As spring approaches and heralds the end to a relatively mild winter we can look back on the works that have been carried out in between seasons such as hedge laying and planting, off-side tree and vegetation works, several landscaping projects and the upcoming national event “Clean for the Queen” which we have several events planned over this weekend.

As the days start to get longer we begin the long process of planning for the upcoming season, including training new volunteers, as well as updating existing volunteers training and with this in mind we will be running a Volunteer Lock Keepers H&S Training course on 7th, 8th & 9th March which will include both new and returning lock keepers and a Lead Volunteer course on 21st – 24th March which is for both volunteers and CRT staff to enable a closer working relationship and understanding when leading volunteers. Anyone requiring this training will be notified in due course to arrange a date.

We hope to have all our existing and new Volunteer Lock Keepers out on their lock sides by Easter to assist with a boating busy period. If you have any interest in becoming a Volunteer Lock Keeper please get in touch so we can assist in making this happen.

As we have quite a few Pin Badges and Mugs to give out to show our recognition for your dedication we are planning a presentation event on the 12th April. This will be an opportunity to hand out the Recognition Gifts to those of you that have carried out 100hrs, 500hrs, 1000hrs and 2000hrs. We will be sending out invitations to the recipients this month once we have finalised the location.

Currently we have a lot of volunteers who are part of a group but not actually registered as an individually volunteer which is perfectly acceptable but if you wish to be eligible for a Recognition Award you will need to fill out a L1/L2 Registration Form.

If you have not filled out an L1 or L2 registration form please contact us.
You helped us to 'Clean for The Queen'

Her Majesty the Queen will be celebrating her 90th birthday this year. We joined with Keep Britain Tidy and a number of other organisations to get the country spruced up in time for the celebrations.

Many thanks to all of you that went out and made a difference to the canal side areas during the weekend of March 4th, 5th and 6th.

4 main Volunteer groups
60+ Volunteers
270+ Hours
80+ Bags of Rubbish

I think you will all agree, this was a fantastic effort by all.
Canal & River Trust’s waterways support more than 600 miles of hedgerows. Many of the hedges are over 200 years old and as such represent a vital part of the canal networks heritage, as well as being a vital biodiversity resource.

Canal & River Trust have secured funding from the players of People’s Postcode Lottery (PPL) for a national Helping Hedgerow Project to survey, map and provide an initial series of enhancements to start making this green legacy fit for purpose in future years.

The project is now at the delivery stage of enhancement works and activity has been happening this winter across the network.

The PPL funding investment has provided the financial support for hedgerows to be planted/laid and volunteers to be trained in the traditional countryside skills of hedge laying. Leading to biodiversity improvement of our green corridors and growing the Trust’s bank of skilled volunteers.

North Wales & Borders has seen enhancements at a number of canal locations, involving a range of volunteering groups.

- Shropshire Union Canal – Middlewich Branch – Cholmondeston - SUMBA
- Shropshire Union Canal - Bunbury – SUCS
- Shrewsbury & Newport Canal – Newport - Shrewsbury & Newport Restoration Group
- Shropshire Union Canal – Ellesmere Port – The Conservation Volunteers
- Shropshire Union Canal – Ellesmere Port – Volunteer Lock Keepers
- Montgomery Canal – Llanymynech – SUCS
- Montgomery Canal – Belan – Montgomery Canal Restoration Group
- Montgomery Canal – Graham Palmer Lock – Shropshire Wild Teams

We will summarise the hedge laying that has been carried out over the winter in the next issue of the NWB Volunteering Newsletter.

Stuart Moodie, CRT National Ecologist said:
“We are very grateful to all the volunteers for their hard work in safeguarding our valuable hedgerows for the future. Hopefully they are enjoying the opportunity and will return to the canals to use their skills in the future”
Upcoming Events
March 2016

Saturday 26th
Chester Towpath Taskforce – Meet at Cambrian Road Canal Bridge at 10:00am planting bedding plants to temporarily beautify an area that has recently been cleared of its vegetation, all welcome.

Thursday 31st
Small Task Team Volunteers – Work party at Hurleston Locks 09:00hrs
All enquiries – Paul Mills 0151 336 1049 or e-mail exelbee@sky.com

April 2016

Wednesday 6th
Audlem midweek evening Taskforce – the evening taskforce begins again and will run until the end of August – meet at 17:30hrs
Contact Neville Preece – neville.preece@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Saturday 9th
Audlem Taskforce - The tasks will involve improving the important immediate area of the canal used by the “Audlem Lass” RNLI trip-boat, making the area visually better and safer for passengers awaiting or visiting the trip-boat. We will also be working in the Lock 15 area of the canal, tidying the surrounding area in readiness for the heritage building/brickwork/lime mortar training and refurbishment of the lock-hut at Lock 15. Contact Neville Preece – neville.preece@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Saturday 16th
SUMBA - Meet at Cholmondeston Lock at 9:30am - park at Venetian Marina CRT’s Gowy will be used as transport to the work sites. Two projects to be completed - 1). Brickyard Bridge 6 - replace rotten timbers, repair steps & repaint woodwork 2). Sykes Hollow Picnic Area - repaint picnic tables, BBQs & totem posts etc.
For further details and to register - email Graham Russell: sumbacanal@gmail.com

Thursday 28th
Small Task Team Volunteers – Work party at Burland, Restoration of Ravensmoor Wharf. All enquiries – Paul Mills 0151 336 1049 or e-mail exelbee@sky.com

Monthly Ongoing
Chester Towpath Taskforce – events every last Saturday of each month. All enquiries – Mike Carter - mike.carter77@virginmedia.com

Montgomery and Llangollen Canal Volunteer Group - Friday group meeting each week to complete a variety of tasks along the Llangollen and Montgomery Canals. Contact Roger Birch – roger.birch@canalrivertrust.org.uk for more details each week.

Welshpool Adoption Group – The Welshpool Adoption Group meets 9.30am every Thursday by the slipway at the bottom of the Church St Car park in the centre of Welshpool to undertake a wide range of volunteer projects within Welshpool and beyond. For further details contact Pat Ward - patward@intonet.co.uk

If you wish to be added to the list to receive this newsletter and other volunteering information please contact

Jason Watts – Volunteer Support Team Leader – jason.watts@canalrivertrust.org.uk