



Canal &
River Trust

PRESS RELEASE

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CANAL & RIVER TRUST BOOST FOR RARE AQUATIC PLANTS ON MONTGOMERY CANAL

Floating water plantain and other rare aquatic plants should soon be thriving again on a Montgomery Canal arm near Welshpool, thanks to the Canal & River Trust charity.

Over the winter, volunteers and contractors have worked alongside Trust ecologists to clear away unwanted vegetation and silt from the Guilsfield Arm, which runs for two and a quarter miles (3.6km) from Burgedin towards the village of Guilsfield in Powys.

The Guilsfield Arm is now cut off from the canal mainline by a bridge but is being developed as a special place for nature, providing a safe, undisturbed home for some of the many aquatic plants which flourish on the Montgomery Canal.

The Canal & River Trust cares for 2,000 miles of canals and this project is one of ten key nature sites across the country which has received extra help thanks to the support of players of People's Postcode Lottery.

Sara Hill, Canal & River Trust ecologist, said: "The volunteers and contractors have done an amazing job on the Guilsfield Arm. They had to contend with some horrendous weather just before Christmas, but they really got stuck in, dug out the canal channel and cut back overgrown trees from the bank.

"This has had the beneficial effect of reducing shading and improving water quality, which then in turn allows aquatic plants and animals, like water voles and shrews, to flourish. The project is all about encouraging biodiversity and creating healthy waterways."

The volunteers, who meet every Friday, undertake a range of canal maintenance tasks including hedge-laying, lock gate painting and towpath repairs but will be keeping a keen eye on the water to enjoy the brief flowering of the water plantain over summer.

Anyone who would like to join them should contact Canal & River Trust volunteer coordinator Jason Watts. Email Jason.watts@canalrivertrust.org.uk.

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- For more general information about how to volunteer or donate to the Canal & River Trust, check out www.canalrivertrust.org.uk or call the customer services team on 0303 040 4040.

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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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