



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **LONGEST EVER GREEN FLAG AWARD HAS BEEN MADE**

The coveted Green Flag, awarded to the best kept parks, beaches and green spaces across the UK, has, for the first time, been awarded to the entire length of the Kennet & Avon Canal.

The award to the 87-mile Kennet & Avon Canal is the longest Green Flag designation ever awarded. Looked after by the Canal & River Trust, it marks a remarkable transformation for the canal which only a couple of decades ago was unused and in a state of dereliction.

The award to the Kennet & Avon Canal beats the previous longest Green Flag designations which were the Macclesfield Canal in Cheshire at 26miles and the Shropshire Union Canal between Middlewich to Audlem at 22miles.

Over 200 years old, the canal connects the River Thames at Reading to Bath and the ports at Bristol. In its industrial hey-day, the canal shipped goods such as coal and stone. It then fell into dereliction and decline and it wasn't until the early 1960's when it began to be restored by volunteers and initially opened by the Queen in 1990's and then Prince Charles in May 2003.

Mark Evans, waterway manager for the Trust, said: "We're delighted that the entire stretch of the Kennet & Avon Canal from Reading to Bath has been awarded with a Green Flag.

"The canal is a wonderful outdoor green space which is ideal for families to enjoy a lovely day out in the countryside. Winning this award is testament to the huge amount of work that everyone at the Trust puts into looking after the canal. As a charity, we're grateful to all the people who volunteer to help us as well as those who donate money to help look after the waterway."

To find out more about the Canal & River Trust including how you can volunteer or donate money to support our work visit [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)

**ENDS**

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**Notes to editors:**

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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