



Canal &
River Trust

PRESS RELEASE

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£120,000 CANAL RESTORATION WORK IN STOURBRIDGE THIS WINTER

Four historic locks along the Stourbridge Canal are having an essential make-over as part of the charity Canal & River Trust's winter maintenance programme.

In total, eight gates are being changed and brickwork is being inspected and repaired at locks 2, 3, 6 and 13 along the Stourbridge Canal. The canal was completed in 1779 and brought coal and other supplies to the world famous glass industry.

The charity, which cares for 312 miles of waterways in the West Midlands, carries out an annual programme of restoration and repairs to the nation's waterways during the winter to minimise the inconvenience of navigation closures to boaters during the busy summer season.

At Lock 3, both bottom end gates and the top end single gate, which weigh in at just over five tonnes altogether, are being replaced having been working hard for boaters since 1990. The three gates, which were made at the charity's workshop in Bradley and cost a total of £23,000, will end their journey to the lock by boat where they will be lifted into place by a crane. After the gates have been fitted, the lock chamber will be drained and the team will be fixing any damaged bricks and stones in and around the lock. The works are running for four weeks from 20th February to the 17th March.

On Sunday 12th March between 10am and 4pm, people will have the rare opportunity to walk down into Lock 3 to see the canal from a very different angle. Visitors will be able to learn more about the history of the canal and see up close one of the finest examples of working heritage in the world.

Ian Darby, customer operations manager for the Canal & River Trust, says: "Replacing and repairing the gates at these four locks on the Stourbridge Canal is part of the essential maintenance needed to enable the local canal network to be used and enjoyed by thousands of boaters, cyclists, anglers and walkers every year.

Canal & River Trust, The Toll House, Delamere Terrace, Little Venice, London W2 6ND

T 0203 204 4514 E press.office@canalrivertrust.org.uk W 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

“We’re delighted to be able to open up Lock 3 on Sunday 12th to offer a unique chance for visitors to venture to the bottom of the drained lock chamber, letting us showcase the work the charity does by explaining about the repair and restoration works we are doing here.”

As part of its maintenance programme, the Canal & River Trust will be working on around 164 lock gates across the country as well as carrying out repairs to aqueducts, reservoirs and tunnels.

Richard Parry, chief executive of the Canal & River Trust, says: “We care for a remarkable network of historic waterways which are still working just as they were designed to 200 years ago. Keeping them open and safe requires a huge amount of planning, investment and craftsmanship and involves a wide range of experts, from civil engineers and hydrologists to heritage experts and ecologists.

The address for the open day is: Lock 3 Stourbridge Canal, Brierley Hill Road, Stourbridge DY5 3TY.

Sturdy footwear is recommended for walking in the drained lock chamber, if footwear is deemed inappropriate entry will not be allowed.

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

ENDS

For further media requests, interviews or images please contact:

Claire Risino, Campaigns Manager, Canal & River Trust

T: 07785 920 863 E: Claire.risino@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Notes to editors:

The Canal & River Trust is the guardian of 2,000 miles of canals, rivers and docks 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.

Locks have varying numbers of gates – at the ‘upstream’ end of locks some have two gates whilst others only have one, with the same applying at the ‘downstream’ end.

The new lock gates are hand-crafted using traditional methods in the Trust’s specialist workshops at Bradley in the West Midlands and Stanley Ferry in Yorkshire. A single lock gate can take up to 20 days to make and has a working life of between 25 and 30 years. In order to be watertight they need to be built very precisely, fitting tightly to the masonry of the lock walls and to each other.

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