



# PRESS RELEASE

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22 September

## Canal & River Trust hosts its Annual Public Meeting

The Canal & River Trust yesterday (21 September) held its Annual Public Meeting at The Bond, Birmingham, attended by a mix of waterway stakeholders, partners, boat licence holders and members of the media.

Chair Allan Leighton welcomed guests before chief executive Richard Parry spoke about performance during the year which saw the highest levels of public support and investment in the Canal & River Trust's waterways since they were transferred from state control five years ago.

Attendees also heard about the work the Trust is commencing to better measure and report the impact of its work, including the health and wellbeing benefits to the wider population from being able to freely access the waterways network. They were also updated on the work of the Trust's Waterway Partnerships in seeking to deliver those benefits.

After the Annual Meeting, the Trust held the 13th meeting of its governing Council where Sir Christopher Kelly and Susan Wilkinson were appointed as trustees of the Canal & River Trust. They replace Lynne Berry OBE, Jane Cotton and John Dodwell who have all completed their second volunteer terms as trustees and retired from the board.

Dame Jenny Abramsky takes over Lynne's role as deputy chair of the Trust.

Sir Christopher Kelly is chair of the Kings Fund, the health think tank, and of the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board. He is also senior independent director on the Board of the Co-op Group. He has in the past chaired the NSPCC, the Financial Ombudsman Service and the Committee on Standards in Public Life. Before that he was a civil servant, mainly in HM Treasury but subsequently as head of policy at the then Department of Social Security and finally as permanent secretary to the Department of Health.

Susan Wilkinson has extensive experience in the not-for-profit and tourism sectors and was an executive board director at the National Trust until the end of 2016 with responsibility for membership, fundraising, volunteering and tourism. She is currently a trustee of the Old Royal

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Naval College Greenwich, the Churches Conservation Trust and the Medical Research Foundation. She is also a board director of the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions and previously held several tourism and charity non-executive roles with Visit England and the Institute of Fundraising. She is the current chair of the Canal & River Trust's Living Waterways Awards.

Allan Leighton commented: "I'd like to welcome Sir Chris and Sue to the Canal & River Trust. Their wealth of experience is a real endorsement to the work of our charity and I look forward to working with them. I'd also very much like to thank Lynne, Jane and John for all the support and commitment they have given the Trust. All three have been with the Trust right from the very start, working tirelessly to make this exciting national waterways charity a success. We absolutely wouldn't have made the giant leaps forward without their direction and input, and although they are rotating off the board, I know that we'll continue to see them on the waterways."

Ends

### **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. [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk) / @CanalRiverTrust / @crtcomms