

EA-MIDLANDS <sup>Box</sup> 5

# River Sow Improvements in Stafford:



## Your questions answered



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Olton Court, 10 Warwick Road  
Olton, Solihull B92 7HX



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### How will I know what is happening?

Notice boards will be put up around the site, which will describe the work, with a section for regular updates. Posters will be put up at Stafford station with details of any footpath closures in Victoria Park. We will also produce regular newsletters that will be sent to anyone who asks for them. Press releases will be issued when anything important happens.

### Will the work affect my house?

The work should not have any structural effect on your property. However, independent surveyors will carry out surveys of certain properties before and after the work to check whether there has been any effect.

### Am I entitled to any compensation?

In certain circumstances compensation will be provided by the Environment Agency. This is usually in the form of renovation works.

### Who has been consulted about this work?

During the design of this scheme the Environment Agency consulted local businesses and residents, Stafford Borough Council, English Nature, English Heritage, the Countryside Agency and other interest groups. Press releases and public notices appeared in the local media, and a public exhibition was held in August 2001 in Stafford. Consultation documents were advertised and published in 1998, May 2001 and August 2001.

Copies of the published documents are available, and can be requested by phoning Rosemary Coyne on 01543 404933, or by writing to Sentinel House, Fradley Park, Wellington Crescent, Lichfield WS13 8RR.

### Who are all the people on site?

Three different contractors employed by the Environment Agency are carrying out the work:

- ◆ Tree works - Fountains Forestry
- ◆ Engineering works - Jackson Civil Engineering
- ◆ Landscape works - not yet appointed

The engineering works have been designed by WS Atkins. Nicol Jones & Lomax carried out the landscape design and the environmental impact assessment. WS Atkins will be supervising the engineering works and will also check the environmental side of the work.

### Who do I contact if I want to know more or make a complaint?

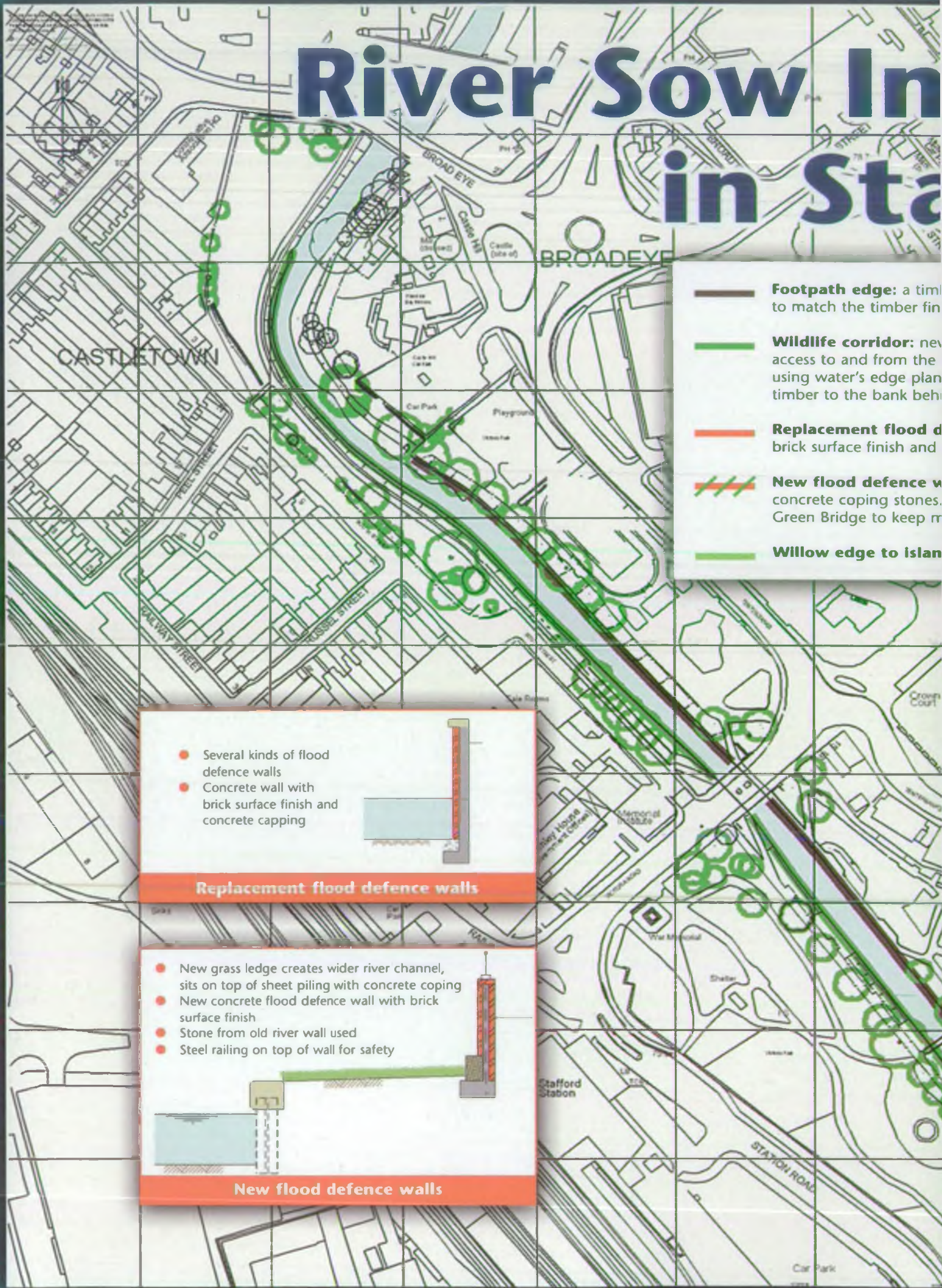
Please telephone:





