



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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13 March 2017

### **Have your say and help the Canal & River Trust to shape the future of the Calder Valley**

The Canal & River Trust is putting people, communities and heritage at the heart of a major Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid to fund a five-year partnership project entitled 'Calder Valley Rising' and asking people to have their say on shaping the content of the bid.

The Trust, which cares for 2,000 miles of canals and rivers in England and Wales, is working on the project with local stakeholders to help improve the resilience of the Calder Valley region – an area devastated by the Boxing Day Floods in December 2015.

If successful, the five-year project will add value to the work being undertaken by the Environment Agency and Calderdale Council to create a more integrated approach to the management of water and land. By bringing together local communities and organisations such as Calderdale and Kirklees Councils, the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water, Natural England and the South Pennines Local Nature Partnership, among others, the Canal & River Trust will help to develop a cohesive range of projects across the Calder Valley landscape to help support people, communities and safeguard heritage.

Jane Thomson, Enterprise Manager at the Canal & River Trust said: "Over 2,200 homes and 1,600 businesses from Todmorden to Dewsbury were seriously affected by the Boxing Day floods along with our 200-year old canal heritage infrastructure. There is a real urgency to deliver change and help the Calder Valley communities to become more resilient in future extreme natural events, both drought and extreme rainfall through a more integrated approach to the management of the water and land. 'Calder Valley Rising' would also importantly help to reconnect communities with their waterways along the length of the valley by making them more accessible and strengthening the connection and affection for them that already exists.

She added: "We know how passionate, enthusiastic and knowledgeable people the Calder Valley are about their local landscape, this was demonstrated when over 100 volunteers came to help us clean up the canals

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as an immediate response to the floods, so I do hope people will share their views by completing our very brief online survey.”

Robin Gray, Development Manager at Pennine Prospects said: “A key component of this approach is the recognition that working with natural processes to manage the sources and pathways of flood waters can benefit other parts of the catchment much further downstream. Often referred to as Natural Flood Management this technique can help deliver many other benefits too, such as the creation of new wetland or woodland habitats, whilst being cost effective.”

People can share their views through an online survey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/N9SC9VM>

The Round 1 funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund will be submitted in June.

**Ends**

**For further media requests please contact:**

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**Notes to Editors:**

The Canal & River Trust is the guardian of 2,000 miles of canals, rivers and docks across England and Wales, caring for the nation's third largest collection of listed structures, as well as museums, archives, and hundreds of important wildlife sites. We believe that living waterways transform places and enrich lives and our role is to make sure there is always a place on your doorstep where you can escape the pressures of everyday life, stretch your legs and simply feel closer to nature.