



Canal &
River Trust

**North Wales &
Borders Waterway
Partnership**



Annual Report

Introduction

This is the first written annual report produced by the Canal and River Trust's North Wales and Borders Waterways Partnership.

Each year the partnership reports back to the local waterways community at its annual meeting.

For the last two years the Partnership's annual meeting has been part of 'Showcase' events – at Lion Quays near Chirk in 2015 and at Chester Racecourse in 2016. In 2017 our Showcase is on 13 October at Memorial Court in Northwich.

At the Showcases as Chair of the Partnership I outline the partnership's activity whilst Wendy Capelle, the North Wales and Borders Waterways manager, describes the work of the local waterways team and Richard Parry, Chief Executive of the Trust, talks about the work of the Trust as a whole.

Inevitably this means that the descriptions of the local work of the Canal and River Trust is presented in greatly summarised form and is heard only to those people who happen to be able to attend the Showcase.

To provide better information this year we are supplementing the presentations with this written report. This report is available in electronic form for circulation to our friends and partners amongst the waterways and wider communities.

As this is our first written report it briefly looks back, and forwards, as well as covering the activities in the North Wales and Borders region in 2017.

I hope that you find the contents interesting. If you wish to know more about anything in this report please contact us on:
enquiries.northwalesborders@canalrivertrust.org.uk
0303 040 4040

Much more information about the Trust is available on
canalrivertrust.org.uk



Brenda Harvey
Chair of Waterway Partnership,
North Wales and Borders

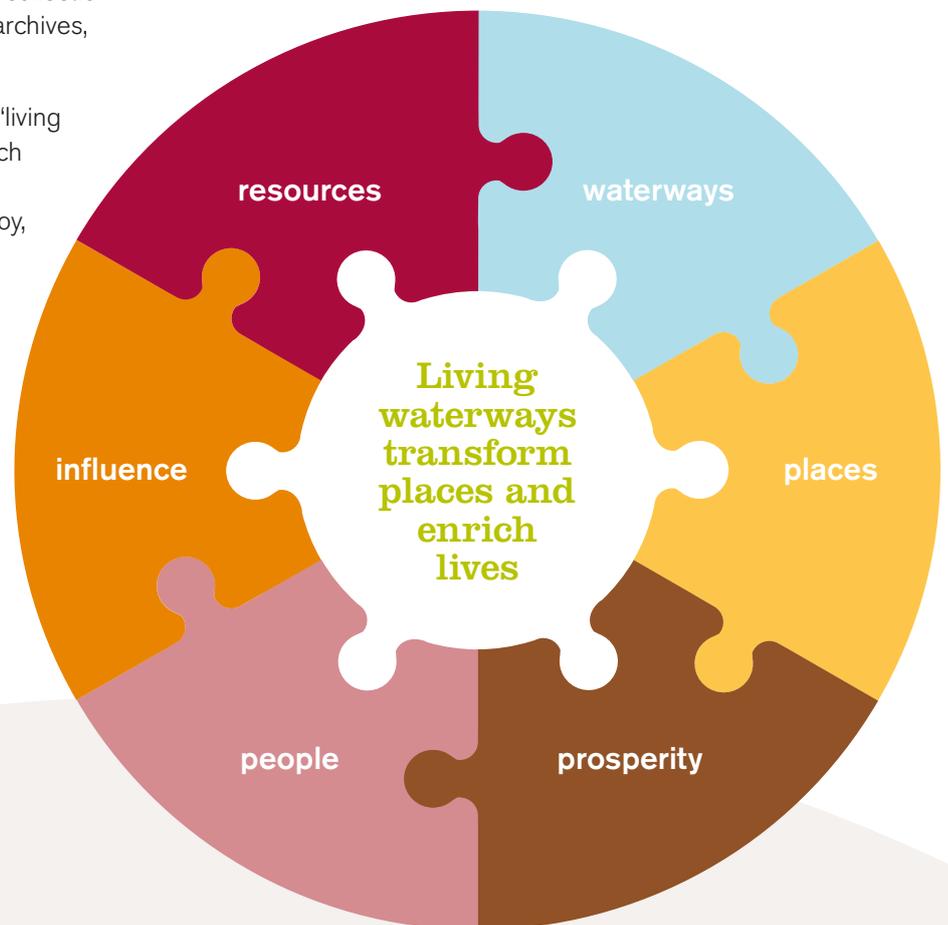


The Canal & River Trust National Picture 2017

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.

The Trust's vision is to create and sustain 'living waterways that transform places and enrich lives' providing spaces where people can escape the pressures of everyday life, enjoy, volunteer, learn and feel closer to nature; recognising the benefits to their own health and wellbeing of being in this environment.