Principal Project Manager: John Hindle on 0121 711 2324, or

Environmental Impact Assessment Officer: Rosemary Coyne on 01543 404933.


Or write to John Hindle, Environment Agency, Sapphire East, 550 Streetsbrook Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1QT

# River Sow In in Sta



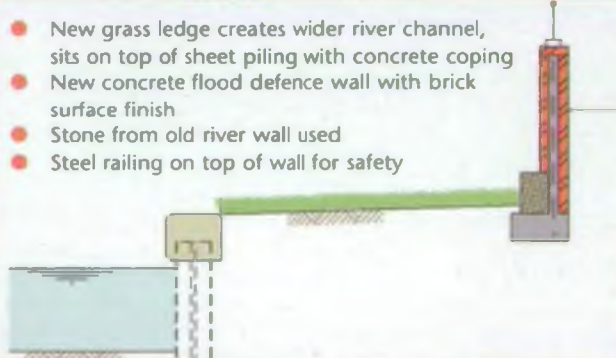
-  **Footpath edge:** a timber finish to match the timber finish
-  **Wildlife corridor:** new access to and from the river using water's edge plan timber to the bank behind
-  **Replacement flood defence walls:** brick surface finish and concrete capping
-  **New flood defence walls:** concrete coping stones. Green Bridge to keep river
-  **Willow edge to island:**

- Several kinds of flood defence walls
- Concrete wall with brick surface finish and concrete capping



### Replacement flood defence walls

- New grass ledge creates wider river channel, sits on top of sheet piling with concrete coping
- New concrete flood defence wall with brick surface finish
- Stone from old river wall used
- Steel railing on top of wall for safety



### New flood defence walls

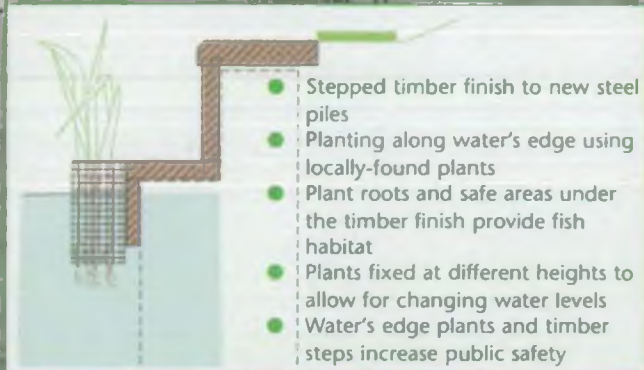
# Improvements Afford

er finish to the top of the steel piles  
h for the wildlife corridor

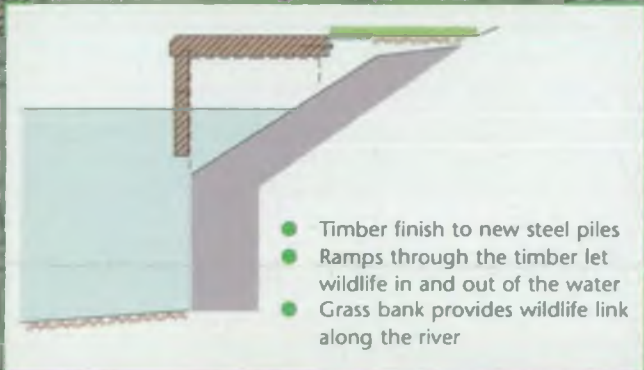
timber topped steel piles allow  
water and along the river, either  
s or special ramps through the  
nd

