



PRESS RELEASE

30th January 2017

[Video and images available – link below](#)

STOKE BRUERNE LOCK BARES ALL AT OPEN WEEKEND

- Visitors can walk down into the bottom of a drained lock and view the empty canal pounds
 - Fishing taster sessions with local angling club
 - Introduction to canoeing with local canoe club
 - Boat trips and other family friendly activities

This February, visitors to the canal in Stoke Bruerne will be given the opportunity to experience the Grand Union Canal and flight of locks in a very different way.

On Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th February from 10am to 4pm, visitors will have the opportunity to venture to the bottom of Lock 16. People will be able to see the original 200-year-old brickwork up close next to the brand new lock gate which forms part of the repair work. Expert engineers and volunteers will be on hand to explain the works to members of the public and give an insight into the skills and methods used to carry out the works.

Alongside being able to see the drained canal pounds and the bare structure of the lock there will be a number of family friendly activities for visitors to enjoy. Taster fishing and canoe sessions, boat trips and other family activities. The Stoke Bruerne Canal Museum will be open and visitors can hear stories from the 1800's about life on the Grand Union Canal from a storyteller.

The open day is part of a ten-week repair programme, costing £157,000, which involves replacing a number of wooden lock gates that have come to the end of their life. To do the essential works pounds of water in-between the locks have been drained. Before draining the water, fish were rescued and relocated further along the canal. Local school children were invited to see the rescue take place and learn about the rich ecology, logistics, engineering and heritage of the Grand Union Canal.

Sarah Brown, Development and Engagement Manager for the Canal & River Trust in the region, said "Many people don't realise the work that goes into keeping our canals in good working order

Canal & River Trust

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and making them nice for the thousands of people who enjoy them every year. They certainly aren't familiar with the bottom of a lock! Our open days are a great way of exploring our waterways and getting a glimpse of how everything works. We've invited local groups along to give people a chance to try out a new sport and enjoy the Grand Union Canal in a different way. We love being able to show people what we do and the endless opportunities the canals can offer."

**To find out about the Restoration & Repairs programme and other open days happening across the country this winter go to <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/open-days>
ENDS**

For further media requests please contact:

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Notes to editors:

Raw video content and images of Stoke Bruerne fish rescue available at:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/buxva5nsar6qd7i/AABS1hnmAsflw1ee_bNvortza?dl=0

Historic images of Stoke Bruerne available at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/hzbfpbm86tdisch/AACkNEpAuuf32D034TqA1X03a?dl=0>

Parking is available at the museum, once this car park is full parking attendants will be able to direct visitors to an overflow car park.

Please do wear sturdy shoes if you would like to go down into the lock, last entry to the lock at 3.30pm

Historical interest:

Rather than divert around the village, the Grand Union Canal Company built straight through Stoke Bruerne, completely changing its character. For a brief period from 1800 to 1805, whilst Blisworth Tunnel was under construction, Stoke Bruerne was one of the busiest inland ports in the country.

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 / @CanalRiverTrust / @crtcomms