



STAFFORD RIVERWAY LINK Members Newsletter Mar.2026

Hallo everyone, and welcome to the March 2026 edition of your Members' Newsletter.

To start us off, the very good news is that all the necessary paperwork and permissions are finally in place, and we have been able to start work again on the second stage of the project – building the bridge.



The Groundwork Party turned out first on the 14th February to ready the site, and the Building Team moved in on the 16th. Local members might have noticed the changes, with fencing re-aligned (not forgetting to allow a corridor for the farmer's cows to move through!), and ground levelled in preparation for the work. Building the bridge and realigning the spillway will be the focus of work for the next year or two.

But we are already looking beyond that. The next major task once the bridge is completed, will be breaking through from the Staffs and Worcester into the newly constructed basin. This is not a job for volunteers, and a CRT approved contractor has already been on site to estimate the cost of the temporary coffer dam (the Portadam) which will have to be constructed.



The engineer getting up very close and personal with his work! He estimates £13,200 for installation and eventual removal of the dam, plus a £100 per week hire charge. We have some (more!) fundraising to do.

The Trustees of our local Titanic Brewery have very generously helped us with a donation of £1,200, towards the cost of relocating the Sky Fibre-optic cable, which has to be resited under the new bridge. We were presented with the cheque at the Work Party on Saturday Mar 14th to the applause of a good turnout of volunteers,



Weeping Cross Funding have also chosen the SRL to receive a donation of £1,500. Thank you, Weeping Cross. It would be hard to continue without this sort of support from our local community. Other applications for funding are in the pipeline, and there are more ongoing, some of which you might be able to help with:

- Sign up to EasyFunding. This is a free service that turns online shopping into free donations for charities and other good causes. It partners with over 7,000+ brands (including Amazon, John Lewis, Argos, and Tesco) who will donate a portion of your purchase price to your chosen cause at no extra cost to you. You simply need to sign up, and chose Stafford Riverway Link as your recipient. This link <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/how-it-works/> will tell you everything you need to know.
- Committee member, John Potter, regularly gives talks about the SRL and its aims to local groups. These are completely free of charge - though John is very willing to accept donations on behalf of the SRL!. If you know of a group who would welcome an informative and entertaining talk on an important local project, then please contact John at thistlejohn@outlook.com.
- Contribute to our GoFundMe page. We've raised 75% of our £10,000 target. Find out more at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/stafford-riverway-link-basin-amp-bridge-project>
- If you haven't already done so, achieve (a kind of!) immortality by buying a brick to build our bridge. Every purchaser gets their name in a 'time capsule', which will be set in the bridge as it nears completion. Have a look at <https://www.stafford-riverway-link.co.uk/Brick.html>

As I mentioned in the last Members' Newsletter, we are in the process of applying to the Charity Commission to become a registered charity. This too will help with fundraising, as it brings with it advantages such as Gift Aid, VAT concessions, and greater access to grant funding.



As a final word on fund raising - this is my last chance to remind you of our big fund raiser – our Open Day. This year it's runs on 16th/17th May. Land stalls, trade boats, games for the kids, free boat rides, food, drink, and entertainment – and a chance to see for yourselves what's happening on site with SRL, and hear about our plans for the future. It'll be a great day out – hopefully even better than last year! - so please come along and bring family and friends with you. This year we are working with the support of with River Canal Rescue, who will be amongst those present on the day.

Some more dates for your diary, for those who live locally:

- the travelling exhibition about the history and development of the SRL is at **Rising Brook Library** until Saturday 28 March 2026, then at **Eccleshall Library** (Saturday 11 April to Friday 5 June 2026), and finally at **Baswich Library** (Monday 6 July to Thursday 3 September 2026). For an in depth look at the history of the SRL and of canals in our area by our archivist, David Jones, go to our website <https://www.stafford-riverway-link.co.uk/> and click on History Archive.
- Our next monthly social evening will be at Stafford Boat Club on Tuesday March 17th - 8pm for 8.30pm. The topic of the talk this time is 'A Trip up the Erewash Canal'. All are very welcome to come along and support this interesting event, especially as it is our last social evening until October. The bar will - of course - be open! Further details from John Potter at thistlejohn@outlook.com
- And a last reminder about Open Day. We'd love to see you there!

With very best wishes,
Denise Arthur
Secretary. Stafford Riverway Link
Mar 2026

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<https://www.stafford-riverway-link.co.uk/>