

PRESS RELEASE

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CALDON CANAL GETS £157,000 WINTER MAKEOVER

The Canal & River Trust, the national waterways and wellbeing charity, is carrying out more than £157,000 worth of vital maintenance and repair work to the Caldon Canal in Staffordshire this winter.

Over the next three months, three lock gates are due to be replaced and essential repairs carried out to several bridges, lock chambers and a timber walkway.

The Trust, which cares for 2,000 miles of canals, including the Caldon and the Trent & Mersey, will be working on six separate projects along the 240-year-old canal.

Before each separate lock or section is drained, fish are rescued and transported to another part of the canal which remains in water. New lock gates are hand-crafted in oak at a special Canal & River Trust workshop using traditional skills and then craned into place as part of a spectacular lift movement.



Photo shows volunteers (Lto R) Peter Plant, John Pearson, Andy Ralphs and Malcolm Gray on the Caldon Canal, near Leek.

Work includes:

- Bridge deck replacement at Bedford Street Bridge, Stoke-on-Trent.
- Repairs to Long Butts Drawbridge (Bridge 23) at Norton Green.
- Replacement of top gate and minor repairs at Cheddleton Top Lock (Lock 13), Cheddleton.
- Replacement of tail gates at Woods Lock (Lock 15), near Cheddleton.
- Replacement and repairs to timber walkway at London Works Bridge (Bridge 50B), near Consall.

Volunteers will also be helping Trust staff on a special project at Waterworks Lock (Lock 5) and Lock 8 Road Lock, near Stockton Brook, to replace a worn-out gate and damaged ground paddles, which are vital for filling and emptying the lock chamber for boats.

Ged King, construction manager with the Canal & River Trust, said: “This canal repair project is really important. We’ll be emptying millions of litres of water from the canal, moving thousands of fish and lifting multi-tonne lock gates through the air into place.

“Although the Caldon Canal is 240 years old, it is just as relevant today as in Georgian times, when it was constructed to move limestone from the Peak District down to the Potteries and the industrial Midlands.

“Today the canal has reinvented itself as a leisure destination and a haven for wildlife. Modern canals offer an amazing, tranquil space, where everything slows down – a great place to escape the pressures of modern life. We know from research that people are happier and more relaxed when they’re by water, and activities such as walking, cycling, boating, fishing, canoeing and paddle boarding improve people’s mental and physical well-being.”

“Wooden lock gates typically last around 25 years and allow thousands of boats to travel from place to place each year. Each new gate is made to measure, weighs several tonnes, and is handcrafted from seasoned oak so that it fits perfectly in the lock chamber. Once in place, the new lock gates will help the Trust conserve water and keep boats moving along the waterway.”

For more information on the Canal & River Trust’s vital winter waterway repair programme, public open days and volunteering opportunities, visit <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/>.

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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.

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