The Trust's 10-year strategy sets out the six areas that underpin that vision:



Since launching in 2012, the Canal & River Trust has made a valuable input to the waterways and communities it serves. Successes include:

- **Increased annual visitor numbers by 33% to 396m with visitor satisfaction hitting 85%**
- **Increased volunteering by 264% to 540,000 hours in 2016/17**
- **Increased volunteer lock keeper numbers by 278% to 750**
- **180 communities have adopted a stretch of canal or river**
- **Over 235,000 children have been reached through the Trust's education programme**
- **Numbers of Friends have grown to 22,000 and donations are now £2.9m p.a.**
- **Around 33,000 licenced boats on the Trust's network**
- **Over £645m spent maintaining and restoring our waterways**
- **Reduced unplanned navigation closures by 62%**
- **Set up partnerships with a range of household names including M&S, Google, Rolls Royce, People's Postcode Lottery, The Scout Association, Help for Heroes and National Trust**
- **350,000 supporters welcomed (including digital supporters, donors and volunteers)**
- **Grown awareness of the Trust to 1 in 3 people.**

In July 2017 the Canal & River Trust published its 2016/17 Annual Report* which records the highest levels of public support and investment in the Trust's 2,000 miles of historic waterways since they were transferred from state control five years ago.

Overall in 2016/17, the Trust improved the availability of the waterways and saw an increase in both boater and visitor satisfaction. The Trust also saw a further rise in the number of people donating to the charity's work and a significant growth in volunteering which reached over half a million hours for the first time.

This was supported by a strong performance during the year in the Trust's commercial property portfolio.

2016/17 saw the Trust increase the money it was able to spend on charitable activities by 6% to £157m. This included the Trust's biggest ever programme of lock repairs and gate replacements, as well countless minor repair and maintenance tasks such as vegetation management, servicing of bridges and vital inspections of embankments and hidden culverts.

Amongst other things, the Trust made improvements at its museums, invested in flood remediation work and completed dredging across 22 priority sites. It delivered a series of major towpath upgrades across the country and fixed the damage caused during the 2015 Boxing Day flood.

Allan Leighton, chair of the Canal & River Trust, commented: *"Five years ago, the creation of the Canal & River Trust was a huge endorsement for the charitable sector. We were given responsibility for a national network that has the power to make such a positive impact on so many peoples' lives. In that time, we've seen a charity that has gone from strength."*

"This (the Canal & River Trust's 2016/17 Annual) Report reminds us of the potential of our waterways to make a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve. With 25 million people, from all backgrounds and demographics, right on our doorstep – and around 4.3 million regular visitors each fortnight – we are uniquely positioned to make a powerful impact across the country."

Richard Parry, chief executive, commented: *"It has been another successful year for the Trust and I'd like to thank everyone for their support and hard work."*

"We have been able to increase the amount of money we can spend on the waterways which has seen a huge output by staff and volunteers alike. Accordingly, we beat our target for unplanned navigation closures with a further reduction year-on-year and I am pleased with the improvement in both boater and visitor satisfaction which grew to 76% and 85% respectively."

"Our education teams continue to introduce the next generation to the waterways with 92,700 children reached by the programme last year. We have also been building a high-quality STEM learning programme which reached 3,000 secondary school children to inspire a new generation of engineers and waterway supporters."



