

# Manchester City Centre Canals

The trail has routes ranging from 0.5km to 2km, with activities for you to do along the way



Tick off activities as you go along the routes, you can come back again anytime and complete any you don't do or do them again:

- 1 Dragonfly Breathing ☐
- 2 Stretch ☐
- 3 Jump Line ☐
- 4 Stop & Look ☐
- 5 Waggle Dance ☐
- 6 Code Breaker ☐
- 7 The Canal's Story ☐
- 8 Canal Step Challenge ☐

## Let's Go Outdoors!

### Family Wellbeing Trail

#### Manchester City Centre Canals

#### Hello, Explorers!

We're the Canal & River Trust, and we care for over 2000 miles of canals and rivers across England and Wales.

Spending time moving by the water makes us happier and healthier — so Let's Go Outdoors! and explore our Manchester wellbeing trail together.

Share your moments:  
[@canalrivertrust](https://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/expexplorers)

Explore fun activities:  
[canalrivertrust.org.uk/expexplorers](https://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/expexplorers)



Remember to stay  
**SAFE** near water and  
**Stay Away From the Edge.**  
Be sensible, never enter the  
water and in an emergency,  
call 999 immediately.

We would love to hear  
your feedback on this activity.  
Please fill in our quick survey.



Working with Happy Confident Kids, this project is made possible by Sport England to enable families to move and connect with nature along our wonderful waterways.



# Explorers

## 1 Dragonfly Breathing

Imagine you're an incredible dragonfly

### Flapping wings (to release energy)

- **Stand tall**, feet apart and comfy.
- **Stretch your arms out wide** like dragonfly wings.
- **Take a big breath** in through your nose.
- **Flap your wings!** Breathe out through your mouth as you flap your arms up and down.
- **Do it a few times** to feel that energy fly away!

### Gliding (to find calm)

- Keep your arms out wide, but **still and soft**, like you're gliding.
- **Breathe in slowly** through your nose.
- **Breathe out gently** through your mouth.
- **Repeat a few times**, imagining a dragonfly floating peacefully.

Add a gentle buzz if you like.

Breathing mindfully is one of the fastest ways to access calm.



## 2 Super Stretch

Stretching helps release tension from our muscles, which helps our minds feel calm and relaxed.

### 1. Tall tree stretch

- Stand tall. Reach up high like you're touching the clouds or tallest tree.
- Breathe in and hold for 3... feel the stretch.

### 2. Windy tree sway

- Keep arms up and gently lean side to side, like a tree in the breeze.
- Stretch each side slowly.

### 3. Heron stretch

- Bend forward, arms dangling toward your toes.
- Let your head relax and feel the back of your legs stretch.

### 4. Canal bird wings

- Arms out wide—big bird wings.
- Make slow, wide circles—forward, then back.

How good does that feel now?



## 3 Jump Line

Use pebbles or small items to create a line—stay well away from the canal edge.

Try these jumps:

- **Two-foot taps:** Jump both feet over the line. How many times can you go back and forth?
- **One-foot hop:** Hop over using one foot, then switch feet. Can you keep your balance?
- **Side-to-side:** With the line between your feet, jump side to side without touching it.
- **Zig-zag:** Jump forward and diagonally left and right, like a zig-zag path.
- **Long jump:** Find a small gap or crack and leap over it in one big jump—only if it's safe to do so.

Jumping raises our heart rate & makes us feel more energized and awake.

## 4 Stop and Look

Standing on a bridge and looking out is a great way to exercise our eyes.

- So stand on this bridge and look far into the distance.
- What is the furthest thing you can spot?

Looking at faraway views calms your brain and helps you to spark new ideas.



## 5 Waggle Dance

Bees dance in a figure of eight and buzz to tell other bees the direction and distance to food, this is the waggle dance. The longer they waggle, the further away the food is.

Do the waggle dance:

1. Spot a flower or leaf you like.
2. Face towards the flower (bee food)
3. Waggle your hips and move in a figure of eight.
4. Buzz as you waggle!

Can someone else follow your waggle dance to find your "flower?" Then, it's their turn to be the Waggle Dancer.

Dancing is a great way to move all parts of your body, it also releases hormones that make us feel happy!



## 6 Code Breaker

Alright, super-sleuths, it's time to team up and solve these puzzles! Unscramble the letters to reveal the hidden words.

**Bridge buster!** What's the name of this bridge?

**SCAT ON OWADHS EBRDGI** (Hint: Search for the sign!)



**Otters** can live in canals, what type of animals are they?

**LMAAMM** (Hint: They are warm blooded)



**Joy jumble!** Now unscramble the letters that appear in the blue boxes above.

**= A TINY moment of joy**



What was your tiny moment of joy today?  
Scan the QR code to share it!

## 7 Canal's Story

Find a peaceful spot by the canal.

Sit down and take notice of the nature that surrounds you whilst you listen to our story.



## 8 Canal Step Challenge

Find the steps highlighted on your map and try these challenges (with an adult nearby):

- **Slow & steady:** Step up one at a time, feel each foot.
- **Speedy steps:** How fast can you go—safely?
- **Downhill dash:** Walk carefully back down.
- **One foot first:** Start with the same foot each time, then switch!

Step-climbing makes your heart strong, your legs powerful and your balance and coordination awesome.