



PRESS RELEASE

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CHARITY SPENDS £1MILLION REPAIRING HISTORIC BRIDGES ALONG OXFORD CANAL

Watch the video here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEvy20fO7RA>

The charity, Canal & River Trust, has recently started a £1million project to repair and restore six historic lift bridges along the Oxford Canal over the next three years.

These Grade II Listed black and white timber lift bridges are a characteristic of the Oxford Canal and were built by renowned canal engineer James Brindley over 200 years ago. The lift bridges, and their supports, were built as a cheaper alternative to the more traditional brick arch bridge after the canal company ran short of money.

The restoration work starts with Chisnell Lift Bridge (no. 193) near Anyho and includes repairs to the brick and stonework, rebuilding walls and work to fill the numerous holes and voids that have appeared over the years. The other bridges to be repaired over the next three years include:

- Drinkwaters lift bridge (no. 231) and Wolvercote lift bridge (no. 233)
- Shipton lift bridge (no. 219) near Shipton on Cherwell
- Caravan lift bridge (no. 215) near Enslow
- Haddons lift bridge (no. 173) near Banbury

Charles Baker, from the Canal & River Trust, said: "These bridges have a fascinating story behind them and, while they may not be as the engineers originally intended, they are unique to this particular canal. The original canal builders set out with grand designs but unfortunately they ran out of money and had to change their plans. It's a classic tale of making-do and as a result they used a combination of brick, stone and oak which hasn't aged as well as the more traditional brick arch bridge.

"By removing the first few layers of brick we can see exactly where the bridges have deteriorated over time and where the voids in the brickwork are. We should be finishing this first bridge before Christmas so hardy boaters and local people can enjoy a winter cruise or festive walk."

For more information on the work of the Canal & River Trust visit www.canalrivertrust.org.uk

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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.

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