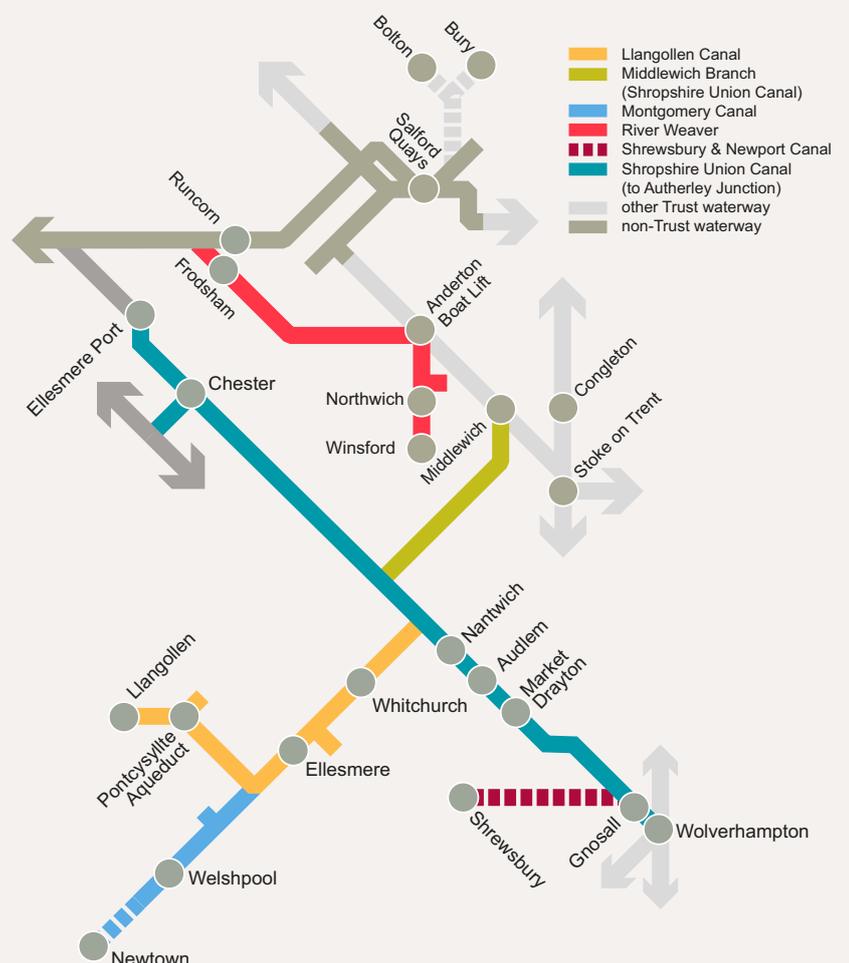
Repairs completed on Nantwich Aqueduct in 2016

*The Canal & River Trust Annual Report 2016/17 can be seen in full on line at www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/annual-report. Other information about the Trust and its activities can be found at www.canalrivertrust.org.uk.



The North Wales and Borders Region

The Canal & River Trust's North Wales and Borders region covers the waterways that run north and south between Ellesmere Port and Wolverhampton and east and west between Newtown and Llangollen in Wales across to Middlewich, Northwich and the Anderton Boat Lift. It includes some of the most popular stretches of canal on the network as well as river navigation on the Weaver and canals under restoration. It is one of the Trust's most rural regions with Chester and Ellesmere Port being the largest settlements on the region's canals.



The Waterways Team

It is the role of the local waterways team, under the leadership of the waterways manager, to liaise with local users, customers, volunteers and communities in respect of the work of the Trust.

There is a significant on-going responsibility in maintaining the waterways and towpaths to safe, accessible and navigable standards as well as working with others within the Trust, and amongst partners, to seek sources of funding to make improvements.

The team undertake regular maintenance responsibilities, deal with crises or one-off events affecting the waterway and liaise with the Trust's national teams in respect of major engineering schemes and projects.

The team, and the Waterway Manager and Development and Engagement Manager in particular, work very closely with the local Waterways Partnership making use of the Partnership's knowledge and experience. Together the Partnership and the Waterways Team devise and deliver projects to engage local individuals, businesses and communities with the waterways.

In recent years the Waterways Team has focused on the promotion of volunteering on the waterways and the improvement of facilities for volunteers.

Notable activity for the waterways team has been:

| 2015/2016 | 2017 & ongoing |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 100m of new pontoon and visitor moorings at Anderton Boat Lift • Refurbishment of historic buildings at Anderton as part of Saltscape Project • Refurbishment and repair to Marsh Lock gate and mechanical refurbishment • Refurbishment of six customer service stations across the waterway • Regular support of the Montgomery Triathlon and Middlewich Folk and Boat festival amongst a summer season of events • Increase in youth engagement through Youth Ambassadors Programme pilot and similar activities • Successful campaigns including Share the Space, Lets Fish and Go Fish • Community Engagement leading to sustainable activities and relationships in key locations • In 2016, the refurbishment of Nantwich Aqueduct, joint funded by stakeholders, won the Living Waterways Award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new playground installed in Anderton Boat Lift • Creation of wetland habitat at Hartford Blue Bridge on Weaver navigation • Working in partnership with Daniel Adamson which is a £4 million refurbishment HLF steam tug to undertake monthly cruises up the River Weaver • £4million pound project funded by HLF to create a nature reserve, new channels and a winding hole; creating a new destination at Crickheath. • In 2016/2017 43,000 hours of volunteer hours were recorded including 50 Volunteer Lock Keepers, 13 community adoptions and Bank of America as a Corporate adoption who are now in their 3rd year with the team • Towpath upgrade on the Montgomery Canal funded by Welsh Government and use of Community Payback • Creation of two new canoe access points on Llangollen Canal and a new facility for canoe groups |

The Waterways Partnership

The Role of the Waterways Partnerships across England and Wales

(Extracted from Canal & River Trust Annual Report 2016/17)

