



Canal &
River Trust

PRESS RELEASE

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Photos and video available -

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/utak2pcoq2f8l4s/AAD8sDSm1yCqqD1s-w7uOX3Ha?dl=0>

Take a 'lock' behind the 'Seends' of the Kennet & Avon Canal

- Essential works being carried out at three canal locks in Seend, Wiltshire
 - Rare chance to walk along the bottom of drained Lock 18
 - Free public open day planned for Saturday 10th March

To celebrate the essential works being carried out at three locks on the Kennet & Avon Canal in Seend, the Canal & River Trust are giving local people the chance to walk down into one of the drained locks during a special open day this weekend.

Visitors will be able to walk down into the drained chamber of Lock 18 to see the brand-new lock gates which have just been installed and talk to engineers about the challenges and rewards of repairing 19th Century engineering with 21st Century technology. There will also be family activities, poetry recitals and a chance to take a virtual tour along stretches of the 2,000 miles of waterway the Canal & River Trust cares for.

Caroline Robson, development & engagement manager at the Canal & River Trust, says: "We're delighted to be able to offer this unusual chance to walk along the bottom of lock 18 to see the much loved Kennet & Avon Canal from a very different perspective. Our apprentice bricklayer will be teaching people some skills in bricklaying as well as talking about the Canal & River Trust's apprentice programme and all that we do as a charity to keep the canal open for people to use and enjoy. And if you're in need of a special handmade present for the mums in your life for Mothering Sunday, then you can make a bat or bird box or make something in the yarn workshop. There will be a lot going on to celebrate this important work so we look forward to seeing you on Saturday!"

The Canal & River Trust, the charity which looks after all 87 miles of the Kennet & Avon Canal, is spending £281,000 on Wiltshire locks 17, 18 and 19 to ensure they are working smoothly for the busy boating season.

The works are being carried out as part of the Trust's annual £38 million, five-month programme of repairs to England and Wales' waterways between November and March. The charity carries out an annual programme of restoration and repairs to the nation's



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waterways during the winter to minimise the inconvenience of navigation closures to boaters during the busy summer season.

The free public open day is on Saturday 10th March, 10am to 4pm. Parking will be at The Barge Inn, Seend, Melksham SN12 6QB.

Please wear sensible and waterproof footwear i.e. flat boots, trainers. Dogs are welcome but will not be allowed in the locks. There will be a space to leave bikes and buggies. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult to go in the locks. Unfortunately, the locks are not suitable for wheelchairs but people will be able to view the lock from the bridge.

To find out more about the Restoration & Repairs programme and the open days happening across the country go to <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/open-days>

ENDS

For further media requests, interviews or images please contact:

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Notes to editors:

The flight of five locks 17-23 built near Seend Cleeve village were constructed by renowned canal engineer John Rennie. Seend Lock Bridge 154 lies in between locks 18 and 19, built in the local limestone, but it was repaired with patches of blue bricks, characteristic of the period of Great Western Railway ownership of the Kennet & Avon Canal 1854-1948.

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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