



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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12 December 2016

### **£1MILLION DREDGING PROJECT ON KENNET & AVON CANAL**

The charity, Canal & River Trust, has started work on a project to dredge sections of the 78 mile Kennet & Avon Canal.

The work, which is costing the Trust £1million and will last two years, will focus on areas along the Kennet & Avon Canal where boaters are having difficulty mooring, navigating through bridges or getting stuck on the approach to locks. In total around 21,000 tonnes of silt – which is the same in weight as over 4,000 elephants – will be removed from the canal.

Using a floating dredger, silt and debris which has built up along the bottom of the canal over a number of years, will be removed from the bottom of the waterway. Once collected the silt will be recycled to agricultural land alongside the canal.

The project will also involve installing water vole friendly coir rolls which are soft mats made from recycled coconut husks. These protect the canal bank from erosion whilst allowing water voles to burrow into to make homes. It is hoped that the mats will connect different colonies of endangered water voles and so help to boost their numbers.

Paul Fox, from the Canal & River Trust, said: “We’ve already started dredging along the canal near Crofton and should be finished by Christmas. After Christmas we plan to start dredging in the Horton area and will be in this area for a few weeks.

“We plan to recycle as much of the silt as possible to agricultural land which has the benefit of being both environmentally friendly and cheaper.”

For more work on the Canal & River Trust visit [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)

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**For further media requests please contact:** Sarah Rudy Canal & River Trust on 01908 302 584 / 07788 691 219 or email [sarah.rudy@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:sarah.rudy@canalrivertrust.org.uk)

Canal & River Trust, Station House, 500 Elder Gate, Milton Keynes, MK91BB

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

Patron: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales. Canal & River Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with company number 7807276 and registered charity number 1146792, registered office address: First Floor North, Station House, 500 Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1BB

**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](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk) / @CanalRiverTrust / @crtcomms