

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Lottery funding secures future of canal bridge in Walsall Wood

Waterways and wellbeing charity, Canal & River Trust, has started work to replace Black Cock Bridge on the Daw End Branch Canal in Walsall Wood.

Thanks to support from players of People's Postcode Lottery, this Victorian road bridge, which carries Camden Street over the Daw End Branch Canal and is named after the nearby public house, will undergo a major repair.

The bridge, which was built in around 1880, needs a complete refurbishment having suffered from severe corrosion during its near 150-years of service.

The existing steel structure will be removed and replaced with a new arched shaped bridge. The steel beams will be manufactured off site and delivered and lifted straight into place then a concrete deck and new steel parapets will be built onto them. The original historic brick abutments and cast-iron rope guides will be saved and reused in the construction of a new bridge deck.

Completed in 1800 the Daw End Branch Canal – pronounced locally as Doe End - is one of the most rural of the Birmingham Canal Navigations. The canal was originally built to carry limestone to Black Country furnaces and links the Rushall Canal to the Wyrley & Essington Canal and is now used by local people and boaters as a place to relax and unwind.

Daniel Bailey, from Canal & River Trust, said: "It's great to be able to complete the works at Black Cock Bridge. Thanks to the generous support from the Players of the People's Postcode Lottery the project will allow us to sensitively replace the bridge and ensure this important canal crossing can be used for many more years to come.

"Our canals are enjoying a second gold age – used by more people and in more ways than the great canal engineers of the industrial revolution could ever have envisaged. Our 250-year-old historic network is home to much loved wildlife and is a vital green space used by millions of people in our towns and cities. It has an important role to play in the decades ahead, for the

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wellbeing of communities, protecting biodiversity and mitigating the effects of a changing climate.

“To protect and preserve these special places and ensure they don’t fall back into the dark days of dereliction and decline that was the story of the early and mid-20th century, we need Government, partners, funders, and the community to join us and raise the money and resources required to care for this amazing historic network. With increasing frequency of flooding and drought, and the rising costs of materials we need support now more than ever.”

Will Humpington, Climate Change and Environment Advisor at People’s Postcode Lottery said: “We are delighted that funding raised by players of People’s Postcode Lottery will allow this vital preservation work to take place.

“Our players have now raised more than £16 million for Canal & River Trust and it’s great to see those funds being used to safeguard the future of Britain’s industrial heritage, improve people’s health and well-being, and protect the wildlife living on our waterways.”

The canal and towpath will be closed for the durations of the works which are due to be completed by the end of the year. For more information on the Canal & River Trust including how you can volunteer or donate money to support our work visit [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)

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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.

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