



PRESS RELEASE

10 July

Charity urges people to avoid swimming in Tardebigge Reservoir

The Canal & River Trust is reminding people not to swim in Tardebigge Reservoir during the hot weather after the charity received reports about people choosing the location to have a dip.

The reminder comes just weeks after the Trust issued a warning to people not to choose local waterways to cool off in, because of the dangers posed by colder than expected water, currents and underwater obstructions.

Summer is one of the most popular times for people to visit Britain's waterways, with more than 385 million visits made last year by boaters, cyclists, runners, walkers and canoeists. Unfortunately, when the weather warms people can risk their lives by jumping into the water. Of the 400 people who drown in the UK every year (1), more than half the fatalities happen at inland waters such as canals, rivers, lakes, quarries and reservoirs (2).

The charity is reiterating its message that people should come to the waterside and have fun, but during the hot weather, to find a pool or organised event if they want to go swimming. Some of the dangers posed by water in canals, rivers and reservoirs include:

- You can't see the depth – the water could be much shallower than you expect it to be and cause serious harm if someone jumps in, as well as being much deeper than expected in other areas;
- There could be hidden objects under the surface;
- Reeds and other plant life can get tangled around limbs and keep you in the water;
- Low water temperatures can cause the blood to rush away from your muscles to protect your vital organs, meaning muscles may become fatigued very quickly – even amongst the strongest of swimmers.

Rob Eaton, Canal & River Trust customer operations manager, said: "We've had reports from community-spirited anglers that they've seen people swimming and diving into the reservoir, which is something we strongly advise against. We have signs in place to discourage it, but people are choosing not to heed the advice.

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“Being by the water is a lovely way to spend a summer’s day and they are excellent places for families to explore during the holidays. But it’s also important that people, especially children and teenagers, are aware of the dangers of going for a dip. The consequences can be devastating.”

The Canal & River Trust ‘Explorers’ water safety programme, which focuses on children in Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum, aims to help young people learn about and enjoy their local canal or river safely and can also be used towards a number of Cub Scout and Brownie badges. Dozens of volunteers nationwide help the Trust each year by going into schools and speaking to youth groups about their local canal or river. If you’d like to see the free resources available or if you’re interested in helping the Trust educate young people about their local canal or river, visit www.canalriverexplorers.org.uk

To find out more about staying safe near our waterways, go to: <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/our-campaigns/safety-on-our-waterways/summer-safety>

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Notes to editors

For more media information contact joe.coggins@canalrivertrust.org.uk 020 3204 4410

Canal & River Trust footage of what lurks beneath the water line:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkTuGmigJZM>

YouTube footage of young people jumping into canals:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOsstHVt1Lg> – teenagers jumping into a lock

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-29k3mLYnbA> – teenagers jumping in the locks at Rochdale Canal

Please note this YouTube footage is not owned by the Canal & River Trust. It was filmed and uploaded to YouTube by individuals not connected to the Trust.

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
#BeWaterSafe

The Canal & River Trust is a member of the National Water Safety Forum and is working towards the Forum’s aim to reduce accidental drownings by 50% by 2026.

Reference:

- (1) Statistic based on the WAID data (Water Incident Database) 2014 published by the National Water Safety Forum.
- (2) Statistic based on the WAID data (Water Incident Database) 2014 published by the National Water Safety Forum.