

PRESS RELEASE

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GREEN FLAGS FOR ALMOST 750 MILES OF CHARITY'S WATERWAYS

The Canal & River Trust is announcing that 736 miles of its canal and river navigations have been awarded prestigious Green Flag status by Keep Britain Tidy.

The nation's canal charity has held all its existing miles of Green Flags, with waterways across England and Wales maintaining the standard required for the international quality mark for parks and green spaces. The Canal & River Trust is delighted to have held these Green Flags in the face of significant challenges, not least the extensive damage from successive storms and floods that impacted the 250-year-old network last winter.

The Green Flags further demonstrate the important role the 2,000-mile navigable canal network plays for local communities, bringing nature into the heart of the UK's towns and cities and providing popular, accessible beauty spots across the country.

In addition, seven stretches received a Green Heritage Site Accreditation for the management of historic features, supported in England by Historic England. These are: the Huddersfield Narrow Canal East, the Shropshire Union Canal from Middlewich to Audlem and Barbridge Junction to Ellesmere Port National Waterway Museum; the Peak Forest Canal and Bugsworth Basin; the Lancaster Canal; Stanley Flight to Wigan Top Lock on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal; the Weaver Navigation including Anderton Boat Lift; the Trent & Mersey Canal.

To achieve Green Heritage Site Accreditation, winners must understand and take action to conserve the heritage value of their sites, and help people to understand and enjoy the unique history of these places and communities.

Richard Parry, chief executive at Canal & River Trust, said: "Our canals span 2,000 miles across England and Wales, and Green Flags have been awarded the length and breadth of the network, demonstrating the benefits these historic navigable waterways continue to bring to the 21st century. They offer free, accessible green space to millions of people across the country,

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provide vital homes for wildlife, and support the nation's nature recovery, as well as being navigated, as they have been for centuries, by thousands of boats.

"These Green Flags are testament to our colleagues and volunteers who work hard to keep our canals clean and welcoming places for local communities and visitors. Caring for a 250-year-old canal network is a challenge, with our ageing waterways vulnerable to changing weather patterns, daily wear and tear, and perennial problems like litter and encroaching vegetation.

"We are redoubling our efforts to keep canals alive, working with funders, partners and our growing volunteer support. We have also started the dialogue with the new government about the role our network can play – in part illustrated by these Green Flags – to so many communities across the country."

Keep Britain Tidy's Green Flag Award Scheme Manager, Paul Todd MBE, said: "I would like to congratulate everyone involved on achieving the Canal & River Trust's Green Flag Awards.

"The Canal & River Trust's waterways provide vital green spaces for communities across England and Wales to socialise, enjoy nature, for children to play safely, and provide important opportunities for users to improve their physical and mental health.

"We know that staff and volunteers work tirelessly to ensure that these spaces maintain the high standards of the Green Flag Award, everyone involved should feel extremely proud of their achievement. It is important that our free to use spaces are maintained to the Green Flag Award standard, making them accessible for all members of the community while ensuring the environment is protected."

The Green Flag Award scheme, managed by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy under licence from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, recognises and rewards well-managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of green spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world. Green Flag Award-winning parks and green spaces can be [found here](#).

Details of how to support your local canal can be found at: canalrivertrust.org.uk.

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For further information, please contact:

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Notes to editors

The **Canal & River Trust** cares for and brings to life 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England & Wales. We believe waterways have the power to make a difference to people's lives and that spending time by water can make us all healthier and happier. By bringing communities together to make a difference to their local waterway, we are creating places and spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, every day. www.canalrivertrust.org.uk @CanalRiverTrust

The **Green Flag Award Scheme** (<http://greenflagaward.org/>) is run by the environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, under licence from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, in partnership with Keep Scotland Beautiful, Keep Wales Tidy and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

Any green space that is freely accessible to the public is eligible to enter for a Green Flag Award. Awards are given on an annual basis and winners must apply each year to renew their Green Flag Award status. A Green Flag Community Award recognises quality sites managed by voluntary and community groups. Green Heritage Site Accreditation is judged on the treatment of the site's historic features and the standard of conservation.

Keep Britain Tidy is a leading environmental charity. We set the standard for the management of parks and beaches, inspire people to be litter-free, to waste less and live more sustainably. We run campaigns and programmes including the Great British Spring Clean, Eco-Schools, Love Parks Week, Buy Nothing New Month, Eco-Schools, the Green Flag Award for parks and green spaces, the Blue Flag/ Seaside Awards for beaches and blue spaces, and the Green Key for sustainable tourism and hospitality. To find out more about Keep Britain Tidy, our campaigns and programmes visit www.keepbritaintidy.org.