



# PRESS RELEASE

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Issued: 15 January 2016

## **200 SCHOOLS FOR 200 YEARS OF THE LEEDS & LIVERPOOL CANAL**

Thousands of children who attend a primary school within two miles of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal are being invited to join in the 2016 canal bicentenary celebrations.

The Canal & River Trust, the charity which cares for the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, is hoping 200 schools, close to the route of the UK's longest man-made waterway, will mark the special anniversary by taking part in the Trust's exciting Canal & River Explorers' programme – one school for each year of the canal.

The Trust will be contacting 537 eligible schools and offering the invitation, on a first come first served basis, for children to receive a visit from trained education volunteers.

Volunteers work with the children on curriculum-linked activities such as building their own model canal in an interactive local history workshop, learning how to be safe by water in a water safety assembly and exploring their own local stretch of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal on a guided walk. All these activities are provided free of charge.

The Canal & River Trust Explorers volunteers are hoping to cover the entire 127 mile length from their bases in Burnley, Bingley and Sefton/Liverpool in a programme of visits during 2016, starting after February half term.

Katie Hutchinson, education coordinator with the Canal & River Trust, explained: "This is an exciting initiative to introduce children to the wonderful canal on their doorstep. Many youngsters probably have no idea their local waterway was dug out by hand 200 years ago and played a vital role in the industrial revolution and the place they live today.

"The Leeds & Liverpool Canal helped to create the original northern powerhouse as a transportation route for cotton, coal, wool, limestone, sugar and other commodities. Now 200 years on, the canal is still important as a place for enjoyment and relaxation. It provides an oasis for wildlife and supports a thriving leisure industry.

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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 canal offers powerful ways to engage pupils and bring learning to life. From water to wildlife, traditional canal art to amazing inventions, the opportunities for cross-curricular studies are huge!”

“It’s a brilliant place to enjoy walking, cycling, fishing, boating and canoeing. We hope our Canal & River Explorers programme will inspire a new generation to discover and appreciate this fantastic waterway.”

The Canal & River Trust’s education programme offers a wealth of online teacher resources as well as fun activities for children to get involved in. For more information check out [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers).

Schools wanting to get involved with their local canal and the Explorers programme can contact Katie Hutchinson via email: [Katie.hutchinson@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:Katie.hutchinson@canalrivertrust.org.uk)

The 200 Schools for 200 Years initiative is one of a number of exciting projects to mark this special bicentenary year for the trans-Pennine canal. The award-winning heritage education boat Kennet will be replicating the first ceremonial boat journey along the full length of the canal in October 2016. There will be dozens of festivals and events this year and even the commission of a new symphony, performed in three canal locations on 16 October.

**ENDS**

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**Notes to editors:**

The Canal & River Trust is the guardian of 2,000 miles of historic waterways 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.

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