

PRESS RELEASE

Issued: 13 December 2021

NORTH WEST WATERWAYS GET A £16.5M WINTER MAKEOVER

The Canal & River Trust, the waterways and wellbeing charity, is investing £16.5million on carrying out specialist repairs, upgrades and maintenance work to the North West's historic waterways this winter.

As part of the programme, which is due to finish in mid-March, the Trust's expert engineering teams are replacing worn-out lock gates, repairing masonry and carrying out a host of maintenance tasks to keep the 200-year old network in good working order. The Trust is also undertaking a number of major projects, including repairing a breach of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal at Rishton and securing the long term restoration of Toddbrook Reservoir in Whaley Bridge.

North West projects include work on the Ashton, Leeds & Liverpool (including the Rufford Branch), Peak Forest, Rochdale, Huddersfield Narrow, Trent & Mersey, Llangollen and Shropshire Union canals.

The Trust, which nationally cares for 2,000 miles of waterways, is guardian to more than 380 miles of canals and rivers in the North West, as well as hundreds of locks, bridges, aqueducts, tunnels and reservoirs. Most lock gates need to be replaced every 25-30 years and are individually made to measure from sustainably-sourced European green oak, hand-crafted in the Trust's specialist workshops at Bradley, West Midlands, or Stanley Ferry in Yorkshire.

The North West canal winter works programme includes:

- **Ashton Canal:** New lock gates and ladder installed at Lock 13 (Crabtree Lane); new bottom lock gates installed and masonry repairs at Lock 15 (Clayton); repair work and new resin grouting will improve the condition of the lock chamber at Lock 16 (Edge Lane, Droylsden).
- **Huddersfield Narrow Canal:** Repair work and new resin grouting will improve the condition of the lock chamber at Lock 29 West (Uppermill). Embankment repairs in Mossley will help to prevent leakage.
- **Peak Forest Canal:** Lock gates are being replaced on the Marple Lock Flight at locks 5, 7 and 16; plus masonry repairs to Lock 9 and Dryhurst Bridge 26 in Disley. Dredging works throughout the lock flight will improve water depth for boaters.

Canal & River Trust

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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: National Waterways Museum, Ellesmere Port.

- **Rochdale Canal:** After Christmas, work will include rebuilding the canal offside washwall between locks 39 and 42 in Timbercliffe, near Littleborough; repairs to Locks 64 (Kay Lane) and Lock 44 (Sladen); plus repair work to the embankment between Walk Mill Bridge and Higher Boarshaw Bridge in Chadderton.
- **Leeds & Liverpool Canal:** Work to repair a canal breach at Rishton. New lock gates will be installed at Lock 73 (Wigan Flight), repairs carried out to the headgate at Lock 80, plus grouting and masonry repairs to several locks on the Wigan Flight. The towpath and embankment walls will be upgraded by Lock 52 (Blackburn) and Altham Embankment, near Bridge 118, will be repaired to prevent leakage. Gates will be repaired and new lock ladders installed at Lock 42 (Greenberfield) and Lock 46 (Barrowford).
- **Leeds & Liverpool Canal, Rufford Branch:** New lock gates and ladder will be installed at Lock 2 (Burscough) and leakage will be reduced by repairs to the gates at Chicken Lock 6. Fenders will be replaced on gates at Lock 7 (Rufford).
- **Shropshire Union Canal:** New lock ladders and gate repairs will reduce leakage at Lock 8 (Greenfield, Great Boughton) and Lock 1 and 14 (Audlem).
- **Trent & Mersey Canal:** Masonry repairs and extensive resin grouting will improve the condition of lock chambers at locks 57 (Hassall Green) and 66 (Wheelock).
- **Llangollen Canal:** Gate repairs and other maintenance will be carried out at Lock 1 (Baddiley).

Daniel Greenhalgh, North West regional director for the Canal & River Trust, said: “Our job is to preserve and protect the nation’s precious man-made waterways. With many of the region’s canals constructed over two centuries ago, it’s important to stay on top of regular maintenance and keep the waterways in good condition. We always try to minimise inconvenience to boaters by carrying out this routine work in the winter months.

“Research proves people feel happier and healthier by water and over the pandemic particularly, waterways have offered a valuable lifeline for so many, providing perfect spots for local recreation and exercise. That’s why it’s so important that we keep them open and safe for everyone to use, whether people enjoy a waterside stroll, cycling, boating, paddling or angling. They’re also great places for wildlife, promoting biodiversity, which is especially important in urban areas.”

For more information on the work of the Canal & River Trust, including how to offer support through volunteering or making a donation, go to www.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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