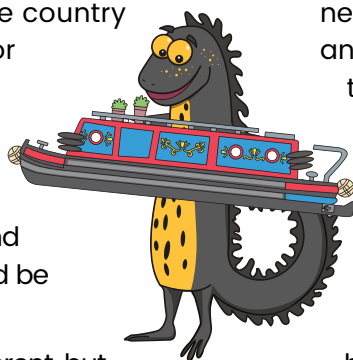


A place in the community

Canals have always played an important part in the community. When first built, they joined up the most important places for industry with towns and ports, helping to transport goods around the country and provided livelihoods for boaters and their families who worked and lived on narrowboats. The **Making a Narrowboat** activity will help young people understand just how challenging life could be for the boating communities.

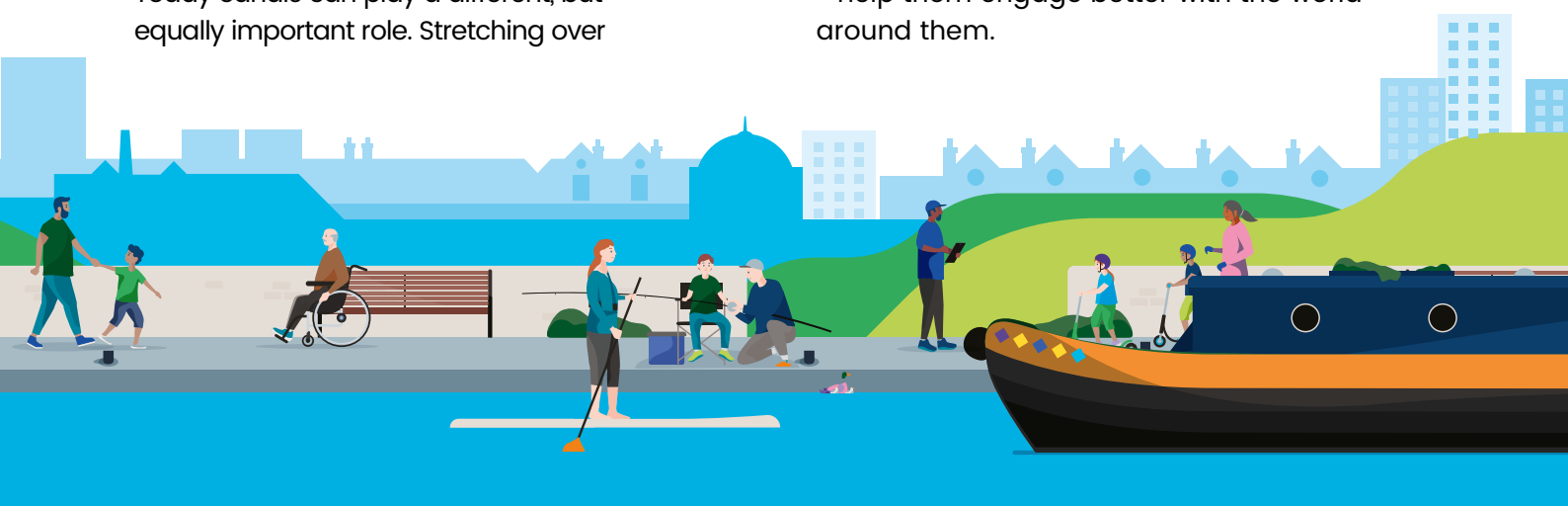
Today canals can play a different, but equally important role. Stretching over



2,000 miles across England and Wales, our waterways are free to access, open green and blue spaces, that bring nature to even the most densely populated and disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In today's busy world, canals and rivers provide opportunities for us to spend time in nature, to help improve our wellbeing.

50% of people in England and Wales live within just 8km of a canal or river, and 8 million people live less than 1km away!

Young people are often unaware of how close they are. Studying the map for the **Canals in the Community** activity will help them engage better with the world around them.



