

The Great Outdoors

Spending time in green and blue spaces, connecting with nature and the world around us, can make us feel healthier and happier. At the Canal & River Trust we believe life is better by water. In fact, to remember the five most important Ways to Wellbeing, just think '**CANAL**'.



The Five Ways To Wellbeing

C

Connect

A

Assist

N

Notice

A

Active

L

Learn

Connect

It's important to take time to get to know friends, meet new people, join a new club or talk to someone about a shared interest. Joining a Scouting or Guiding group is a great way to do this. The **Numbers Game** and many of the other Out and About activities encourage young people to connect with their local area and spend time in nature.

Assist

Helping others is a great way to improve mental health and wellbeing. Happiness comes from giving to others, whether it's random acts of kindness, volunteering, just saying thank you or offering to help your friends. The **Clean-up Treasure Hunt** activity will help your local community.

Notice

It's important to take time to give attention to the present moment and become more aware of the world around you. Our canals and rivers provide vital habitats for hundreds of plants, birds and animal species. The **Waterside Bingo** activity and many of the trails help young people take time to spot and learn about wildlife, plants and trees. Remember, it's not just wildlife to watch out for. Our waterways are home to many buildings of historical interest and some incredible feats of engineering. The **Historical Trail** activity encourages young people to look for examples of this heritage.

Active

Exercise is good for your mind as well as your body. It can help you feel more positive. The **Creating a Journey Stick** idea and many of the other activities in this section will encourage young people to get out and about, and make walking fun.

Learn

Lifelong learning keeps our minds healthy and gives us a sense of achievement. There are so many opportunities to learn along our towpaths and riverbanks and all the badge activities encourage young people to explore and find out more about the things they see and find. There's lots of opportunities to learn new skills – from making **Blackberry Mess** using blackberries picked from the towpaths, to map reading skills and taking on new responsibilities and challenges.

Spending time in green and blue spaces can improve our wellbeing



More ideas

Visit our Explorers website for more activities to help young people look after their health and wellbeing. Download our Wellbeing bundle at: www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

While you are out and about, please remember...

1

Our Towpath Code

Share the space

Towpaths are popular places to be enjoyed by everyone. Please be mindful of others. Keep dogs under control and clean up after them.

2

Drop your pace

Pedestrians have priority on our towpaths so cyclists need to be ready to slow down. If you're in a hurry, consider using an alternative route for your journey.

3

It's a special place

Our waterways are living history with boats, working locks and low bridges, so please give way to waterway uses and be extra careful where visibility is limited.

Respect the boating communities

Many people live along our canals. Taking positive, thoughtful actions will also say thank you to the people who look after our canals and rivers.



Narrowboat on the Worcester & Birmingham Canal



Help us keep our canals and waterways clean

Pollution in the form of plastic continues to be one of the greatest environmental challenges. Not only does litter affect our canals and rivers but 80% of the plastic in our oceans comes from litter dropped inland.



Stop and Think

Stay Together

Call 999

Float

Stop and Think

Help children understand the risks around water and encourage them to make informed and safe decisions.

Find out more

The water safety information sheets in this pack provide lots more advice.



More ideas

Visit our Explorers website for more ideas and activities to help young people have fun outdoors at: www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

A Numbers Game

Sometimes children lived on working boats with their families. Many children could not read as it was very difficult to go to school when they were on the move. The older generation used storytelling, often told through song, to pass on information to their children. Games such as hopscotch were played on the towpath and helped children learn to count.



You will need:

Numbers Game List

A pen or pencil

What to do

- During a visit to a canal or river, see if you can find all these things
- Before leaving, guess how many of each you might find. Or set yourself a target number
- Keep a tally and compare your totals - you might be surprised how many you found

Numbers Game List



Locks



Pubs



Birds



Trees



Flowers



Bridges



Ducks



People fishing



Signs



Canal boats

Top TIP



Don't worry if you don't find everything in one visit. Keep a list of what you have found and see if you can find the remainder on your next visit.

Next Step → → → →

Make a spotters sheet. List or draw all the different things you can see along the towpath or river bank and keep a tally every time you visit.

