

## Emergency response Middlewich canal breach

**Client:** Kier  
for Canal and Rivers Trust  
**Contractor:** CPC Civils

“We have experience working on emergency breaches and our quick response was vital in order to minimise further damage. OnSite Central’s rapid installation of Portadam allowed us to stem the breach quickly, allowing CRT to protect the fish and wildlife from further impact, whilst re-floating and moving the stranded boats.”

**Lloyd Bluss , Project Manager, CPC Civils**

A 30ft section of the Shropshire Union Canal collapsed, causing water to drain into the River Wheelock, leaving up to 20 boats stranded.

Kier as main contractor for CRT, immediately appointed CPC Civils, who have experience working on emergency breaches.

OnSite received an emergency call out, from CPC, to stem the breach and within two days of the breach occurring an 11m Portadam was installed across the canal, preventing further water loss. If the bed had been allowed to dry then the clay can crack causing further damage to the canal.

Within days of the breach:

- 10,000 fish were rescued and relocated to the Trent and Mersey Canal.

- Approximately 20 large trees were removed from the embankment and the River Wheelock.
- 865,000 litres of water were pumped into the canal helping the stranded boats move onto the Trent and Mersey Canal.
- Four truckloads of debris was collected and removed.
- Ecologists carried out a survey to monitor the breach's impact on the local wildlife and further impact was kept to a minimum.

The work to repair the breach is expected to take in the region of 3—4 months with a total repair cost of approximately £3million.

Portadam is widely used on the nations canal network for both planned and emergency works and in this case, quickly helped to minimise further damage to the canal, wildlife and boats.

