

Press Release

Kingsteignton, 7th May 2026

Work begins to restore Stover Canal towpath after series of winter storm floods

Sibelco begins major embankment repair scheme, with footpath and cycleway set to reopen by autumn



Work has begun on a major project to repair a flood-damaged embankment bordering the Stover Canal, near Kingsteignton, paving the way for the reinstatement of a popular local footpath and cycleway later this year.

The embankment, alongside the old Sibelco quarry at East Golds, was first breached during severe flooding from Storm Bert in November 2024, with further damage caused by storms in December 2025 and again in early 2026. The incidents destroyed a 40m section of the embankment, causing flooding into the quarry and forcing the closure of a section of the Stover Canal trail path and shared cycle route between Newton Abbot and Exeter Road.

Sibelco has now commenced a carefully designed programme of repair works, developed in consultation with geotechnical specialists and working closely with partners including the Stover Canal Trust, the Environment Agency, Teignbridge District Council and Devon County Council.



The solution will see approximately 6,000 tonnes of engineered ball clay used to rebuild the damaged section of embankment, providing the structural integrity required for long-term stability. This will be combined with imported limestone and a specialist geotechnical membrane to help protect the structure against future extreme weather events.

Subject to suitable weather conditions, the repairs are expected to be completed over the summer, with the canal towpath and associated walking and cycling routes scheduled to reopen by October.

The embankment was damaged during a series of significant flooding events affecting the Teign catchment between November 2024 and early 2026, including Storm Bert in November 2024, Storm Bram in December 2025 and Storm Chandra in January 2026.

During these events, substantial volumes of water flowed into Sibelco's former East Golds quarry from neighbouring land via a tributary of the River Lemon. In November 2024 alone, about one million tonnes of water entered the site, with further large inflows recorded during later storms.

While this led to damage to the embankment and surrounding infrastructure, including the nearby old railway embankment and canal towpath, it also meant that large volumes of water were temporarily held within the quarry rather than continuing unchecked downstream. A [Devon County Council report following the November 2024 event](#) noted this may have prevented more extreme flooding downstream in Newton Abbot.

The repair works represent a significant investment in infrastructure designed to ensure the long-term stability of the embankment and surrounding area. They also support the wider goals of the Stover Canal Trust, which Sibelco has long supported, to preserve and enhance the canal and its towpaths as a piece of living history, a haven for wildlife and a valued community resource for walkers, cyclists and local residents.

Richard Giles, Kingsteignton Manager (Operations) for Sibelco, said: "We know how important the Stover Canal towpath is to the local community and we are pleased to have started work on this scheme to reinstate the embankment to allow the reopening of the route.

"This has been a complex process following a series of significant flooding events and we have worked closely with specialist engineers and our partners locally to develop a robust, long-term solution.

"We look forward to the completion of the works and seeing the route reopened for local people to enjoy again."

Paul Taper, Chairman of the Stover Canal Trust, said: "We have been pleased to work with Sibelco and other partners following the storm damage and recognise the long-standing support Sibelco has provided to the Trust and the canal over many years.

"The towpath is a much-loved local route, valued by walkers and residents, and we welcome the work now under way to repair the embankment and reopen access for the community."

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Picture Caption: Richard Giles, Kingsteignton Manager (Operations) for Sibelco; Darrin Hewings, Quarry Supervisor for Sibelco; and Paul Taper, Chairman of the Stover Canal Trust



About Sibelco

Sibelco is a global leader in material solutions. Sibelco mines, processes, and sells specialty industrial minerals – particularly silica, high purity quartz, clays, feldspathics and olivine – and is a leader in glass recycling. Sibelco's solutions support the progress of modern life and serve industries as diverse as semi-conductors, solar photovoltaic, glass, ceramics, construction, coatings, polymers and water purification. The Sibelco Group has production facilities in more than 30 countries and a team of more than 5,000 people.

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