

PRESS RELEASE

14 October 2020

FLYING THE GREEN FLAG FOR THE NORTH EAST

Newly formed Tees Barrage Park Celebrates Green Flag Award as Tees Barrage Goes Green in its 25th Anniversary Year

Today, Tees Barrage Park in Stockton-on-Tees is celebrating its first accolade, the prestigious Green Flag Award.

From tonight until Halloween on 31 October, Tees Barrage will be lit up green, to celebrate the award.

Spanning 550 hectares (5.5km²), Tees Barrage Park incorporates four key sites along a half mile stretch of the River Tees. These sites are: Tees Barrage*, Tees Barrage International White Water Centre* & Air Trail, Maze Hill Nature Reserve* and Portrack Marsh Nature Reserve.

The Green Flag Award scheme, managed by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy under licence from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, recognises and rewards well-managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for their management across the United Kingdom and around the world.

Canal & River Trust, the waterways and wellbeing charity that looks after Tees Barrage, has been working with Tees Active and Tees Valley Wildlife Trust and Stockton Council to formally establish Tees Barrage Park and three of the four key sites (*) within the Park were constructed 25 years ago alongside the building of the barrage.

Lizzie Dealey, partnerships and external relationships manager at Canal & River Trust applied for the award on behalf of the group. She explained: "A Green Flag Award comes from a lot of hard work and I'd like to thank and congratulate everyone who works or volunteers for Canal & River

Trust, Tees Active and Tees Valley Wildlife Trust for their efforts to maintain this attractive, diverse landscape and look after the amazing wildlife that live here.”

“With record numbers of people discovering their local parks, woodlands and waterways as places to exercise, take a breath of fresh air, and find a moment of peace during the pandemic, it is vital that we look after our blue and green spaces. So, wrap up warm and take time out to explore Tees Barrage Park for yourself and look out for wildlife along the way, from seals to wetland birds.”

Leon Jones, Tees Active Managing Director said: “The Green Flag award signifies the value of a park to the local community and recognises the excellent standards achieved in every area. At Tees Active we are committed to building active and healthy communities and the Green Flag status for Tees Barrage Park will enable us to attract new visitors, increase levels of physical activity and enhance the lives of local residents. Whether you want to run, walk, cycle, climb or paddle, there is something for all ages and abilities and I would encourage everyone to get out and explore what’s on our doorstep.”

Tees Barrage Park is one of more than 2,000 sites across the country to collect the award for 2020.

Commenting on the Tees Barrage Park success, Keep Britain Tidy Chief Executive Allison Ogden-Newton OBE said: “This year, more than ever, our parks and green spaces have been a lifeline and we know that millions of people have used them to relax, meet friends, exercise or simply escape for a short time.

“It is testament to the incredible dedication and hard work of parks staff and volunteers that Tees Barrage Park has achieved the highest international standards demanded by the Green Flag Award.”

For more information about the Canal & River Trust, including how you can volunteer or support the charity, visit canalrivertrust.org.uk

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For more media information please contact Naomi Roberts, 07557 256482 naomi.roberts@canalrivertrust.org.uk or Matt Cornish matthew.cornish@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Notes to editors

The Tees Barrage Park has the following four key sites in addition to the River Tees.

1. The Tees Barrage* tidal barrier (Canal & River Trust)
2. The Tees Barrage International White Water Centre & Air Trail* (Tees Active)
3. Park Maze* Nature Reserve (Tees Valley Wildlife Trust)
4. Portrack Marsh Nature Reserve (Tees Valley Wildlife Trust)

(Those marked with a * were constructed at the same time as part of the construction of the Tees Barrage which opened in 1995).

The Canal & River Trust cares for and brings to life 2,000 miles of canals and river navigations 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.

www.canalrivertrust.org.uk @CanalRiverTrust @crtcomms

Tees Active began operating on May 1st 2004, it employs over 300 staff and is a charitable community leisure trust. Tees Active is committed to improving health and wellbeing through a number of exciting activities and health initiatives to raise levels of physical activity across the borough. Billingham Forum, IB Leisure, Splash, Thornaby Pavilion, Thornaby Pool, Tees Barrage and Air Trail are supported by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and managed by Tees Active. The venues welcome in excess of 2 million visits per annum.

Tees Valley Wildlife Trust

The Tees Valley Wildlife Trust is an independent, local charity established in 1979 and working across the five unitary authorities of the Tees Valley. It is based at Margrove near Guisborough, has 20 employees, 120 active volunteers and long term support from 5000 members. The Trust works with local communities to improve the area's natural environment and protect its wildlife.

www.teeswildlife.org

Green Flag Awards

The scheme (<http://greenflagaward.org/>) is run by the environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, under licence from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, in partnership in the UK with Keep Scotland Beautiful, Keep Wales Tidy and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. The scheme also operates in an additional 14 countries including Portugal, New Zealand and USA. #GoGreenForParks

Any green space that is freely accessible to the public is eligible to enter for a Green Flag Award. Awards are given on an annual basis and winners must apply each year to renew their Green Flag Award status. A Green Flag Community Award recognises quality sites managed by voluntary and community groups. Green Heritage Site Accreditation is judged on the treatment of the site's historic features and the standard of conservation. To find out more about Keep Britain Tidy visit www.keepbritaintidy.org.

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