



Enjoy a slice of cake and stunning canal views from the Waterside Café

Planning Your Visit

National Waterways Museum,
Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH65 4FW

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📄 what.3.words: hobby.dining.vibes

🚗 **By Car:** Just off the M53, Junction 9.
FREE parking on site.

🚆 **Ellesmere Port Railway Station:** 15 min walk.

🚌 **Bus Station:** 20 min walk.

Admission: book online to enjoy a 10% discount.
Return as many times as you like for a whole year with an **Annual Pass**.

Accessibility: some of our historic dock pathways are uneven, but there is level access to the café, shop, most museum galleries and Canalside Function Rooms.

Opening times: 10am - 4pm

❄ **Winter:** Wednesday - Sunday

☀ **Spring/Summer:** Tuesday - Sunday

Also open school holidays and most bank holidays (check website for seasonal variations)

The National Waterways Museum is cared for by the Canal & River Trust charity

Unmissable experiences at the National Waterways Museum



Porters Row Cottages & Heritage Garden

Step back in time through dockworkers' cottages built in 1833, each furnished to reflect life in 1830, 1900, 1936 and 1952. Explore the changing styles, stories and social history.

Basuto

Built in 1902, Basuto is part of the National Historic Fleet, alongside other such boats including the *Cutty Sark*, *HMS Victory* and *SS Great Britain*.



Gifford

Celebrating her centenary, Gifford was built in 1926 to carry liquid cargoes. She became one of the first vessels in the museum's collection when it first opened (as the 'Boat Museum') in 1976.

Pumphouse

First opened in 1873, the Grade II listed Pump house has been the subject of a major restoration thanks to funding from Historic England. Step inside and marvel at the Victorian steam engine that powered the dock machinery for over a century.



Boat Trips

Step aboard the Diana Margaret for a relaxing canal journey that brings the fascinating history of the Shropshire Union Canal to life. See website for sail times.

Guided Tours

Explore the museum with our expert volunteer guides! Discover how canal people lived and worked and enjoy enchanting stories that bring our historic docks to life.



On Location in Ellesmere Port

The museum has featured in many major productions including *Peaky Blinders* and *House of Guinness*. Our historic urban canal settings provide a timeless backdrop that bring Britain's industrial past to life on screen.

Conferences & Celebrations

Host your next meeting or special event in our Canalside Function Rooms. High quality, affordable facilities in a unique setting, catering for up to 100 guests.



50th anniversary events for 2026

See our website for a fantastic programme of themed events launching Easter 2026.

Step back in time and see history come to life



Built on heritage and inspired by innovation, the **National Waterways Museum** brings to life one of Britain's most important industrial dock communities through its historic boats, buildings and the stories of the people who lived and worked here.

canalrivertrust.org.uk/nwm

Our Historic Boats

Marvel at the UK's largest collection of inland waterways craft, from tiny coracles and pleasure boats to historic narrowboats, barges and larger working craft.

Mossdale (1860) – originally Ruby, believed to be the only remaining all-wooden Mersey Flat.

Box Boat 337 (c.1900) – carried coal in boxes to make offloading more efficient.

Basuto (1902) – the oldest known surviving inland Clyde 'puffer' boat.

George (1910) – the only surviving example of a Leeds & Liverpool Canal horse drawn wooden short boat.

Marbury (1910) – built as a horse-drawn icebreaker.

Ilkeston (1912) – used to carry goods until 1945.

Worcester (1912) – one of 2 tugs built to tow unpowered boats through tunnels.

GD101 (1918) – a dredger used on the Manchester Ship Canal.

Gifford (1926) – the only existing horse-drawn boat of her type. Celebrating her centenary in 2026.

Bacup (1934) – a Leeds & Liverpool Canal motor short boat.

Shad (1936) – a typical Northwich built motor narrowboat.

Marlyn (c.1940) – a 'gig' boat, used to support larger boats around Mersey docks.

Concrete Barge FCB 18 (1944) – built during WWII to economise on wood and steel.

Bigmere (1948) – built to carry grain along Manchester Ship Canal to Kelloggs.

Mendip (1948) – used to transport chocolate crumb to Bournville in Birmingham.

Bantam II (1952) – towed boats like Bigmere on the Manchester Ship Canal.

QR Audio Trail – use the QR codes at each exhibit, via the camera on your phone, to access the audio trail and augmented reality.

Map not to scale



Friendship - centrepiece of our Island Warehouse exhibition

Porters Row - step back in time into period cottages

Mossdale - the last remaining all-wooden Mersey Flat

Map key

- Toilets
- Café
- Baby change
- Picnic area/benches
- Disabled toilets
- Wheelchair and pram friendly routes
- Disabled parking
- Electric car charge points
- Friendly dogs on leads welcome across the site

- A** Reception and Shop
- B** Winchhouse & Slipway
- C** Waterways Archive
- D** Canalside Function Rooms
- E** Blacksmith's Forge
- F** Education Centre
- G** Power Hall
- H** Victoria Arm
- I** Lime Shed (Offices)
- J** Playground
- K** Stables
- L** Pattern Shop
- M** Locks
- N** Toll House
- O** Island Warehouse - Exhibition Hall
- P** Pump House & Accumulator Tower
- Q** Mersey Flat Barge Mossdale
- R** Porters Row Cottages
- S** Historic boats
- T** Boat Trips on the Diana Margaret

In the Lower Basin

Cuddington (1948) – one of the last Weaver Packets.

Pelican (1956) – Manchester Ship Canal maintenance and crane barge.

In the Island Warehouse

Starvationer (1800s) – the oldest canal boat in our collection, named because its ribs are exposed.

Friendship (1924) – an unconverted horse-drawn boat.

Amaryllis (1954) – a classic wooden motor pleasure cruiser.