

# PRESS RELEASE

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## CANAL & RIVER TRUST SECURES FUNDING TO CREATE WATERWAY ROLES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Waterways and wellbeing charity Canal & River Trust has secured government support to create dozens of opportunities in heritage repair and construction, and waterways management, for young people, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions.

The six-month positions are being offered as part of the Kickstart initiative, a programme for young people aged 16-24 who are claiming Universal Credit and are at risk of long-term unemployment. The programme will support young people to build up their experience and help them move into sustained employment after they have completed their Kickstart-funded role.

The Trust will offer a total of 69 placements, at an estimated value of c.£500,000. In Burnley, Leicester and Walsall, up to 36 young people will gain experience in waterway management and customer service, including canal and towpath care and a range of 'green' environmental projects. Another 31 positions are based with the Trust's construction teams, where participants will learn heritage skills ranging from masonry, bricklaying and carpentry, to canal bank protection and towpath resurfacing. Two further roles are being created in the charity's digital marketing team.

Steve Higham, head of partner & outcomes development at Canal & River Trust, said: "We are delighted to have secured Kickstart funding to offer 69 roles across the waterways to help young people to develop the skills, and gain the experience, that will help them secure long term employment. Our waterways run through some of the most deprived areas in the country and it's particularly important that we can offer local opportunities to young people in these communities. Working with our experienced teams, participants will learn a range of skills to equip them for work in conservation, heritage and the environment as well as on the waterways themselves."

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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

The Kickstarter opportunities will be advertised before Christmas with a view to placements beginning from February 2021. They will be advertised on [www.gov.uk/find-a-job](http://www.gov.uk/find-a-job) and the Trust's website, and will be shared with the Trust's community and skills partners.

**ENDS**

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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 Wales and England. 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.

### **Kickstart programme**

Kickstart will enable employers to recruit young people for 25 hours per week at the relevant National Minimum Wage, to be re-imbursed 100% by the Government. The funding will also include associated employer National Insurance contributions, employer minimum auto-enrolment pension contributions and an additional £1,500 per placement for set up costs.