



# PRESS RELEASE

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28 June 2018

## TAKE A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY AND **'GONGOOZLE'** BLOSSOMING BOATS ALONG BRITAIN'S TOWPATHS THIS SUMMER

This summer Canal & River Trust, the charity that cares for 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England & Wales, is encouraging people to set out on a voyage of discovery and help celebrate the nation's most beautiful blooming boats. At this time of year hundreds of boats around the country are festooned with flowers, and the Trust wants people to spread the word.

The charity is asking people to visit the waterways – close to home or further afield – and, if they come across a blossoming boat that takes their breath away, to take a photo and share it on the Trust's Facebook and Twitter pages, with the hashtag #boatsinbloom. It's free to stroll along the towpath and, with 8 million people living within a kilometre of a canal or river, it's one of the most accessible ways to enjoy the summer sun.

It comes at a time when more boats are using the waterways than any time since the Industrial Revolution, with the renaissance of 200-year old canals benefiting local economies, tourism, and the health and happiness of communities.

Matthew Symonds, boating strategy & engagement manager at the Canal & River Trust, said: "Take a walk along any towpath and you'll come across a boat that lifts your spirits with its spectacular display of flowers. We want you to capture that moment of stumbling across something new or special and share it with others. A beautiful picture can inspire people to get out and try something different, and maybe come down and experience our wonderful waterways for themselves.

"Our teams and volunteers work hard to keep the waterways open and in great shape so everyone can enjoy them, while the huge variety of boats that cruise them really bring them to life with charm and vibrancy. There are all sorts of boats: the iconic narrowboat, historic craft, wide beam barges, and motor cruisers, not to mention rowing boats and other paddle craft. They're used for many different things, from floating homes to leisure boats used to explore the network for pleasure, to a whole host of businesses that trade from the waterline.

Canal & River Trust, Toll House, Delamere Terrace, London, W2 6ND

T: 0203 3204 4514 E: [press.office@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:press.office@canalrivertrust.org.uk) W: [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk) Twitter: [@CanalRiverTrust](https://twitter.com/CanalRiverTrust)

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

“We know that being by the water makes people healthier and happier. What better way to celebrate summer and unwind than by making a trip to your local canal or river and ‘gongoozling’ – taking the time to watch the boats go by. And if you spot a gorgeous blooming boat, take a photo of it and share it so other people can share the pleasure.”

Twitter: @CanalRiverTrust

Facebook: @CanalRiverTrust

Hashtag: #boatsinbloom

**ENDS**

**For further media requests please contact:**

Fran Read, national press officer, Canal & River Trust

m 07796 610 427 e [fran.read@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:fran.read@canalrivertrust.org.uk)

### **Notes to editors**

The Canal & River Trust cares for and brings to life 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England & Wales. We believe waterways have the power to make a real difference to people’s lives and that spending time by water can make us all healthier and happier. By bringing communities together to transform their local waterway, we are creating places and spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, every day.

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