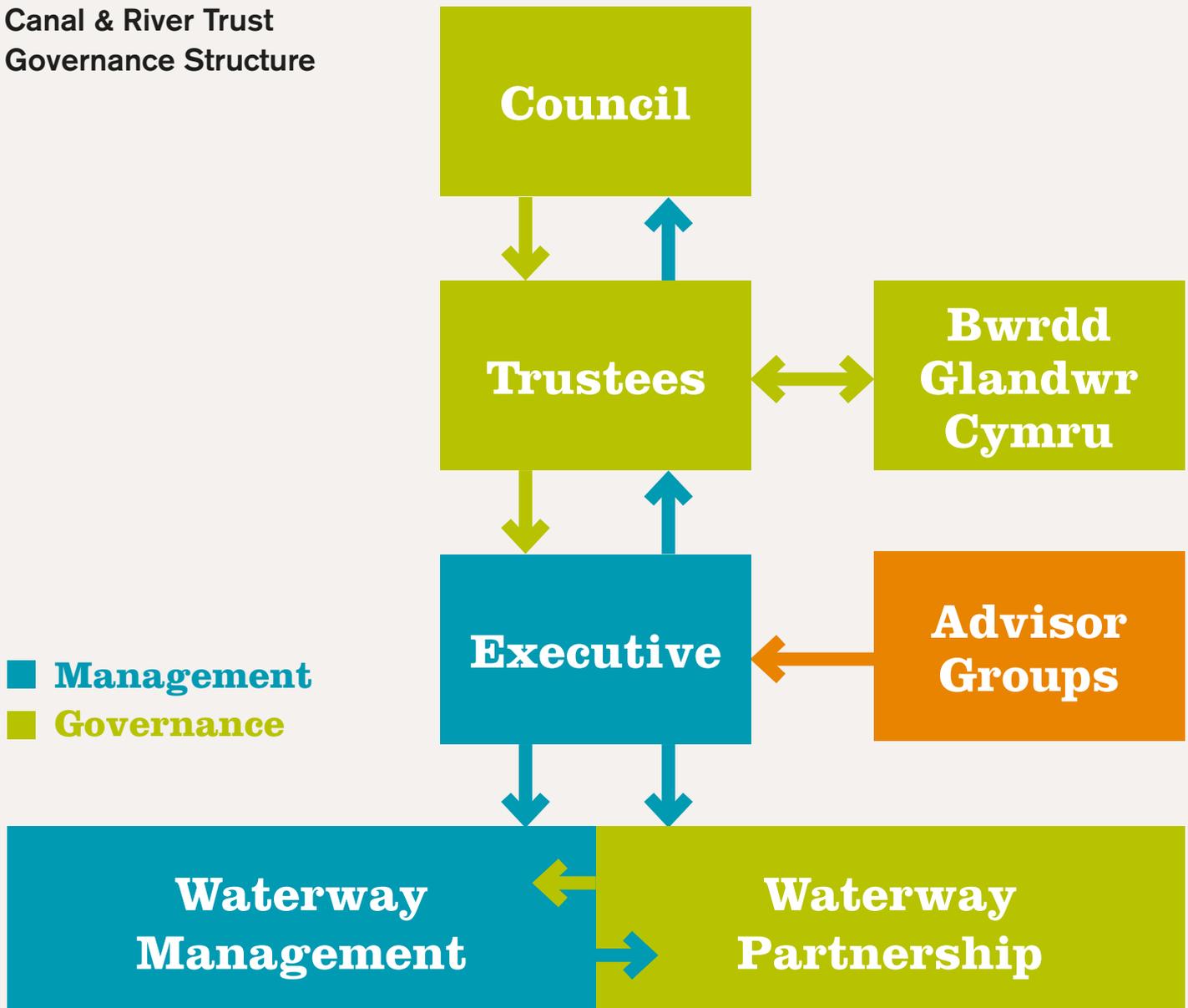
Ten regional Partnerships help to shape plans for the waterways and act as links between the Trust and the local Community. Each has a membership of between 8-12 people with relevant experience and interests – boaters, walkers, cyclists, anglers, business, community engagement, volunteering, fundraising, environment, heritage. These Partnerships mirror the ten Canal & River Trust geographic management areas. The Chair of each of the Partnerships has a seat on the Council.

The Partnerships play an advisory role and do not have executive powers. Nevertheless, their contacts and influence at a local level are vital in facilitating engagement with

communities, business, academia, local authorities, funders and sponsors, in all their diversity. They also have a key role in building our brand and reputation and promoting fundraising at a sub/regional level.