Canal & River Trust's role in the community

The Canal & River Trust is the charity that looks after our canals and river navigations. There is a lot to do - keeping towpaths clear for walkers and cyclists, checking water quality to help fish thrive, operating locks for boaters, protecting wildlife and their habitats, and much more. Maintaining a historic network of canals criss-crossing the country takes time, effort and of course money.

None of this would be possible without our amazing volunteers and fundraisers. The Wildlife Saving Cookies activity encourages young people to think about ways they can help.



So much of our work would not be possible without our amazing volunteers and fundraisers

Supported by players of



Awarded funds from



Regeneration

A lot of our work focuses on improving our waterways to make them better places to visit. We want to bring communities together by creating spaces for everyone to share, which encourage social interaction and support healthy lifestyles by providing places for walking, cycling and water sports. We work with local authorities and planning departments to make sure our spaces are safe, accessible and attractive.



Angel Canal Festival



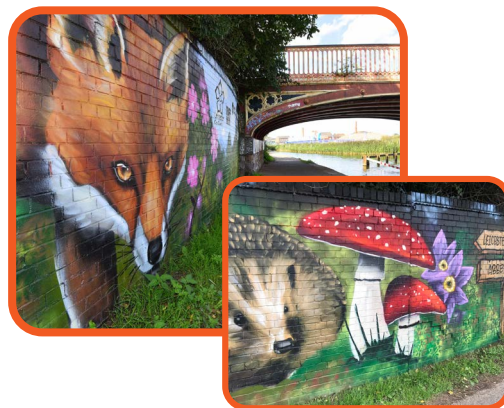
Campaigning

We encourage everyone to visit and to support us in looking after the waterways. To raise awareness, we run stories and campaigns around issues affecting local communities such as water safety, plastic pollution, flytipping, dog muck and invasive species which threaten local wildlife.

Engaging the community

Our Community Arts programme is designed to bring people together and enrich lives. Members of the community work alongside artists to create art pieces to be displayed by the water. Young people can let their imaginations run as they design their own Community Art piece.

The Community Champions activity asks young people to design a poster to do just this.



Support from the community

There are lots of other community projects to get involved with, including ecological wildlife and conservation events, training in wildlife identification, species mapping, biodiversity recording and lots more.



Help your community

Scouting and Guiding Groups can get involved in many different volunteering opportunities or even adopt a stretch of their local canal and take on responsibility for regenerating and maintaining the area around it. The Clean-up Treasure Hunt encourages young people to take an active role in litter picking and cleaning up their local community.

Wellbeing for the community

The Trust has made a commitment to being a wellbeing charity, improving the lives of communities who live alongside our network of canals and beyond.



Benefiting the environment

Our canals and rivers also have an important part to play in helping the environment, such as generating sustainable energy through hydro electric generators on by-washes and sluices. We have also worked with The Hepworth Gallery on the River Calder to use the river as an innovative low carbon solution to heating and cooling the building. Water is drawn directly from the river and circulated around the building via a heat pump system. We are working to make this renewable energy source more accessible.



Hydropower plant at Knottingley

More ideas

Visit our Explorers website to find out more about our Plastics Challenge and how you can help to improve your local environment: www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

A protest poster is a great way to spread important messages and get others involved. Visit our website and watch a short film for inspiration at: <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers/children/protest-poster>

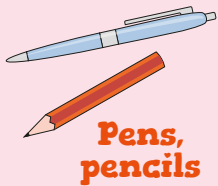
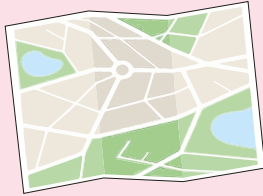
Map your local area

Canals and rivers are often called Corridors for Nature. They stretch for over 2,000 miles across England and Wales, connecting communities, creating safe routes through urban areas and providing habitats for nature along the way. This activity will help you get to know your local canal or river.



You will need:

A map



Pens, pencils



Glue



What to do

Use a map to find where your group meetings are held

Use the 'key' to find interesting things in your local area

Is there a canal or river nearby? Can you see what it is called and where it goes from and to?

