



PRESS RELEASE

19 December

Edible community garden coming to River Lee in Stonebridge, thanks to plastic bag cash

A simple patch of grass next to Stonebridge Lock on the River Lee is set to be transformed into an edible garden, after a public vote triggered a £12,000 donation.

The money comes from Tesco's Bags of Help initiative, in partnership with environmental charity Groundwork, which awards the proceeds generated from the sale of carrier bags in stores to create or improve green spaces in communities. Customers were able to vote for one of three projects, which were then awarded £12,000, £10,000 or £8,000 depending on which got the most support.

The garden project is led by the Canal & River Trust – that charity that cares for the River – in partnership with Action For Kids and Stonebridge Lock Café. It will see the space landscaped, with large timber beds installed for growing vegetables and six fruit trees planted. In addition the work will also act as learning opportunity for young people.

Once completed the garden will be cared for by the Café and Trust volunteers with regular input from Action For Kids, with the produce shared through the Café for the community.

Work will begin in the new year as the London Community Rehabilitation Company co-ordinates community payback days to clear the site, with the garden expected to be open by the spring.

Jeannette Brooks, Canal & River Trust development and engagement manager, said: "We're so pleased that local people have voted for our project, the money is going to help us transform what at the moment is a pretty boring bit of grass. It'll certainly be a first for this stretch of the river. It'll be great to work alongside Action For Kids and the Café to make sure that young people can help with the work. We've seen from other parts of the waterway that when we are able to make improvements, and get support from the community to do so, it can improve the area no end."

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

More details about Action For Kids is available at www.actionforkids.org

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Notes to editors

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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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