



Press Release

14th of June 2021

Lapal Canal Trust signs contract with Land & Water Services Ltd to construct the first part of the restoration of the Dudley No 2 Canal in Selly Oak.

Dr Andrew Hardie, Chair of the Lapal Canal Trust, signs a £300,000 contract with Kevin Kirkland, Construction Director of Land & Water, to build the first Selly Oak section of the Dudley No2 Canal. The new water feature section completes the development of Whitehouse Wharf and forms part of the Selly Oak Shopping Centre owned by M & G Real Estate, and provided as a public amenity. The area includes a bridge linking the new shops to Selly Oak town centre, the remains of a lime kiln and a new public square. The large water area is designed to enable boats to turn and enter and exit the soon to be restored Dudley No 2 Canal. It will be an attractive calming water feature in the heart of Selly Oak, to be enjoyed by all canal users - including canoeists, paddle boaters and anglers. It is large enough to be a convenient destination for trip boats to and from central Birmingham. A very pleasant 55 minutes journey along the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, taking in a beautiful green corridor not yet seen by many residents



Dr Andrew Hardie and Kevin Kirkland



The landowners (Freeholder and Leaseholders) - Canal & River Trust, Sainsbury's and M & G Real Estate - have very kindly given permission for the work to start; their support and that of their legal advisors was essential with work being planned to start in July. Thanks also to C&RT for their technical evaluation and the permit to proceed. With the area forming part of the Worcester & Birmingham Canal, C&RT have kindly agreed to maintain the water space.

The work is only possible because of the generous support of the 50 charities, companies, and individuals and who have helped to fund the project. The larger funders are Veolia, Garfield Weston, Headley Trust, Landsec, Unite Students, William Cadbury, Jabbs and Rowland Trust. The complex legal arrangements were managed by Gowlings WLG who have supported our project over many years.

The Lapal Canal Trust is now focused on raising the further £500,000 required to complete the restoration to Harborne Lane Bridge, which must be completed by 2025.



Andy Street Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority:

“Congratulations to the Trust on the progress made This is a hugely important project for Selly Oak and the wider region, and I endorse it wholeheartedly. Our canals provide a safe and enjoyable way for residents to exercise, commute and connect with nature. We are all grateful for their restoration work, really encouraging to hear that the contract has been signed and progress is being made”



Brigid Jones Local Councillor and Deputy Leader of Birmingham City Council:

“This is a significant step forward for a really exciting heritage project. The restoration of the Dudley No2 canal is a great example of partnership work that will benefit the Selly Oak community for years to come.”



Adnan Saif Canal & River Trust Director for West Midlands:

“The winding hole will open great opportunities for all kinds of water-based activities and will serve to increase the vibrancy and visitor attraction in Selly Oak and wider canal network. The Canal & River Trust is pleased to work with the Lapal Canal Trust to achieve this significant milestone, and on future developments.”



Kevin Kirkland, Construction Director at Land & Water:

“We are very much looking forward to working with the Lapal Canal Trust and getting started on building the first section of the Dudley No2 Canal and. At Land & Water, we pride ourselves on maintaining and enhancing the UK’s waterways for years to come and this is a perfect example of how the canal can be used to benefit surrounding communities and boat lovers.”

The project is supported by the Community Partnership for Selly Oak and forms part of CP4SO ambitious plans to preserve the many attractive old buildings in Selly Oak.

Note to Editors

For queries and higher resolution version of the pictures please contact John Lines, Press and Publicity officer at the Lapal Canal Trust.

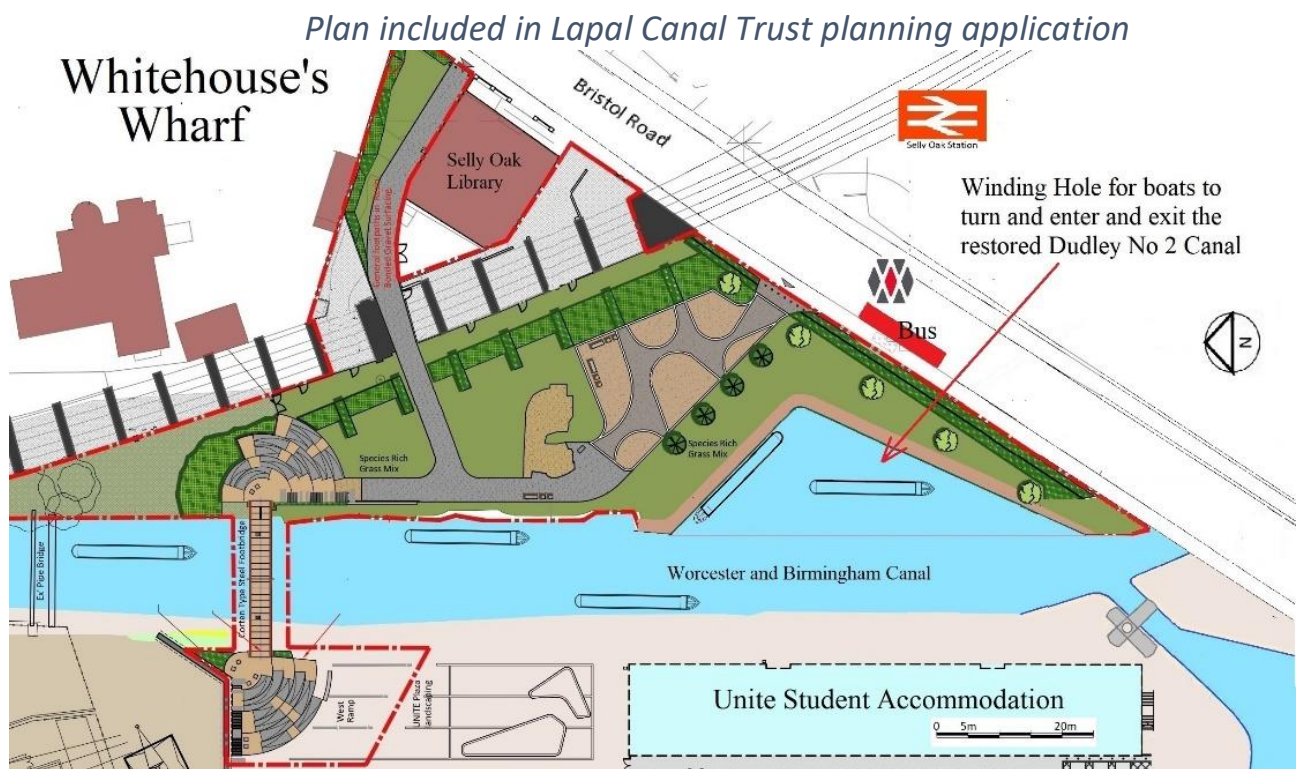
Email: john.lines@birmingham.gov.uk Tel: 07766 923390



The Lapal Canal Trust was formed in 1990 it is a registered charity (no 1013845) and a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee, registered in England (no 2721675)

Additional Information. See our web site for more information www.lapal.org .

1. **Funding** The development is covered by a Section 106 Agreement. Provided the work is completed by November 2025 the agreement contributes £724k towards the cost. We need to raise a further £500k before work can start.
2. **Historical background** The Dudley No 2 Canal was built to carry coal from Dudley to London. Work started in 1794 and the route was opened in 1798. The through route was closed in 1917 by a collapse of the Lapal tunnel, but remained open both sides until the late 50's. The Industrial town of Selly Oak grew around the canal junction now being restored. The area being constructed used to have two wharves (Whitehouse's Wharf) and was more recently affectionally called Goodman's Yard.



Photos taken in the 1930's

