



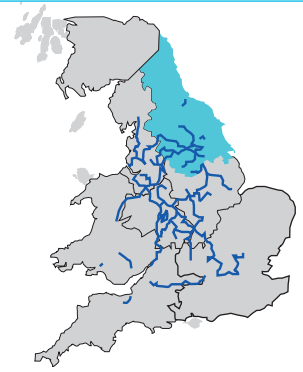
**Canal &
River Trust**

Making life better by water

2021 Youth Impact Report

Yorkshire & North East





Youth engagement activities in Yorkshire & North East

During 2021, youth engagement activities in Yorkshire & North East delivered the following:



5,500

young people engaged in participatory activities and events



60

young volunteers



1,500

youth social action hours



8,100

young people engaged through Explorers / STEM



5,851

children & young people attending water safety sessions

All figures are approximate due to the nature of data collection at events and a current changeover of systems.

Partners worked with

Armley Local Care Partnership (and partners)

Beat The Street

Bradford College

Darnell Wellbeing

Forum Central

Hookers & Clickers

Interreg Europe

Kirklees College

Lady Elizabeth Hastings' CE VA

Primary School

Leeds Autism Services

Leeds City College

Leeds City Council

Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park

UTC Sheffield

West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue



Autism-friendly waterfront festival

With the British Medical Association estimating that around 1 in 100 children in the UK have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, it is essential that the Trust creates activities that are inclusive for all users of the waterways.

In August, as part of the Leeds Waterfront Festival, the Trust ran an Autism Friendly Event including canoeing, theatre experiences and yoga, as well as various partners offering a range of activities such as a scavenger hunt and a photography competition.

Over 120 active participants engaged, with approximately 1,500 additional people taking part by visiting stalls and enjoying the casual activities in the area. Well-B also made an appearance and was popular with adults and children alike!

It was a great way to introduce young people – particularly those young people who are autistic – to the waterways and experience the sights and sounds in a safe and friendly way.

It was very appreciated by visitors, with comments such as: “I would have struggled to arrange this myself, but my autistic son loved it so thank you very much for organising this”, and “I’ve not had the confidence to leave the house at all since lockdown, but this event got me out and I’m so glad I did”.

<https://www.las.uk.net/news/leeds-waterfront-festival-autism-neurodiverse-friendly-event-success>

Isolation 2 inclusion project funds new health and wellbeing approaches

The Trust is involved in an innovative project in Leeds that aims to improve the lives of families and young people who feel isolated or lonely.

The Isolation 2 Inclusion project is an 18-month EU funded project that unites countries around the North Sea to tackle the growing issue of isolation – a problem made significantly worse by the Covid-19 pandemic. The project, overseen by Interreg Europe, is funding new approaches that improve the health and wellbeing

of participants. The Trust is working with the Local Care Partnership and a number of other key partners to build on its social prescribing model and explore how a fluid participant-led model can be successfully introduced.

The Trust was chosen as a funding partner due to the miles of waterways that flow through the city and the extensive range of health and wellbeing activities that can be delivered alongside them. Where the Isolation 2 Inclusion project differs from other social prescribing offers is that to co-create a truly personalised solution, participants and link workers aren't restricted by a menu of services to choose from. By presenting the varied potential of the waterway as a foundation (outdoor, heritage,

ecology, recreation, relaxation), specific activities (walking, yoga, paddle boarding etc) can then be overlaid to create a bespoke engagement with partners.

Of course, the nature of the process means that participants might favour a non-waterway activity. The aim of Isolation 2 Inclusion is that all participants have the opportunity to be part of the co-creation of activities and solutions that will lend themselves to individual needs. As such, every engagement is celebrated by partners whether they access their own activities or not.

The ultimate aim of the project is to cement a partnership approach within the Leeds area and replicate it in other areas of the country. The I2I project also runs in the East Midlands and it is hoped that by creating a transferable model, the legacy of this project can benefit people across the country beyond the life of this initial project.



A Zest for Trust activities

Zest are a community centre working with people from low socio-economic backgrounds in deprived areas of Sheffield.

The Trust has worked with Zest for a number of years and during the school holidays up to 15 young people from Zest's youth group participated in a mixture of social action and fun-based activities.

The first part of the day is spent volunteering on a range of projects including towpath maintenance, vegetation clearance, litter picking, habitat

building and planting. The afternoon is spent undertaking an activity from the Let's programme such as canoeing from the canoe hub, creating art, or participating in nature-based activities.

The sessions are always incredibly well received, and this has led to the longevity of the relationship between Zest and the Trust.

zest
FOR THE COMMUNITY



Sheffield welcomes international arts project

‘Walk with Amal’ was an international arts project which saw Amal, a giant 3.5 metre puppet of a child refugee, walk from the Syrian border to the UK to raise awareness of the struggles of refugees.

Amal was visiting Sheffield on her route and Trust staff worked with Good Chance, Handsprung Puppet Company and Sheffield Theatres to enter the city via the Sheffield Canal.

As part of the welcome, local school pupils made a series of welcome banners, and for the day of her arrival, planned a welcome celebration for her aimed at families.

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The activities included in the ‘Walk with Amal’ welcome event included Bhangra dancing workshops, crafting clay head puppets of Amal and welcome banners to create a bigger exhibit, mini canal ecosystem building, public street art which the public could add “welcome” in lots of different languages, and live music with a steel pan band.

Two boat rides were also put on to encourage families living close to the canal in Darnall, a diverse



community, to visit Victoria Quays for Amal’s welcome. When Amal arrived she entered via a canal boat organised by the Trust and the whole area was bustling with people awaiting her arrival with approximately 4,000 people in attendance including many families and young people.

Engineering engagement with young people

More than 50 Year 9 students from UTC Sheffield’s Engineering Department have been involved in a year-long project with the Trust to create a system to remove litter from the canal which will then fit onto canoes in the city.



The students have been working on this project in their term time over the full academic year.

Some incredible designs were proposed. 20 of the top designs were presented as full product design briefs and three winning students were chosen. Of these, two are currently being made as prototypes which can then be tested on the canoes in Spring 2022 when 15 students will visit the hub and test the products.

It is hoped that the finished products will eventually be used for the regular litter picks as part of the canoe hub in Tinsley which is a community centred hub offering free canoeing sessions for disadvantaged families whilst improving the environment of the canal.

For more information on our youth & community engagement work
please email lucie.unsworth@canalrivertrust.org.uk



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