



PRESS RELEASE

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TRANSFORMATION OF MIRFIELD'S CANALSIDE IS IN THE BAG THANKS TO LOCAL SHOPPERS

Shoppers in Mirfield have bagged themselves an improved canalside after a project funded through Tesco's Bags of Help initiative helped to transform the Calder & Hebble Navigation running through the town.

The Mirfield Community Partnership, working in partnership with the Canal & River Trust, Groundwork Wakefield and local developer Darren Smith, has used the money to make the canalside more attractive and welcoming for local people.

The project was awarded £8,000 through the scheme in which Tesco, working with Groundwork, awards grants raised from the 5p bag levy to environmental and community projects.

The work in Mirfield has involved improving the towpath surface, planting trees, creating new flowerbeds, improving flood defence walls, putting in better seating and repairing crumbling dry stone walls.

Many of the improvements have been carried out by local volunteers. The aim is for volunteers from the local branch of Yorkshire Building Society to help care for the stretch of canal running through the town. They will help to ensure that it stays looking at its best by picking up litter, weeding, painting lock gates and caring for the flowerbeds.

The project forms part of a wider scheme, promoted by the partnership, to develop Mirfield Promenade – a four mile walking route from Ravensthorpe to Cooper Bridge. The scheme would improve access for local people, enhance habitats for wildlife, encourage other activities such as angling and canoeing and provide opportunities for local people to volunteer and gain new skills.

Hilary Brooke from the Mirfield Community Partnership said; "The canalside is looking amazing and we're really grateful to Tesco and all of the groups and volunteers that have got involved.

"This is just one example of what working in partnership really means in practice with the community pulling together to improve their local area. This project will help to make local people's morning walk that bit more enjoyable, provide a welcoming place to sit and watch the world go by and attract more wildlife."

Canal & River Trust, Fearn's Wharf, Neptune Street, Leeds LS9 8PB

T: 0203 204 4514 E: press.office@canalrivertrust.org.uk W: www.canalrivertrust.org.uk Twitter: [@CanalRiverTrust](https://twitter.com/CanalRiverTrust)

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Jon Horsfall, waterway manager for the Canal & River Trust, which manages the Calder & Hebble Navigation, said; "We're delighted with the transformation at Mirfield. The volunteers, led by Mirfield Community Partnership, have worked really hard and it's a testament to how much people value their local canal. The community now has an even more special and enjoyable place to escape to and everybody involved should be rightly proud of what they've achieved."

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For further media requests please contact:

Stephen Hardy, communications manager, Canal & River Trust

T: 01636 675703 M: 07920 077190 E: stephen.hardy@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Notes to editors:

The Canal & River Trust is the guardian of 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales, caring for the nation's third largest collection of listed structures, as well as museums, archives, and hundreds of important wildlife sites. We believe that *living waterways transform places and enrich lives* and our role is to make sure there is always a place on your doorstep where you can escape the pressures of everyday life, stretch your legs and simply feel closer to nature. www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/
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The Mirfield Community Partnership was set up in 1993 and originates from co-operation between a number of bodies including Mirfield Town Council, The Art Gallery (now called West Yorkshire Print Workshop) and Saint Paul's Church, Eastthorpe. The aim of the group is to provide and maintain facilities for the general benefit of the people of Mirfield and the surrounding areas; promoting environmental improvement and the development of facilities and of cultural and social activities both in the town centre and other areas of Mirfield. See more at:
<http://communitydirectory.kirklees.gov.uk/communityDirectory/organisationdetails.aspx?orgid=3379#news>