

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **CANAL CHARITY CARRIES OUT £300,000 WINTER REPAIRS ON SHROPSHIRE/WELSH BORDER CANALS**

The Canal & River Trust, the national waterways and wellbeing charity, will carry out nearly £300,000 worth of repairs to the Llangollen and Montgomery canals, starting in the New Year.

Repairs to a handrail at Britain's highest aqueduct, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, between Chirk and Llangollen, new lock gates at Grindley Brook and Povey's Lock near Whitchurch, are among eight vital maintenance projects along the Welsh Border canals between 2 January and 29 March 2019.

Before each separate lock or section is drained, fish will be rescued and transported to another part of the canal which remains in water. All the new lock gates are hand-crafted in oak at a special Canal & River Trust workshop using traditional skills. The old gates will generally be craned out and the new gates craned in as part of a spectacular lift movement.

Other work includes:

- Repairs to Montgomery Canal lock gates at Frankton Locks 1 and 4.
- On the Llangollen Canal, repairs to a collapsed washwall at Whitehouses Tunnel.
- Correction of an inward leaning wall, plus balance beam and brickwork repairs at Hurleston Locks.

Ged King, construction manager with the Canal & River Trust, said: "The Llangollen Canal is one of the most popular canals in the country, so it is vitally important that we keep the 200-year-old man-made waterway in good repair.

"Its combination of stunning scenery and incredible engineering, including the 11 mile World Heritage Site, attracts thousands of visitors every year. Boaters love the challenge of traversing Britain's highest aqueduct, and walkers, cyclists, canoeists and anglers all enjoy spending leisure time by this beautiful waterway.

"Most of this year's maintenance jobs are on the Llangollen Canal but we also have a key task to repair lock gates at Frankton Locks, the gateway to the Montgomery Canal, which is currently undergoing a £4 million restoration project.

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“After Christmas, we will be emptying millions of litres of water from the canals, moving thousands of fish and lifting multi-tonne lock gates through the air into place. Each new gate is made to measure, weighs several tonnes, and is handcrafted from seasoned oak so that it fits perfectly in the lock chamber. Lock gates typically last around 25 years and allow thousands of boats to travel from place to place each year.

“Although the canals were originally built during the Industrial Revolution, today they have been reinvented as leisure destinations and havens for wildlife. Modern canals offer an amazing, tranquil space, where everything slows down – a great place to escape the pressures of modern life.”

The Llangollen Canal, constructed by famous canal engineers Thomas Telford and William Jessop, connects the Shropshire Union Canal at Hurleston in South Cheshire and runs through Ellesmere in Shropshire to its terminus at Llangollen in Denbighshire. The Montgomery Canal joins it at Frankton.

For more information on the Canal & River Trust’s vital winter waterway repair programme and public open days, visit <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/our-campaigns/open-days>.

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**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 difference to people’s lives and that spending time by water can make us all healthier and happier. By bringing communities together to make a difference to their local waterway, we are creating places and spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, every day.

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