Create a map or exhibition poster of your local area for your meeting space

Include any local canals, rivers or reservoirs

Make sure you include any locks, bridges, tunnels and aqueducts you identify

Make a display of your work

Top TIP



In England and Wales there are 1,569 locks, 53 tunnels, 3,112 bridges, 370 aqueducts and 74 reservoirs along our canals and rivers. Key on a map of your local area to help you find these.

Next Step → → → →

Can you find out more about your local canal? When was it built and why was it built? Add these interesting facts to your exhibition map or poster.



Share your creations and ideas with us
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Clean-up Treasure Hunt

Our canals and rivers are precious. They need looking after and protecting. Litter, graffiti and fly-tipping all spoil the beauty of waterways and can endanger wildlife.

See if you can find all the items on our WANTED list* and remove them from our canals. It's a fun treasure hunt, but you'll pick up litter to help us as well!



You will need

Rubbish bags

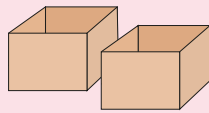


Plastic gloves

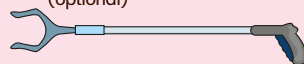


Boxes labelled

Glass, Metal, Paper, Plastic, Organic



Litter-pickers (optional)



What to do

- Get into teams. Each team will need 2 rubbish bags, gloves and a copy of the WANTED list
- Agree a time limit
- Spread out and start searching for the items on the list
- Tick off the ones you find, carefully pick them up and put them in one of the rubbish bags
- Put any litter not on the list in the other bag
- When the time is up see which team has found the most items from the WANTED list
- Sort the litter into the labelled boxes and dispose properly by returning, recycling or reusing what you can. Discard the rest in a black plastic bag suitable for landfill
- Wash your hands

WANTED

- Something To Write With
- Bottle Cap
- Sweet Wrapper
- Blue Objects
- Red Object
- Something Made Of Glass
- Something Made Of Metal
- Something Made Of Plastic
- Something Round
- Something Square
- Something Natural
- A Piece Of Clothing
- Something Lost



- Don't reach into water to collect any litter or climb up or down any embankments
- Don't reach into areas you cannot see clearly
- Don't touch sharp or jagged items or bulky items that are too heavy to lift
- Always wash your hands after outdoor activities and before you eat
- If you see anything dangerous report it to us online or call 03030 404040

SAFE Remember the SAFE message.
Stay Away From the Edge

Community Art

You may have seen large murals or artworks alongside the canals. If you have, it's likely that they are part of a Community art project, designed to bring people together and enrich lives. Some pieces have been designed by members of the community, while others have helped local artists paint the artworks.



What to do

Design your own Community Art piece to be displayed in your Scouting or Guiding Group building or in the wider community.

Here are some ideas for different types of art pieces to create:

Sustainable statue -
made from recycled materials

Natural wonder -
create your piece from natural materials collected from the towpath or river bank

Wall art -
a mural or collage made from card, paper, fabric or other materials

Take your inspiration from our canals and rivers

Our canals and rivers make a great theme for your art piece. You could focus on the water or the wildlife and nature found in and around the water.

Maybe some of the fantastic artworks found along our canals might inspire you. Take a look at these.



Top TIP



Think of where your art piece will be displayed. Think of a name for it too.

Next Step → → → →

Your art piece could tell a story too - How could you weave words and stories into the art piece? What story would it tell and where could it be displayed?



Share your creations and ideas with us
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Community Champions

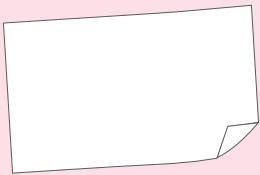
Become a community champion and create a poster for your window to encourage everyone to look after our waterways.



We want canals and rivers to be places that everyone can use and enjoy. Anti-social behaviours such as graffiti and dropping litter can be very damaging to these environments and can harm the wildlife that lives in the local area.

