



PRESS RELEASE

9 January

Appeal launched for new lock keepers for Worcestershire's canals

The charity that looks after the Worcester & Birmingham Canal is searching for new volunteers to take-up arguably the most iconic waterway role – the lock keeper.

The Canal & River Trust is on the lookout for people interested in volunteering at Diglis lock, where the canal meets the River Severn, helping passing boaters, welcoming visitors and giving a hand to the Trust's teams in maintaining the canal.

The volunteers will help to keep the historic tradition of lock-keeping alive in the region, where lock keepers have been part of waterway life for hundreds of years.

Full training is provided and people of all ages (over 18) and experiences are encouraged to apply. Volunteer lock keepers work on a shift basis throughout the year, with busier periods typically expected between April-October.

Gill Hellings, from Worcester, has volunteered as a lock keeper at Diglis for two years, she says: "I'm passionate about canals and not having a boat myself, working as a lock keeper is the next best thing. We've got big double locks at Diglis, it's an impressive location, and boaters really appreciate the help we're able to offer. There's not really a typical day, if we're not helping people through the locks, then we can be litter picking, talking to visitors or even giving directions to the nearest restaurant. Time flies when I'm working on the canal-side and it's a great way to stay fit too. I'd definitely recommend the role to anyone interested in getting outdoors and helping people visiting or living in the community."

Caroline Kendall, Canal & River Trust volunteer development co-ordinator, said: "Lock keeping is probably the most iconic job on the waterways. Our lock keepers are the face of the canal, safely seeing boats through the locks, as well as helping people with directions or information about the area. It's a great role for anyone keen to work outdoors and meet new people. You'll learn some new skills and provide a huge amount of help for the thousands of visitors we get to the canal each year."

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Applications for the role are open from now, with training and induction beginning in March. For more information visit <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/>

The Canal & River Trust cares for 1,583 locks nationwide and there are approximately 3.8 million 'lockings' each year (passages through locks).

Ends

Notes to editors

For further media requests please contact: joe.coggins@canalrivertrust.org.uk 020 3204 4410

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.

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