SAFE Remember the SAFE message.
Stay Away From the Edge



Build a Journey Stick

There are so many things to notice when you take a walk along a towpath or riverbank. You can make notes or draw pictures of things you see, hear and smell. A **Journey Stick** is a great way to collect things along the way to remind you of your walk. Here are some examples of what you might see.



Picnic bench



Tall reeds



Railway



Big horse



Green door

You will need:

Stick



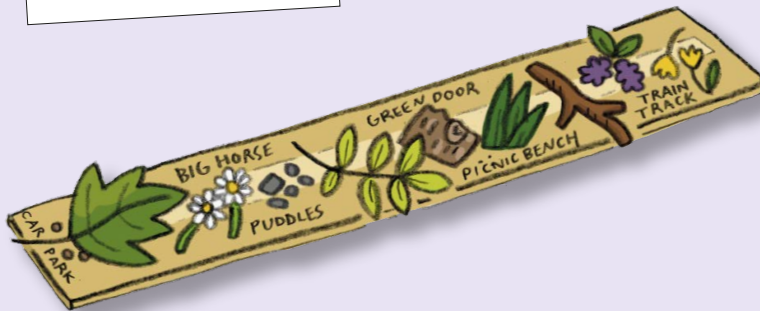
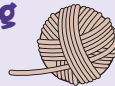
Pencils or pens



Card or paper

30cm x 6cm

String



What to do

- Find a stick about 50–75cm long, lying on the ground
- Walk along the riverbank or towpath
- Collect items to remind you of your walk
- Tie them to your stick
- When you are back, you could stick the items you have found onto paper or card to make a collage of your journey
- Write descriptions of the things you saw and where you went on your collage. Think about smells and sounds too

Top TIP



Remember to only collect windfallen items. Do not break new sticks, pull off leaves or pull up flowers. Wash your hand after your visit and before you eat or drink anything.

Next Step → → → →

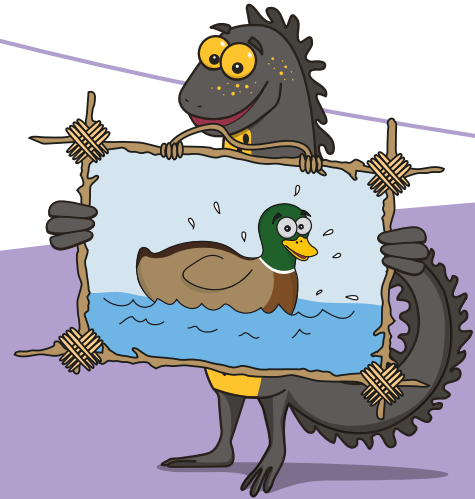
Draw and colour a map of your journey, marking all the things you saw. Share your journey with family and friends, showing them the things you found along the way.

SAFE Remember the SAFE message.
Stay Away From the Edge



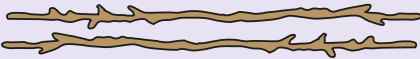
Make a Stick Frame

You will find lots of sticks as you walk on the towpath. Why not collect some the next time you visit and make this easy picture frame.

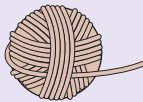


You will need:

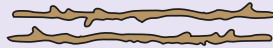
2 sticks* for the sides



String or twine



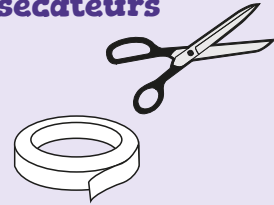
2 shorter sticks* for the top and bottom



Double-sided tape or PVA glue

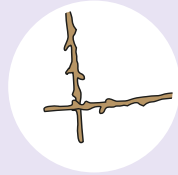


Scissors or secateurs



What to do

- Place two of the sticks at right angles to each other to form a corner
- Wind the string around the two sticks, moving it backwards and forwards in a figure or 8. Do this at least 4 times
- Tie the string to the short length, at the back, and cut off the spare string



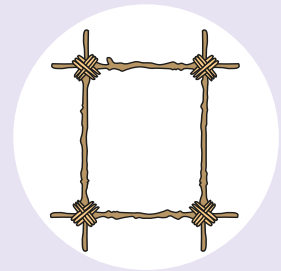
- Repeat for each corner



- Tie a loop to the top for hanging



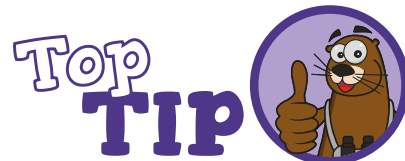
- Glue a picture to the back of the frame



*Please use wind-fallen sticks. Do not break new sticks.

