

PRESS RELEASE

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CANAL CHARITY REMOVES TONS OF SEDIMENT FROM THE ASHBY CANAL TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR BOATERS

Waterways charity, Canal & River Trust, is carrying out dredging on the Ashby Canal as part of a series of improvements to help keep boats moving on the centuries-old waterway.

The dredging, starting in early March and lasting for around nine weeks, will see the charity invest over £400,000 in removing around 4,600 cubic metres of sediment from the bed of the canal, making it easier for boaters to navigate.

The works will focus on stretches of canal over a 6km length between Sutton Wharf Bridge, near Sutton Cheney, and Wykin Bridge, near Hinckley.

The work is carried out using a digger, which is secured to a barge, and will haul out accumulations of silt from the bottom of the canal and load it into a hopper barge to be taken away. The material will be taken to nearby agricultural land where, once it's dried, will be spread onto fields to fertilise the soil.

It's the second phase of dredging works on the Ashby Canal after works took place last year between Sutton Cheney and Market Bosworth.

As part of the project the Trust has also cut back trees overhanging the water, widening the channel available to boaters and improving lines of sight along the canal.

Completed in 1804, the Ashby Canal is lock-free which makes it popular with novice boaters and people hiring holiday boats. Dredging is an important part of the Canal & River Trust's ongoing work to keep the canal open and boats moving. Nationwide the charity spends around £7million per year removing tens of thousands of tonnes of sediment from the bottom of its canals.

Linny Beaumont, regional director for the Canal & River Trust, said: "Dredging isn't a glamorous job but it's an essential part of our ongoing work to ensure that boats can continue to navigate our historic waterways.

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“Boats have been navigating the Ashby Canal for over 200 years and it’s vital that they can continue to do so, as boats bring so much colour and life to our canals. They also bring economic benefits, with boaters stopping off to visit local pubs, cafes and shops – so these works are good news for the whole area.

“With time and climate change taking their toll on the nation’s ageing waterways, our charity is grateful for the public support we receive to help us carry out projects like this and ensure we keep our canals alive for future generations.”

For more information about the Canal & River Trust, including how to volunteer and donate, visit: www.canalrivertrust.org.uk.

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For further media requests 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.

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