



PRESS RELEASE

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Video and images available – links below

PUBLIC INVITED TO VENTURE INTO THE DEPTHS OF PARKHEAD CANAL LOCK DURING ESSENTIAL REPAIRS

- Find out from the charity's skilled team of experts about the vital work being carried out to 200-year-old canal
 - Family friendly activities makes for a special day out

Lock 3 at Parkhead, on the Dudley Canal, will be undergoing an extensive refurbishment to install brand new handmade lock gates. The lock will be out of action while experts from the Canal & River Trust drain it to carry out the essential repairs.

On Sunday 4th March the Canal & River Trust, the charity which looks after 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales, will allow the public the rare chance of venturing into the deep bottom of the empty lock chamber to view the structure from a very different perspective. The public can speak to the charity's experts about how the lock gates are made and fitted and about the works being undertaken.

The works to the Dudley Canal will cost £43,000 and are being carried out as part of the charity's £38million, five-month programme of winter repairs to England and Wales' waterways between November 2017 and March 2018. After over 25 years of use, the old lock gates need to be replaced with new, 4-tonne gates made at the Trust's Bradley workshop from sustainable English oak.

The Trust's team, including construction supervisors, civil engineers and volunteers, will be on hand to explain about their varied work and why it's important to pass this knowledge and experience on to future generations.

Canal & River Trust

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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

Visitors will be able to enjoy boat trips with Dudley Canal Trust as well as trying canoeing. There will be a 'virtual hub' where visitors can plug in and watch virtual reality videos of some of the Canal & River Trust's more unusual and awe-inspiring locations. Other attractions include a heritage working boat along with other trade boats.

Bashir Ahmed, Development & Engagement Manager at the Canal & River Trust, says: "It's not very often that we get the chance to see our historic locks drained of water. The open weekend gives us the opportunity to meet with local people and share with them the work of the Trust and how we maintain these national treasures. There will be plenty of activities to spark everyone's interest so please come along and meet us."

To find out more about the Trust's restoration and repair programme and the open days happening across the country go to www.canalrivertrust.org.uk.

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For further media requests, interviews or images please contact:

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Historic images of Banbury Lock available at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yopdo277urmyipj/AABsFKE0PQfMAF6fmtNfiFFha?dl=0>

Canal & River Trust Open Days video available at: <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/our-campaigns/open-days>

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.

www.canalrivertrust.org.uk / @canalrivertrust / @crtcomms / #winteropendays

Dudley open day will be held on Sunday 4th March 2018 between 10am and 4pm. Last entry into the lock will be at 3:30pm.

Location: Parkhead Locks, Dudley Canal, Dudley, DY2 0UP

Parking is limited, available on nearby Peartree Lane. Please do wear sturdy shoes if you would like to go down into the lock.

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.

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 20-30 years.