



PRESS RELEASE

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CANAL & RIVER TRUST SEEKS VOLUNTEER LOCK KEEPERS ACROSS THE NORTH WEST'S WATERWAYS

Canal & River Trust, the charity that looks after 2,000 miles of waterways, is seeking new volunteer lock keepers across the north west to support the region's canals and rivers.

Volunteer lock keepers act as 'the face of the waterway' and it's a role as iconic as the waterways themselves. They not only help boaters pass through the locks but also engage with people using the towpaths and take part in other volunteering activities to help the UK's canals and rivers thrive.

Every year there are around 3.8 million 'lockings' (passages through locks) through the Canal & River Trust's 1,580 locks. With some 32,000 boats using the canals, there is more waterways traffic now than at the height of the industrial revolution.

Debbie Bradley has been a volunteer lock keeper with Canal & River Trust for four years. She works on the Ribble Link on the Lancaster Canal and says she always looks forward to the new boating season.

"I love lock keeping. It gets me out in the fresh air, I learn new skills, and I get to meet people and hear their narrow boating stories.

"I find it very therapeutic as it is totally the opposite of my job in a clinical lab."

The Canal & River Trust is seeking volunteer lock keepers across the north west for locks on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, Ribble Link, and Rufford Branch at:

- Blackburn Locks
- Gargrave & Bank Newton Locks
- Greenberfield
- Hirst Lock to Bingley 5 Rise
- Johnson's Hillock Lock (near Chorley)
- Office to Newlay Lock (Leeds)
- Ribble Link (Preston)
- Wigan Flight

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Patron: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales. Canal & River Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with company number 7807276 and registered charity number 1146792, registered office address: First Floor North, Station House, 500 Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1BB

- Stanley Lock Flight, Liverpool
- Rufford Branch (Burscough)

Alice Kay, volunteering development coordinator at Canal & River Trust, commented: “Our volunteer lock keepers are an essential part of the visitor experience, welcoming people to our waterways and helping to keep the canals and rivers open and accessible.

“For those who like working outdoors, doing hands-on tasks, and meeting new people it’s the ideal volunteering role. It really boosts local communities whilst giving volunteers the chance to learn new skills and make new friends.”

People over 18 and able to give at least a day a week can apply to become a volunteer lock keeper. Everyone gets full training and support and the role is usually live from April to October.

Anyone interested in volunteering with Canal & River Trust can come along to the open day at Johnson’s Hillock on 28th January, where they will be able to find out more. Full details are available at: www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/events/2018-01-28-johnsons-hillock-open-day-28-january-2018

Further information on volunteer lock keeper opportunities with Canal & River Trust is available at: www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/volunteer/opportunities.

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Photo shows Alice Kay, volunteering development coordinator at Canal & River Trust, and volunteers in Wigan.

For further information, images, and interviews, please contact:

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Notes to editors:

Photos show Canal & River Trust volunteer lock keeper Mike Grout.

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.

Find out more about our work at: www.canalrivertrust.org.uk