

# PRESS RELEASE

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Issued: 14 March 2019

## CAEN HILL GETS £30,000 WINTER MAKEOVER

The Canal & River Trust, the national waterways and wellbeing charity, has carried out more than £30,000 worth of vital maintenance and repair work to Caen Hill Locks on the Kennet & Avon Canal in Wiltshire this winter, with the team finishing work this week ahead of the summer cruising season.

Caen Hill Lock Flight is a scheduled ancient monument and one of the greatest boating challenges on the 2,000 miles of waterways the Trust looks after, carrying the canal up a total of 29 locks with a rise of 237 feet over two miles. The works to protect this special site are part of an £86,000 winter conservation programme spread across the Kennet & Avon Canal.

Over the winter, specialist teams from the Trust worked on seven of the 29 locks, relining and boarding the gates to fix leaks, preserve water, and make them easier for boaters to use.

Caroline Robson, engagement manager at the Canal & River Trust, said: “Every year, thousands of people come to marvel at John Rennie’s extraordinary feat of engineering. As one of the seven wonders of the waterways, it’s important to keep it in top condition for the boaters who take on the challenge, the gongoozlers urging them on, and the volunteer lock keepers lending a helping hand!

“Caen Hill Lock Flight was the final stretch of the Kennet & Avon Canal to be completed, solving the puzzle of how to carry water up such a steep hill. Whilst the original cargoes of coal, stone, and grain may be consigned to history, the canal continues to delight thousands of locals and visitors every year.

“Today the canal is a leisure destination and a haven for wildlife, as well as a place to explore the country’s rich industrial heritage. We want more people to come and discover the sense of wellbeing being by the water brings. The Kennet & Avon Canal forms part of the Great West Way – a major new touring route being developed between London and Bristol which joins-up many of England’s most iconic attractions and encourages visitors to venture off the beaten track and explore more of the region by road or by rail, by boat, by cycle or on foot. Works like those we’ve carried out at Caen Hill help make such an exciting project possible.

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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

“Modern canals offer an amazing, tranquil space, where everything slows down – a great place to escape the pressures of modern life. We know from research that people are happier and more relaxed when they’re by water, and activities such as walking, cycling, boating, fishing, canoeing and paddle boarding improve people’s mental and physical well-being.”

For more information about the Canal & River Trust, including how you can volunteer or donate to the charity, visit [canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk)

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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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