The Trust is currently reviewing the role of the Partnerships to ensure that their members can fully contribute to the Trust's Objectives.

Canal & River Trust Governance Structure



Members of the North Wales and Borders Waterways Partnership 2017

There are currently ten voluntary partnership members of the North Wales and Borders Waterways Partnership bringing a wide range of skills, experience and local contacts to the support of the work of the Trust.

The current members of the Partnership are listed below with a very brief indication of their backgrounds. Thanks must also go to the first Chair of the North Wales and Borders Partnership and former members who have made significant contributions to the local waterways: Jim Forrester (Chair), Helen Paterson, Bill Furniss, Jane Staley, Chris Koral, Belinda Davenport, Barry Stamp, Alan Platt, Sara Mogel and Gillian Edwards.

Brenda Harvey (Chair)

Background: Local government, town planning, regeneration

Sue Cawson

Background: Graphic design and publishing, Boating and waterways education. Member of Trust's Navigation Advisory Group

Mike Carter

Background: Marine engineering and surveying, boater, Chair of Trust's Navigation Advisory Group

Mary Gibby

Background: Conservation biologist, boater

John Hatton

Background: local government, leisure services, national canoeing bodies

Julie Roberts-Joyce

Background: teaching, school level education in general

Ruth Wojtan

Background: Partnership working, policy development, funding, local government, waterways strategy

Nicola Said

Background: tourism, marketing

John Yates

Background: heritage conservation, boater. Member of Trust's Heritage Advisory Group

Campbell Boyle

Background: Leading major construction projects around the world, boater

Wendy Capelle

North Wales and Borders Waterway manager, Ex officio member of the Partnership

Activities of the North Wales and Borders Waterways Partnership

The Partnership undertakes a varied programme of activities.

After the creation of the Trust in 2012 there was a significant investment of time in working out how the local waterway region could be helped by the work of the Partnership. The culmination of this work was the production of a ten-year strategic plan which has been the basis of the work of the Partnership since its publication in 2014.

Each year the Partnership works with the Waterways Team to agree a programme of activities to be undertaken during the year.

In the past three years, as the Trust has refined and clarified its priorities and measures, the work of the Partnership has become more focused on its contribution to those priorities.



Facing the Water

Promoting well being through our Waterways

North Wales & Borders Waterway Partnership
10 Year Strategic Plan



Partnership Activities in Summary

Much of the work of the Partnership is about influencing and engaging with others to promote the Trust's vision for the future and helping deliver it locally.

Not all the partnership activity is therefore immediately apparent along the waterways and towpaths – unlike that of our fellow volunteers who contribute their hard labour to maintenance and improvement tasks.

However, the partnership role is a different one – one of integrating the consideration of waterways and their protection into the agendas and programmes of other bodies; setting the context for future funding opportunities and establishing the important potential of the waterways in the minds of influential people locally.

With over 240 miles of waterway in North Wales and Borders and just ten/eleven (TBD) volunteer partnership members our activities are focused on where the greatest impact can be made and in establishing sustainable self-supporting change or improvements.

The list below identifies past, current and ongoing Partnership activities. 'Past' activities (2015 and/or 2016) may no longer be a major focus for the Partnership but may still be supported and could return as priority projects in the future.

Canal of the Future (Past, Present and Ongoing Activity)

Over recent years Partnership members have worked with members of the waterways community and local people to devise plans for the physical improvement and greater use of local waterways.

Starting with a consultation at the Annual Showcase event in 2015 and with subsequent local consultations of various types work has been focused on:

- **Market Drayton** (where community development plans have been identified and are being put into action),
- **Ellesmere Port** (where plans for improvement along the canal corridor have been developed)
- **Ellesmere** (where local views that the former canal warehouse should be reused are now being explored).
- **Audlem** (which now has a Destination Management Plan), has also had Partnership involvement in detailed plans for the canal side and increasing opportunities for visitors the area.



Consultation at Showcase event in 2015

Adoptions (Past, Present and Ongoing Activity)

Partnership members have been effective in establishing new contacts to allow new canal adoption schemes to be developed. (This is where groups enter into an agreement to maintain and/or improve a length of canal and towpath.)

Notable examples from recent years are:

- Richmond Court adoption in Chester where residents of the hostel for the homeless have taken responsibility for a length of the canal and towpath adjacent to Richmond Court. This has led to other joint activities with the Trust including helping on a 'Share the Space' promotion in Chester and a fishing taster session.
- Gnosall Village. Building on the village's longstanding endeavours as part of the Best Kept Village Awards a group has now taken on responsibility for improvements on the towpath through the village.

In the future, the Partnership is keen to promote adoptions with companies and organised groups.