**ence walls:** concrete walls with  
concrete coping stones

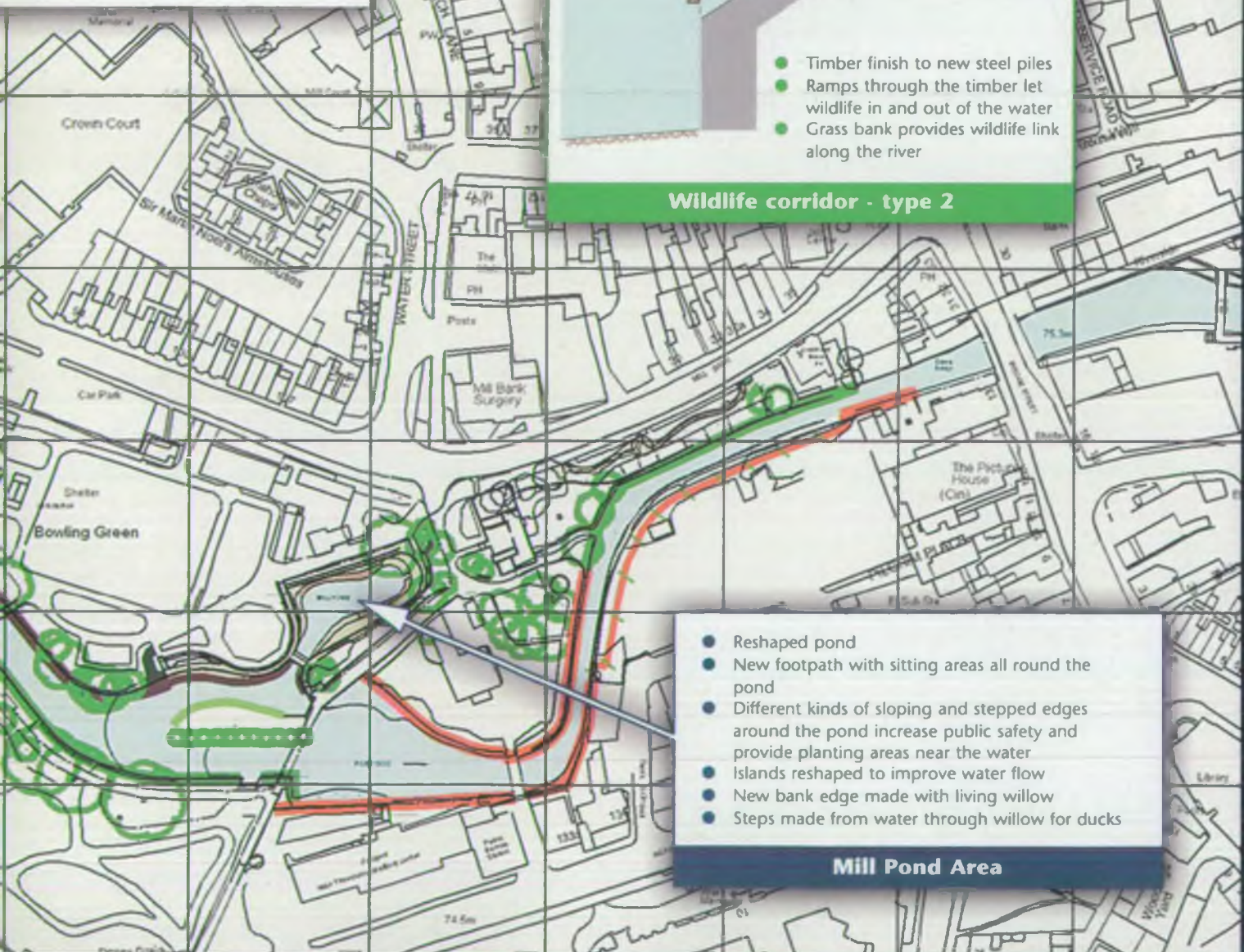
**all:** concrete with a brick finish and  
Allows widened river channel near  
ore water in the river



**Wildlife corridor - type 1**



**Wildlife corridor - type 2**



- Reshaped pond
- New footpath with sitting areas all round the pond
- Different kinds of sloping and stepped edges around the pond increase public safety and provide planting areas near the water
- Islands reshaped to improve water flow
- New bank edge made with living willow
- Steps made from water through willow for ducks

**Mill Pond Area**

# River Sow Improvements in Stafford: Your questions answered

## Why is the work needed?

Surveys have shown that the existing bank structures have reached the end of their life. If they are not replaced it is possible that the banks would collapse at some time in the future, which would increase the risk of flooding in Stafford town centre.