You will need:

Paper or card



Pens, pencils or paints

What to do

- Create a poster to encourage everyone to look after our canals and rivers
- Choose a theme - we've included some ideas to help you
- Think about a strong headline and message that will catch attention

Some ideas for themes

- **Litter** - Did you know? if every person visiting our canals in a year was to pick up just one piece of rubbish it would all be gone!
- **Plastic pollution** - Did you know? Every year around 14 million pieces of plastic end up in our waterways and around 500,000 pieces float out to the sea
- **Wildlife conservation** - Did you know? The water vole is the nation's fastest declining mammal - they need more homes! We need to restore their habitats along our canals and rivers to help
- **A local problem?** Is there an animal or plant at risk in your community? Use your poster to tell others about the need to help



Top TIP



Remember, if a poster is in a window it may be seen from a distance - make sure your design is strong and bold.

Next Step → → → →

There are lots of opportunities to volunteer in the local community, either on your own or with your family. See if you can help. The Wildlife section contains lots of ideas for things to make which will help wildlife. These animals are part of our community too.



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Make a Community Bracelet

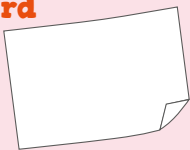
Next time you spot a narrowboat, look out for decorative knot work on the fenders (buffers to stop boats crashing into banks and boats). Try making this bracelet inspired by a boater's knot. Why not agree a colour scheme for you and all your friends to use? Wearing matching bracelets can make you feel part of a community.

Try some knotwork of your own to make this bracelet



You will need

Card



Tape measure



Masking tape



Large spring clasp



Glue



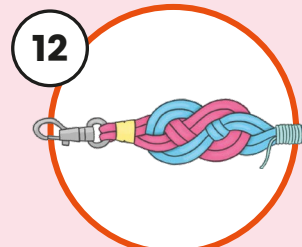
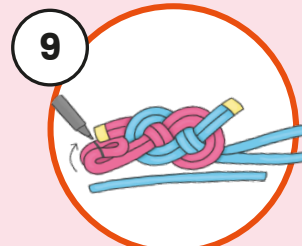
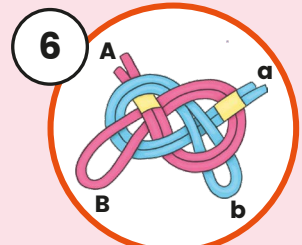
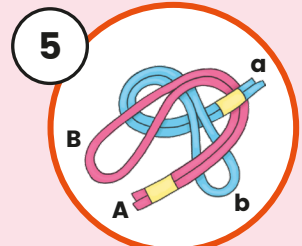
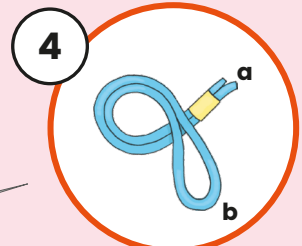
Embroidery silk

Large needle



What to do

- 1 Measure your wrist (not too tight!). Cut the cord to the same measurement.
- 2 Measure the clasp and cut this length from the cut piece of cord. This is your measuring cord.
- 3 Cut two pieces of cord measuring at least 56cms. Fold one piece in half and tape the ends together using the masking tape. Repeat with the other piece of cord.
- 4 Take one piece of the long taped pieces of cord and make a loop with the taped end on the underside pointing upwards.
- 5 Take the second piece of taped cord and place it on top and under the loop you've made.
- 6 Now wrap end A under the loop and over B and back under the loop. Pull all four ends tight.
- 7 Finish your bracelet by bringing the ends of the cord together. The taped ends need to be shorter than the looped ends. Cut both taped ends (a and A) to about 2.5 to 3.5cms from your knot.
- 8 Place the measuring cord you made in Step 1 next to your bracelet and make sure the knot aligns to the centre of the cord.
- 9 Take one of the looped ends and fold it back over itself so that it lines up with the end of your measuring cord. Take the taped end of the bracelet and place it over the folded side. Mark a line where the cords meet.
- 10 Unfold the longer, marked cord and tape over the mark. Trim at the line and repeat on the other side.
- 11 Slide the clasp on to one end of the longer cord. Fold it to meet and glue where the end meets. Cover with tape. Repeat on the other side to make a loop for the clasp.
- 12 Finish your bracelet by wrapping embroidery silk round the masking tape.

