



Canal &
River Trust

PRESS RELEASE

13 November 2017

GET YOUR PARKAS - MANCHESTER CANAL LOCK GOES 'MAD FOR IT'

- **Lock 91 on the Rochdale Canal is to host the World's first DJ set in a drained canal lock chamber**
- **Visitors can dance the night away to some much-loved Hacienda classics**

Already over the Christmas build-up? Why not come and see the canal that runs through the heart of Manchester as you've never seen it before.

The Canal & River Trust will be opening lock 91 on the Rochdale Canal for one night only to celebrate Manchester's musical heritage, by playing a set of Hacienda club classics, in homage to the famous club which was located just metres from the lock. Visitors can dance the evening away under the star lit sky and sway their glow sticks to music by local DJ 'Just Jane' all 14ft down inside a drained lock chamber.

The one-off music event on Friday December 1st is part of a free open weekend taking place on Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd December at locks 90 and 91 on the Rochdale Canal, to highlight the essential works being carried out by the charity, Canal & River Trust. Throughout the weekend visitors will be able to walk in the drained lock chambers and canal, seeing up close the vast quantity and array of rubbish that gets thrown into the water, while learning about how the charity looks after this busy section of canal and the challenges it faces.

The works to the Rochdale Canal will cost £100,000 and are being carried out as part of the Canal & River Trust's £38million, five-month programme of repairs to England and Wales' waterways between November 2017 and March 2018.

Mark Wigley, construction manager for the Canal & River Trust, says: "This is the first time we've held an open day in Manchester and we're really excited to show locals all the hard work that's gone into its restoration. We're carrying out these vital repairs to ensure the canal in this bustling part of Manchester city centre is kept in great working order for everyone who loves and uses it.

"Our historic waterways are still working as they were designed to 200 years ago and we work year-round to keep them open and safe for everyone to enjoy, this requires a huge

amount of planning, investment and expertise and we're investing in local training for apprentices to ensure these skills can be passed on."

Visitors to the Manchester open weekend can also look around a pop-up museum, showcasing some of the weird and wonderful finds from below the waterline. There will be 'virtual hubs' where people can plug in and watch a virtual reality video of some of our more unusual and awe-inspiring locations, re-enactments from the birth of the Rochdale Canal, and an exhibition of historic images from the area. And to carry on the weekend's music theme, visitors on Saturday will be entertained by a local choir singing Christmas carols in the lock.

Event details: Friday 1st December – free evening music event 6pm-9pm, this will be first come first served. Saturday 2nd and 3rd December – open weekend, 10am-4pm both days. There is no parking at the event. The towpath runs alongside Whitworth Street West off Deansgate in Manchester City Centre. Entry to the event is on the towpath between lock 91 and lock 92. Site postcode: M3 4LA.

Please wear sensible footwear. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult to go into the locks. The lock chambers are not suitable for wheelchairs, however there will be a viewing area from street level.

- Images of the Rochdale canal in Manchester, past and present available at: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/se4cukhlvi1list/AAAt_3PZD6wiqSUS2dhupr5ua?dl=0
- Canal & River Trust Open Days video available at: <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/our-campaigns/open-days>
- To find out more about the Open Day programme and the events happening near you visit <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/our-campaigns/open-days>
- For more information on Just Jane please visit <https://www.takemetochurch.co.uk/>

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For media requests, interviews and additional images/footage please contact:

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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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The Canal & River Trust carries out a year-round programme of works to maintain and repair the 2,000 miles of canals and rivers in its care so they can be enjoyed by the 33,000 boats and 10 million towpath visitors each year. Many of the biggest projects are carried out during the winter months to minimise the impact on waterway users. This year, essential maintenance will include the replacement of worn-out lock gates and repairs to aqueducts, reservoirs and tunnels.

The Manchester open weekend is one of 10 free public open days across the country, offering the chance to see a part of the nation's 'hidden history' and some of our most extraordinary waterway locations as you have never done before.

As part of its winter maintenance programme, the Trust will be working on over 200 different sites across the country. The new lock gates are made in the Trust's specialist workshops at Bradley in the West Midlands and Stanley Ferry in Yorkshire.

Lock gate making and fitting is a skilled and traditional trade and one that remains essential to the waterways. Lock gates are constructed with tremendous strength as they have to control huge water pressures, take the hard usage they get from the thousands of boats which use them each year and survive for a long time underwater and at the mercy of the elements. Each lock gate is hand-crafted by a skilled team of carpenters and made from sustainably-sourced British oak. A single lock gate weighs on average 3.6 tonnes, can take up to 20 days to make and has a working life of 25-30 years.

Locks have varying numbers of gates – at the 'upstream' end of locks some have two gates whilst others only have one, with the same applying at the 'downstream' end.