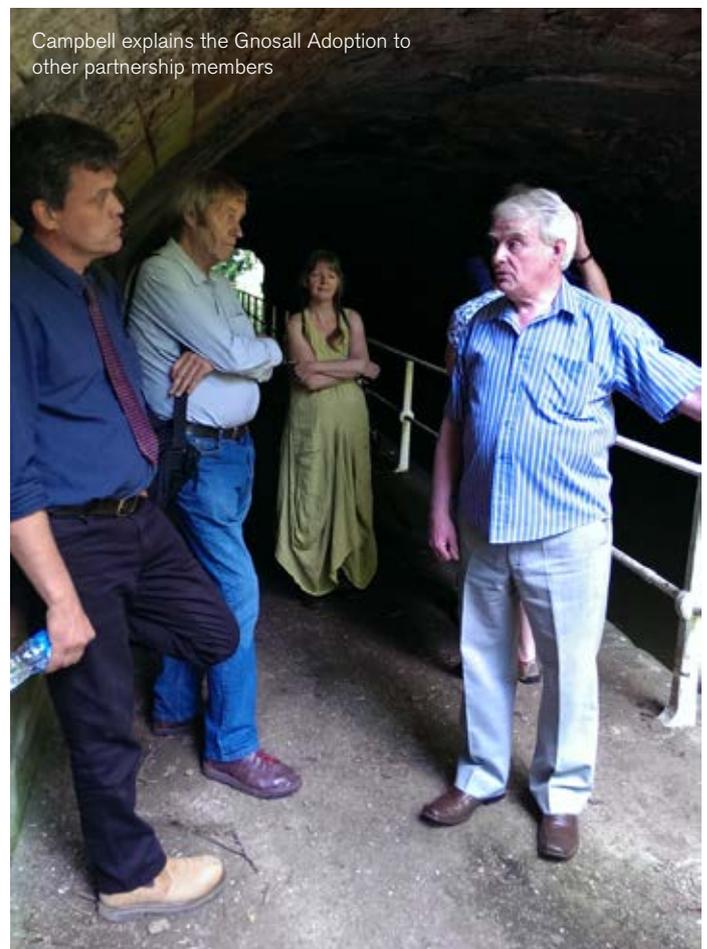
Richmond Court Residents
Fishing Taster on SUC



Richmond Court Residents supporting
Share the Space Campaign



Celebrating Richmond Court Canal
Adoption Agreement



Campbell explains the Gnosall Adoption to
other partnership members



Gnosall Village



Green Flag Award (Present Activity)

In July 2017, 22 miles of the Shropshire Union Canal in Cheshire was granted Green Flag Award status.

The award-winning section stretches from Audlem to Barbridge Junction and then connects to Middlewich. The Green Flag award, developed originally in respect of parks and green spaces, is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent visitor facilities.

Following initial involvement of the Partnership (with the support of Waterway Partnership colleagues from the adjacent Manchester and Pennines area) the Waterways Team took the bid forward with the support of the very active volunteer and interest groups involved with this stretch of canal.



Strategic Engagement (Past, Present and Ongoing Activity)

Partnership members have existing links into local organisations or the knowledge and experience to create such links. This helps the Trust to demonstrate to partners that the value of waterways to local communities may be wider than expected – for example covering physical and mental health, environment and ecology, learning, social skills and the benefits derived from volunteering. The existence of Waterways Partnerships across the country provides the Trust with capacity and reach at the strategic level that it could not otherwise achieve.

The local Partnership promotes these linkages through one-to-one meetings, events and promotions. These activities are frequently supported, or co-promoted, by the Waterways Team.



Allan Leighton, Chairman of the Canal and River Trust addressing a Waterways Partnership-hosted event in Chester City Centre for partners and senior local contacts (2016)



Representatives of local organisations hearing about the Canal and River Trust on a Partnership-led boat trip in Ellesmere Port 2015



Partnership Chair with Mark Isherwood AM, Lynne Berry, Deputy Chair of Canal & River Trust, and Andrew Stumpf, Head of Wales, Canal & River Trust, at Royal Welsh Show 2016

Strategic Engagement (Past, Present and Ongoing Activity) continued

The Royal Cheshire Show held in June 2017 enabled the North Wales and Borders Partnership and the Waterway team, to work together with Manchester, Pennines & Potteries to organise a successful stand that saw over 3,000 people engage with the Trust. A Breakfast meeting hosted by Richard Parry and the Partnership Chairs opened the stand and was attended by The High Sherriff of Cheshire and senior representatives from the HS2 project, Marketing Cheshire, Cheshire Women's Institute and local Councillors.

