something we can do now we have greater regulatory freedom after leaving the EU – but it is hoped these will be rolled out worldwide through initiatives like the #STOPTHECRASH partnership.

This will be followed by another example of international unity: the announcement of a new air services agreement between Canada and the UK. It means that crucial transatlantic routes can continue and planes flying from the UK will continue to enjoy the same access they currently have with Canada, helping the UK maintain its place as Europe's most important aviation hub.

The Transport Secretary will sign the bilateral agreement at the event with Canadian Transport Minister Omar Alghabra.

The UK's leadership in decarbonising transport will also be on show, coming hot off the heels of the Transport Secretary's historic challenge to the aviation industry to deliver the first net zero transatlantic flight by the end of next year, and the launch of its Jet Zero Council, which is focused on delivering zero emissions aviation in a generation.

The Transport Secretary will chair meetings of the intergovernmental [Zero Emissions Vehicles Transition Council](#) (ZEVTC), which he is expected to use as an opportunity to discuss coordinating industry and government efforts in the transition to zero emission heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) – which will be key to decarbonising our roads and meeting global climate targets.