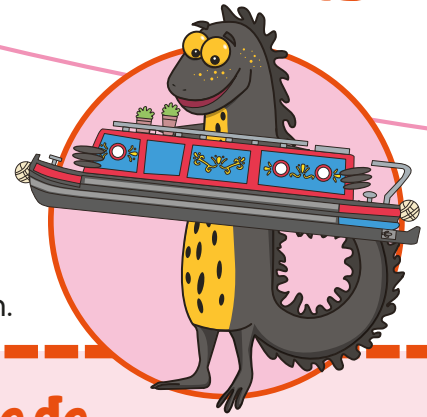


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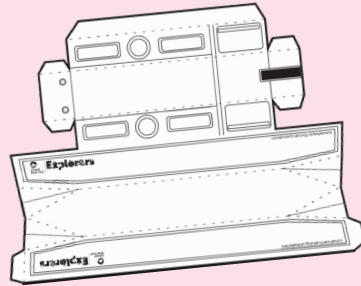
Make a Narrowboat

Canals and rivers are home to thousands of boaters who make up our boating community. Nowadays, the whole narrowboat is used as living space, but when working boaters lived on board, delivering cargo across the country, whole families lived in the tiny cabin at the back of the boat which measured just 2m x 3m.

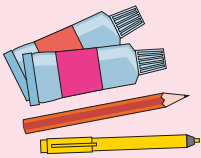


You will need

Narrowboat template, labelled to show living and cargo spaces



Pens, pencils or paints



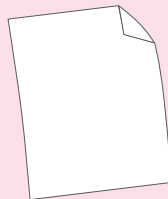
Scissors



Glue



Paper or thin card



What to do

- Colour in and decorate the narrowboat template. Stick the template onto thin card to make it stronger
- Cut out the template carefully, fold along the dashed and dotted lines and tease into shape
- Cut along the lines underneath the boat near the bow and stern, fold the remaining flap and pinch together the bow and stern
- Put glue on the tabs and stick together

Top Tip



Use scissors to gently score the dashed and dotted lines before folding the card or paper.



Next Steps → → → →

Look out for Narrowboats!

It can be fun to spot narrowboats when you visit a canal or river. Take a look at shapes and sizes, names, colours and the way they are decorated.

You can find out more in books, magazines and on the internet too, or by visiting one of the many museums and attractions along our waterways. See how much you can find out about them.

Remember: Our boaters share their home with all the other visitors to our canals and rivers. Please do not disturb them when you visit.



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



Canal Bakes: Make Life Ring Cookies

Why not hold a canal-themed bake sale to help us with our work? The money you raise could pay for litter pickers, community art projects, creating wildlife habitats and much more. Life rings are positioned along our canals and rivers, to be used in an emergency. They are the inspiration behind these biscuits.



You will need

- 50g caster sugar
- 100g softened unsalted butter
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 175g plain flour
- 200g icing sugar and 1-2 teaspoons hot water
- Food colouring
- Large round biscuit cutter and a smaller biscuit cutter.

What to do

- Preheat the oven to 180C (160C fan) and line a baking tray with baking paper
- Mix the sugar, butter, egg yolk and vanilla extract together to make a soft paste
- Add the flour to make a dough
- Dust the work surface and rolling pin with flour and roll to a thickness of a £1 coin
- Cut out circles using the big cutter then make into rings by cutting out the centre
- Place on baking tray and bake for 10 minutes until golden. Leave on the tray to cool
- Mix the water and icing sugar. Use food colouring to make different colours and decorate



Top TIP



Add the water to the icing sugar a teaspoon at a time to get the right consistency.

