

Fire fighters to fill new village pond

Fire fighters in Brewood will be pumping out 300,000 litres of water from the Shropshire Union Canal to fill a new pond at a village wildlife haven.

A high pressure pump will be installed over the canal and around 1.2 kilometres of high capacity hose will be deployed from Fire and Rescue support vehicles between Shutt Green Lane and Barnfields Sandbeds, where the pond is located.

A team from Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service will undertake the work as a training exercise on Tuesday (NOV5).

The Friends of Barnfield Sandbeds, volunteers dedicated to its upkeep, work closely with South Staffordshire Council, which owns the site.

Council contractors recently dug out the pond and it is lined and ready to fill. Approval has been given by Severn Trent along with the Canal & River Trust, the Environment Agency, The Homestead Caravan Site and J B Sands of Brewood, owners of land the hoses will cross.

Marion Goodrich, Chair of the Friends of Barnfield Sandbeds, approached Brewood Fire Station's Watch Commander Paul Danby about the project and he was happy to help.

Mrs Goodrich said: "We are very excited about the pond, which will attract more new wildlife to the site and will be a very welcome addition. This really is a team effort and we are very grateful to the fire service for their help and the council for their ongoing support."

Watch Commander Danby said: "This project has taken a lot of hard work and commitment from a group of people wanting to make a difference in our community. For the fire service to be able to support this by using our equipment to fill the pond not only helps complete this part of the project but enables us to undertake training on the equipment to keep our skills up."

Councillor Mary Bond, cabinet member for Environmental Services added: "This pond is a natural low point on the site, and we are hoping to encourage more wildlife and a greater biodiversity in the area. It's really heartening to see how local people value the site, and the work that the Friends are undertaking to maintain the site will ensure the new pond thrives."

Hose ramps will be installed where necessary to allow vehicles to cross. Disruption will be kept to a minimum and nearby householders have been notified.

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Notes to Editors:

You are invited to send a reporter/photographer to the pond filling exercise from 10am on November 5. For more information please contact Marion Goodrich on 01902 851207.

Barnfield Sandbeds

The Sandbeds, located between Horsebrook Lane and Engleton Lane, was overgrown and strewn with rubbish. Tree works were undertaken, fly-tipping and industrial works cleared, paths created and planting schemes put in place. It is now enjoyed by the whole community.