

The Canal and River Trust is entrusted to care for 2,000 miles of waterways across England and Wales. Bank of America Merrill Lynch volunteers are working alongside the Canal and River Trust to improve a canal in Chester for the local community to enjoy. We love and care for your canals and rivers, because everyone deserves a place to escape...



BAML volunteers alongside CRT staff on the Shropshire Union Canal near Chester 2014.

Early beginnings 2014

Collaborative working between Bank of America Merrill Lynch and Canal & River Trust goes back to Autumn 2014 when 25 employee volunteers from BAML installed 15 metres of soft bank protection (special matting and reeds at the edge of the canal to stop the banks eroding) to a section of Shropshire Union Canal near to Ellesmere Port Boat Museum. The volunteers installed coir rolls providing a stable canal wall for the next 25 years. This method of bank protection provides a lasting rich habitat for aquatic wildlife including water voles, amphibians, invertebrates and water fowl. The mixed aquatic flora pre-planted in the rolls will prove to be an added attraction for visitors to the area and make a huge improvement to the biodiversity of the canal.

2016 and beyond.

Following recent meeting between Bank of America Merrill Lynch (BAML) and Canal & River Trust a programme of work to engage BAML staff on The Shropshire Union Canal between Chester, Telford's Warehouse PH and Ellesmere Port Boat Museum has been agreed. Canal & River Trust propose a schedule of pre-discussed events across the year which would engage 15 to 20 volunteers for each event.

The majority of events will centre on the Blacon area of the Shropshire Union Canal just North of Chester, but we will also look to schedule events further north towards Ellesmere Port Boat Museum.

Alongside bringing BAML employees we want to utilise this partnership to engage the local community and offer development opportunities for young people.

“We are really looking forward to developing the relationships that we have made in 2015 in Blacon where we can begin to see the canal and the waterside, become much more part of community life in the area for leisure, health & wellbeing and fun”

Ani Sutton, Development & Engagement Manager CRT

We would like to bring together a group of young people to plan and deliver a community event along the waterway to engage and inspire local people. BAML associates could train / mentor the young people in project planning, budgeting, partnership working, event promotion etc. Trust staff could support the practical activities and H&S planning with the young people.

The goal of this event would be to engage the local community with the canal but also to find out what they would like to see on the stretch of canal. From this we can work with the local waterway maintenance and environment team to cost and draw up plans for improvements, ensuring that they deliver recognisable benefits to the waterway and the community.

BAML have agreed to provide funding for these improvements to be actioned and early in 2016 we hope to liaise with local people to see what improvements they would like to see along the canal corridor in their area. We have proposed that we could look to put through a top three of the community suggestions to a local vote so further engaging the community.

At BofA Merrill, volunteering is a really important part of our culture and employee feedback is extremely positive. Our volunteers clearly enjoy the opportunity to ‘give back’ and also welcome networking with colleagues from other business lines. Our partnership with CRT continues to go from strength to strength – and we are proud to partner with them and have a positive impact on our local community.

Andrew Lowe, SVP, Head of Business Development for Technology, EMEA



Graffiti and litter Shropshire Union Canal Summer 2015



Our friends from BAML making a start with some hard work !