Meetings have also taken place with a number of MP's and Assembly Members across the network to explore the opportunities that the Canal & River Trust can offer to networks and corporate visions relating to regeneration, economic growth, the leisure industry, health and wellbeing, as well as to local communities.



The Waterways' Stand at The Royal Cheshire Show

Community Engagement (Past, Present and Ongoing Activity)

The Partnership works with the local Waterways Team, particularly the Development and Engagement Manager, to link with people in local communities and alert them to the potential and opportunities that the waterways provide.

In 2016 the Partnership produced its Community Engagement Plan to guide its activities.



North Wales & Borders Community Engagement Plan

About us

The Canal & River Trust is a charity entrusted to care for 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales. 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.

From improving towpaths for walkers and cyclists, providing opportunities to fish on our canals, creating new wildlife habitats, protecting our heritage, restoring derelict canals and maintaining our distinctive infrastructure, we are constantly working to make our canals and rivers the very best they can be.

Listening to young people (Past, Present and Ongoing activity)



Having a range of opportunities to talk to different members of the community as well as groups, has enabled partnership members to understand what is important to individuals as well as groups. Young people's voices are key to this as illustrated by the partnership joining a boat trip with a local youth group in 2015 to explore the World Heritage Site.

Young people explore the World Heritage Site

Fishing Taster Sessions (Past, Present and Ongoing Activity)

The Partnership supports Fishing Taster sessions to engage young people with the waterways promoted by the Trust's local Development and Engagement Manager and national fishing team. The 2015 Blacon session pictured has led on to a major engagement of local young people in the creation of fishing pegs along the canal designed and painted by local people, fishing sessions twice a week throughout the summer in 2016 and 2017 and the aim to create a fishing club soon.



Fishing Taster in Blacon 2015



Improved Access for Unpowered Craft (Past Activity)

Working in liaison with colleagues in the Inland Waterways Association (IWA) the partnership has supported the analysis of local access points for unpowered craft and the identification of ones for improvement and potential sites for new ones.

In the future Partnership members may be involved in helping consultations on potential sites for improvement.

Unpowered craft on Llangollen Canal

Natural Health Service (Ongoing Activity)

The Partnership has an ongoing project called the Natural Health Service. The partnership supports the work of local partner organisations (Mersey Forest in England and 'Get North Wales Moving' in North Wales) in developing local health improvement initiatives. The partnership's project is also feeding into work that the Trust is carrying out nationally to highlight the health contribution of the waterways.

On 24th March 2017, a partnership workshop was held in Llangollen. Called "Unlocking the Health Potential of the Waterways" the event brought together people and

organisations interested in improving the physical and mental health of local people.

The day included a walk on the towpath and a trip on a canal boat to demonstrate the attractive and calming ambiance of the waterways as a location for physical and mental health improvement and the workshop devised future joint activities that could support local people, the NHS and other health organisations in health improvement. Actions devised at that workshop are now being taken forward with local partners.



2017 Health workshop inside...



...on the water...



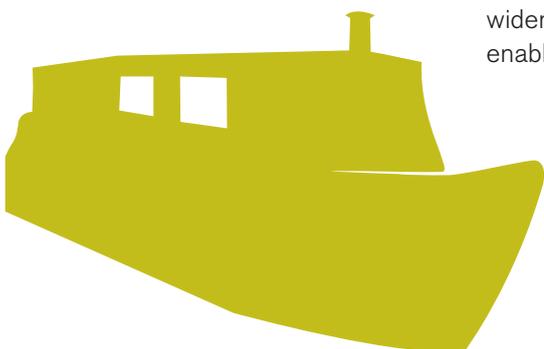
...along the towpath

West Cheshire Ring (Ongoing Activity)

The partnership is working closely with the Trust's Head of Museum's and Cheshire West and Chester Council to promote greater use of the Shropshire Union Canal north of Chester. One aspect of this is to promote a greater number of boat trips. This has three elements:

1. Supporting work to make the National Waterways Museum an even more attractive destination for boaters
2. Increasing the attractiveness of the canal route through Ellesmere Port and
3. Facilitating trips by experienced boaters along the Manchester Ship Canal to link the Shropshire Union Canal and the River Weaver.

Through expert knowledge within the Partnership, progress is being made with wider partnerships to further develop the West Cheshire Ring for boaters and enable a simpler process to join different waterways within the ring.



