

PRESS RELEASE

Issued: 18 April 2019

CHESHIRE PADDLE BOARDING CLUB WINS ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD FOR RIVER ADOPTION WORK

Hundreds of pieces of plastic waste and rubbish have been prevented from reaching the Irish Sea over the last year, thanks to a ground-breaking river adoption agreement between the Canal & River Trust charity and Mid Cheshire Stand Up Paddleboard Club.

The River Weaver Navigation, which runs through North Cheshire, is now much cleaner as a result of the Trust's first UK river adoption by a stand up paddle board club last March. And the club has made such an impact locally, it has been awarded Winsford Town Council's Trueprint Environment Award.

The Canal & River Trust cares for 2,000 miles of Britain's waterways but sometimes struggles to collect rubbish from inaccessible places like reed beds. Paddle boarders are in an ideal position to reach shallow sections close to the river bank which act as traps for plastic bottles, cans and other rubbish.

Mid Cheshire SUP (Stand Up Paddle) boarders, who are based in Winsford Marina, formally adopted nearly 2 miles of the river from Winsford Marina to Newbridge last March and the initiative has been so successful they have just renewed the agreement for another year. The club, which has more than 45 members, regularly paddles along the river and over the last 12 months has retrieved tons of rubbish from the waterway.

Club chairman Brian Cadwallader said: "We were always conscious of the issues of plastic in our rivers and how we could contribute to improving the environment and the enjoyment of others using the river. I was aware of the great work the Canal & River Trust were doing in the Northwest and contacted their volunteer coordinator Jason Watts to discuss how MCSUP could be a part of their growing river adoption schemes.

"The process was so easy, as a club we had all the necessary paperwork required and with guidance from Jason, we were proud to become the first paddleboard club in the UK to adopt a river.

"Using paddleboards on the water allows us to get into areas at the river edge where land based litter picking activities cannot reach. The partnership has been very rewarding for our club and its members. Working with the Trust has given us national recognition within the SUP communities and has prompted other clubs to follow our example.

Canal & River Trust, Toll House, Delamere Terrace, London, W2 6ND

T: 0203 3204 4514 E: press.office@canalrivertrust.org.uk W: www.canalrivertrust.org.uk Twitter: [@CanalRiverTrust](https://twitter.com/CanalRiverTrust)

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 award is a reflection of the voluntary work our members give to the Canal & River Trust, the love of our waters and the pleasure it brings.”

Jason Watts, Canal & River Trust North West volunteer coordinator, said: “This is a win-win arrangement for everyone. We were delighted when Mid Cheshire paddle boarders lead the UK as the first club in this fast-growing sport to take responsibility for their home river.

“They richly deserve the award and we are very pleased other paddle board clubs around the country have now followed their lead. Disposing of plastic waste is high on the political agenda at the moment. Of course, it would be better if people didn’t drop litter at all but if we can all stop it reaching the oceans that is a great result for everyone.”

For more information about the river adoption and taster sessions with the Mid Cheshire SUP, check out the group’s Facebook page.

The Canal & River Trust currently works with more than 170 adoption groups nationwide involving a wide range of organisations, from schools and businesses to running clubs and Scout groups. The Trust has set a target of getting a quarter of its canal network (500 miles) adopted by community groups by 2025.

Check out the Trust’s website www.canalrivertrust.org.uk. for more information about adopting, donating or volunteering, or call the customer services team on 0303 040 4040.

-ENDS-

For more media information, contact lynn.pegler@canalrivertrust.org.uk. Tel 07783 686246.

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 www.canalrivertrust.org.uk.