Next Step → → → →

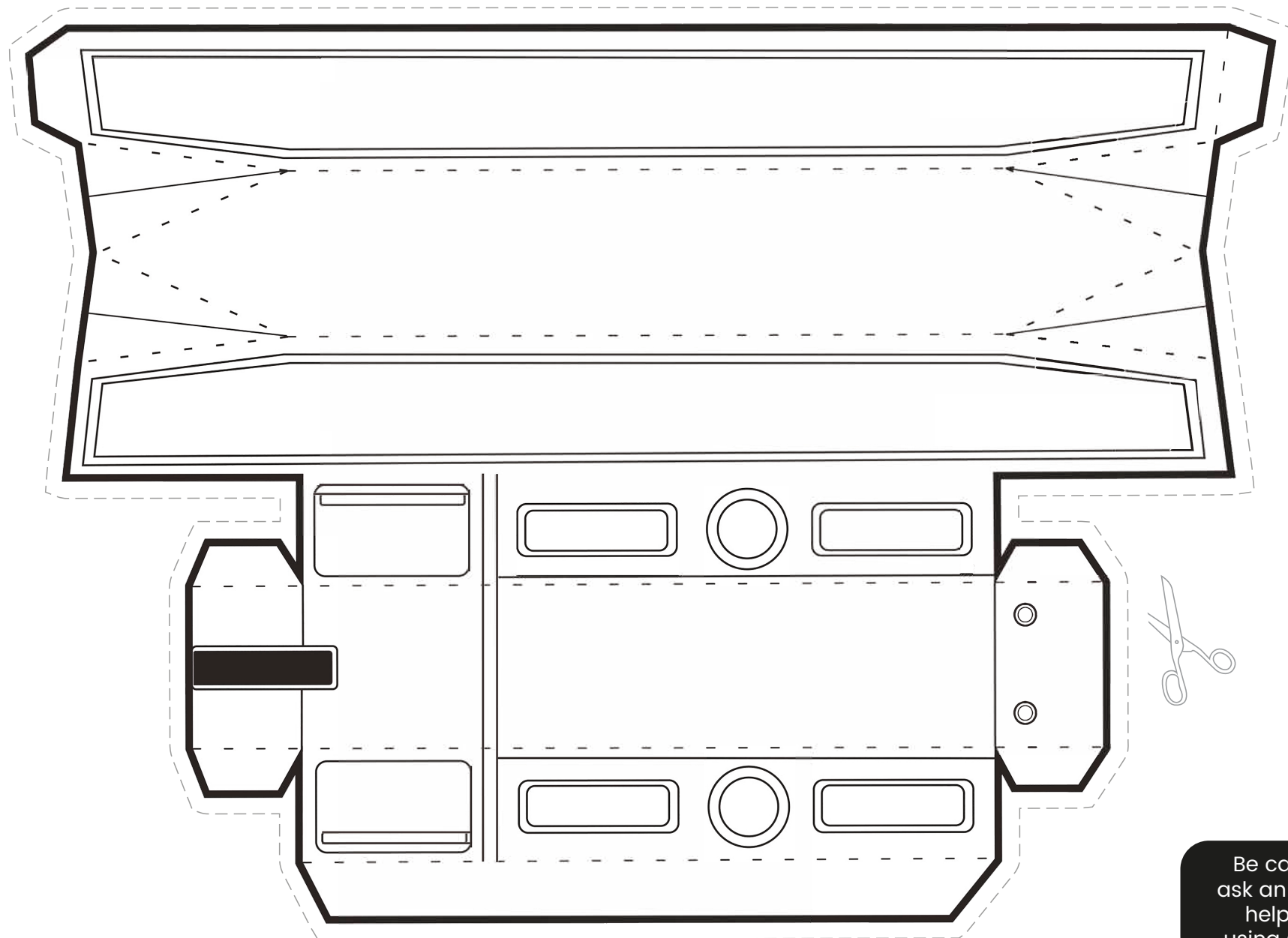
Think of other creative ways to raise money to help your community. How about a sponsored litter pick, or completing a canalathon with your friends, walking 26.2 miles between you.



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



Narrowboat template: **Community**



Be careful or
ask an adult for
help when
using scissors.