World Heritage Site – Governance, Board and Steering Group, Trevor Basin

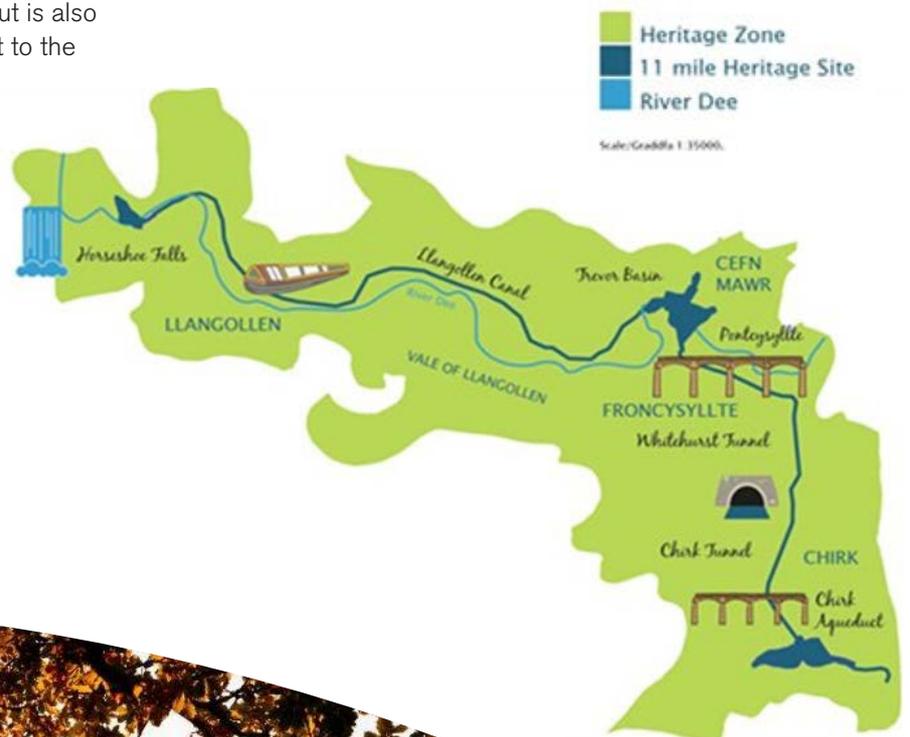
The North Wales and Borders region is the home of the eleven-mile World Heritage Site that is based on the Llangollen Canal and incorporates many fantastic engineering spectacles of the waterways – not least the iconic Pontcysyllte Aqueduct taking the canal over the river Dee at a height of 38.4 metres (126 feet).

The canal WHS and its surrounding buffer zone runs through three local authority areas, and two countries. It also overlaps with the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The area is subject to some of the strongest planning and environmental policy protections but is also an area sought out by visitors who are important to the local economy.

The Trust owns the canal and towpath but little other land except at Trevor Basin.

This complex background has meant that cross-organisational working is critical. Many local projects have been successfully delivered in this way since the WHS inscription in 2009. In recent years the partnership, particularly the chair, has been involved in developing and supporting

local partnership working amongst the WHS's key agencies and involving local communities to derive greater economic benefits and improved visitor experience. This has involved supporting a WHS governance review and technical master planning around Trevor Basin. The waterways manager has been supporting the review of the WHS Management Plan with colleagues from the partner agencies.



The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct in the World Heritage Site



Montgomery Canal

The Waterways Partnership is represented on the Montgomery Canal Partnership which is seeking the restoration of the Montgomery Canal and the sustainable regeneration of the canal corridor. As well as supporting the programme of restoration in any way it can the partnership particularly seeks to support those activities that demonstrate the value of the restored canal to local communities.



Celebrations on the Montgomery Canal

Tourism, Marketing & Branding

With the canal through Chester city, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site, and Anderton Boat Lift in our region, there is significant scope for developing and promoting an improved visitor offer.

Alongside this runs the Trust's national work on tourism, marketing and branding. The partnership is supporting this national work with activity locally and hopes to develop this further in the future.



Trust National Campaigns – Share the Space: Drop the Pace

The Trusts 'Share the Space: Drop the Pace' campaign has been widely supported by Partnership members. This has involved attendance at events such as the 'Mile of Manners' in Chester, 'Belles on Bikes' Bike rides through the World Heritage Site and 'Doggy-doo-dahs' days in Chester and Audlem in over the past two years. In addition, the partnership have shared information of the campaign throughout their own networks.



Mid-Cheshire Waterways Strategy



The partnership is working with stakeholders led by the local authority, to develop a vision of how the waterways can contribute to tourism, well-being and regeneration.



Canal &
River Trust

Canal & River Trust

Canal & River Trust
North Wales & Borders Waterway
2 Navigation Road
Northwich
Cheshire
CW8 1 BH

T 030 040 4040
W canalrivertrust.org.uk
🐦 @CRTHeritage

The Canal & River Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales with company number 7807276 and charity number 1146792