



PRESS RELEASE

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Stonebridge canal site transformed into edible community garden

A once simple patch of grass next to Stonebridge Lock on the River Lee has this week completed an extraordinary makeover, with the Canal & River Trust and local volunteers turning it into an edible community garden.

The area next to Stonebridge Lock Café, which was little more than scrub, now boasts large timber beds installed for growing vegetables, fruit trees and a series of sculptures designed by Daniel Cordell.

Over £12,000 has been invested in the project thanks to the Tesco's Bags of Help initiative which, in partnership with environmental charity Groundwork, awards the proceeds generated from the sale of carrier bags in stores to create or improve green spaces in communities.

Landscaping work began back in the spring, with the completed garden now open for everyone to enjoy. The work was led by the Canal & River Trust – that charity that cares for the River – in partnership with Action For Kids, Stonebridge Lock Café and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.

Jeannette Brooks, Canal & River Trust development and engagement manager, said: “We’re over the moon to have completed the garden. The café next to Stonebridge lock, run by Stephen Keys is really popular, but if you were here a few months ago you’d have seen how tired the space around it was. Now it’s been completely transformed into a fully accessible, wheelchair friendly space - full of colour and character. It’s a really great place to stop off and relax, whether you’re walking, cycling, boating or just want to escape the bustle of the city.

“As a charity, we rely so much on the local community alongside the River Lee and the garden here at Stonebridge still needs lots of care to help the plants establish and thrive. We have more volunteering activity planned in the autumn, so do get in touch if you like working outdoors and want to get stuck in.”

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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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