

PRESS RELEASE

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Aston Villa Foundation adopts local canal

The Aston Villa Foundation has joined forces with waterways and wellbeing charity, Canal & River Trust, to help care for a stretch of the Tame Valley Canal in Perry Barr.

As part of their adoption, colleagues from the Foundation have already been out planting a variety of spring bulbs alongside the canal. The bulbs, which will flower in the club colours of claret and blue, will brighten up the towpath and attract a variety of animals and insects to the canal.

Colleagues from the Foundation will also carry out general maintenance along the canal to make it a welcoming place for the community to visit, from cutting back overgrown trees and bushes, painting lock gates and planting up flower beds.

Canal adoptions give local businesses the chance to work alongside the Canal & River Trust to make a real difference to the local community. At a hands-on level they get involved in activities specific to their waterway, from recording and improving wildlife habitats or maintaining a local towpath, to helping run educational or community events. Most groups meet regularly each month to ensure their stretch continues to thrive.

Terry Hodgetts, business and corporate engagement manager at the Canal & River Trust, said: “It’s fantastic that the Aston Villa Foundation will be working with us. The Foundation already do so much positive work within the community so it’s great that our canals are recognised by them as being important to local people.

“Many fans use their local canal to get to a home game and soon they’ll be able to see their favourite team colours blooming along the towpath. Our canals flow through towns and cities right across the country – providing vital green and blue space in communities that often need them the most. Hats off to Aston Villa, as they are the first football club to support their local community in this way.”

“Being out on the canal is great fun as you get the chance to be outside and spend some time in the fresh air. All our activities are carried out in a coronavirus safe environment and, as we’ve got

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so much space along the canal, they are perfect for socially distanced corporate team days and outings.”

Pete Ezard, Partnerships Manager for the Aston Villa Foundation, said: “It’s a fantastic opportunity to be working in partnership with the Canal & River Trust. We will be able to deliver a number of our projects in partnership with the Trust including social action projects with young people in the community and health and wellbeing schemes with older participants. This will also be an opportunity for us to use the canals for staff development and training days and help restore a small area of the local canals for the community to enjoy.”

For more information on the Canal & River Trust please visit www.canalrivertrust.org.uk

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For further information contact Sarah Rudy, comms & campaigns manager on 07788 691 219 sarah.rudy@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 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