Next Step → → → →

Draw or paint a picture for your frame. Use sticky tape or glue to fix your picture to the frame. Remember to put the tape or glue on the back of your picture!



Use your frame to focus on what you would like to draw. Look through the frame and move around until you see something you like.



Share your creations and ideas with us
on social media #LifesBetterByWater



Waterside Bingo

Rivers and canals are great places to explore. They are full of interesting things to discover. Try a game of waterside bingo. Who can get a full house first?



















You will need:

A waterside bingo sheet

Pens or crayons to cross off what you find

What to do

- Take a waterside bingo sheet with you to a canal or river
- Get your eyes and ears at the ready to find lots of interesting things
- Can you find everything in one row?
- Can you find the things in every square?
- Shout BINGO when you've got a full house or a row

<p>1 Heard a duck quack</p> <p>QUACK QUACK</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>2 Discovered a pattern on a leaf</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>3 Spotted a mooring bollard</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>4 Seen a flying insect</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>5 Found a safe place for a nest</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>6 Spotted polluting rubbish</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>7 Touched wear and tear with my fingers</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>8 Spotted something black and white</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>9 Found a long leaf</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>10 Listened to the sound of rushing water</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>11 Spotted a bee on a beautiful flower</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>12 Imagined the view from a very tall tree</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>13 Seen wooden lock gates</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>14 Heard bird song</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>15 Touched rough bricks on a bridge</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>16 Listened to the sound of wind in trees</p>  <input type="checkbox"/>

Top TIP



Stay alert because new discoveries could be lurking anywhere!

Next Step → → → →

Create your own bingo sheets to play with your family and friends.



SAFE

Remember the SAFE message.

Stay Away From the Edge

Blackberry Mess

Wild blackberries (or brambles) are ripe and ready to pick in the autumn. Canal towpaths and river banks are a great place to look for them.



Try making this Blackberry Mess - a scrummy pudding that doesn't need any cooking.



You will need

- 250g blackberries
- 1 teaspoon caster sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 125g whipping cream
- 125g greek yoghurt
- 2 small meringue nests
- 2 bowls
- A sieve
- A fork

What to do

- Wash the blackberries and take out any leaves and stalks
- Drain the blackberries well and put them in a bowl. Press them lightly with a fork to make the juices run
- Add the lemon juice and sugar
- Whip the cream in a separate bowl until it is thick but still soft. Mix in the yoghurt
- Break up the meringue into rough chunks
- Mix everything together - yum!

Did you Know?



Blackberries were once used to make mauve, dark blue and purple-blue dyes for cloth.

Next Step → → → →

Blackberries can be used to make all sorts of things to eat, from chutneys, to crumbles and other Blackberry Fool. Check the History and Make and Do sections for more ideas!



Share your creations and ideas with us
on social media #LifesBetterByWater



Waterside Bingo template: **Out and About**

Heard a duck quack



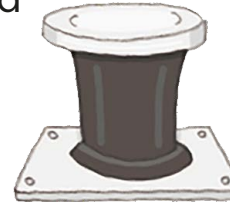
1

Discovered a pattern on a leaf



2

Spotted a mooring bollard



3

Seen a flying insect



4

Found a safe place for a nest



5

Spotted polluting rubbish



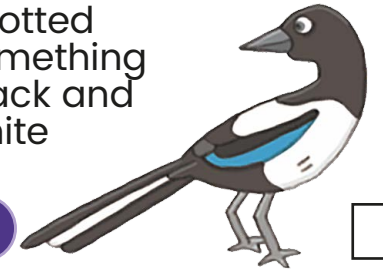
6

Touched wear and tear with my fingers



7

Spotted something black and white



8

Found a long leaf



9

Listened to the sound of rushing water



10

Spotted a bee on a beautiful flower



11

Imagined the view from a very tall tree



12

Seen wooden lock gates



13

Heard bird song



14

Touched rough bricks on a bridge



15

Listened to the sound of wind in trees



16