## What is happening?

The Environment Agency will be carrying out engineering works on the River Sow between Broadeye Bridge and Green Bridge, to make sure that Stafford town centre will be protected from flooding to a level of protection appropriate for urban areas.

## What is going to be done?

New steel sheet piles and some new walls are going to be used to replace the existing bank structures. This means that existing flood defences will be maintained to an appropriate standard.

The engineering works will allow the Mill Pond area to be redesigned. The pond will be dredged and reshaped, and new sloping banks will be used to help wildlife. The islands will be reshaped to try and improve water flow and water quality and new protected areas will be made for the ducks.

A new flood defence wall will be built near Green Bridge to improve flood protection for the Newport Road and Bridge Street area of Stafford, which are currently only protected from the kind of flooding that occurs (on average) once every 25 years.

## What about flooding in other areas of Stafford?

The Environment Agency is only one of several organisations involved in reducing the risks of flooding. The work on the River Sow will not help with the flooding problems that occur in Stafford due to other causes. Other organisations are already looking at these problems.

## How will the work affect me?

There will be some disruption due to the operation of machinery, such as noise and the need to close some paths in and around Victoria Park. People who regularly use Victoria Park for access will need to be aware of this, and details will be available in advance. The contractor will use some local land for a site office and compound, and vehicles will be delivering materials and moving them around the site.

## How will the disruption be controlled?

- ◆ All work must be carried out according to an Environmental Action Plan, which sets limits for impacts on people and the environment. Copies are available on request.
- ◆ Noise and vibration will be measured and shall not exceed agreed limits.
- ◆ Working hours will be controlled.
- ◆ Footpaths will only be closed with prior warning. At least one route through the park to the train station will be kept open at all times.
- ◆ Work will be carried out in sections in order to minimise disruption.
- ◆ Work will be carried out at the time of year when it will cause least environmental impact.

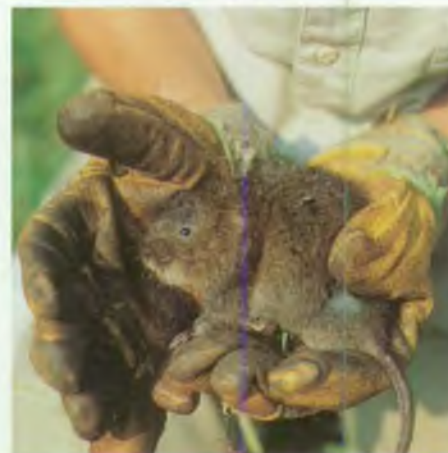
## What will the work look like when it is finished?

The formal look of most of the river will be recreated, but new public access points to the river and the creation of a wildlife corridor will change some views. Flood defence walls will be finished in brick, and the new Mill Pond should benefit from better water quality and more attractive bank edges.

## What will the overall impact of the scheme be?

Once the disruption of the work has finished the scheme will give the following benefits:

- ◆ Improved protection from flooding of Stafford town centre by the River Sow to the '1 in 100 year' standard of protection
- ◆ The creation of the wildlife corridor which will allow small mammals including water voles to move along the river, and will provide refuges for fish and other water creatures
- ◆ A more attractive public area at the Mill Pond



Water Vole -  
now a very rare species in Staffordshire

The Environment Agency began an environmental impact assessment when it was first suggested that work to maintain the standard of flood defences might be needed. This assessment process continued during examination of all of the different options and throughout the detailed design of the engineering works. The Agency's study concluded that the engineering works will result in an overall benefit for the area in the longer term, although there will be some disruption during the works themselves.

## When will the work begin?

The work is due to begin in April 2002. The date will be announced in the press and landowners and local residents and businesses will be informed.

## How long will the work last?

The work is expected to take two years, with different activities being carried out at different times of the year.

**January to March-** pruning and other tree work to prevent damage by the engineering works (this is the time when the trees are dormant and before birds begin to nest).

**April to October-** the main engineering works. Summer is the best time to carry out this work, as it avoids problems caused by high water levels that would make the work much more expensive and increase risks of pollution and delay

**November to March-** planting. This is the best time to replant trees and shrubs.

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