

PRESS RELEASE

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CANAL CHARITY BRINGS FORWARD MACCLESFIELD CANAL REPAIRS

The Canal & River Trust charity has created a small silver lining from this summer's drought conditions by bringing forward a £200,000 major winter works repair project scheduled on the Macclesfield Canal, Bosley Lock Flight, in Cheshire.

The impressive flight of 12 locks was due to close for several weeks in November while the Trust carried out essential repairs to the lock chambers, but with the locks on the Macclesfield and Peak Forest canals currently closed this summer due to a lack of water, the Trust has jumped on the opportunity to complete the project now, to minimise the inconvenience to boaters.

Its national engineering construction team has joined forces with regional staff and volunteers in a massive team effort to complete dozens of essential tasks, including the relining or replacement of lock gates and work on cills, paddles, mitres, spindles and quadrants.

This has been combined with mortar repairs, painting, re-pointing and the creation of a new boater landing stage between locks four and five, including new towpath surface and mooring bollards.

The waterways and wellbeing charity, which cares for 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England and Wales, has been careful to protect wildlife by rescuing and rehoming fish during the works each time a lock chamber has been drained.

Steve Ballard, North West operations manager with the Canal & River Trust, said: "It's wonderful that we have been able to create a positive outcome from a negative situation

Canal & River Trust

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during this challenging time when some of our canals have had to be closed to navigation due to lack of rainfall.

“Bringing forward the repair project means that as soon as we have enough water to reopen the canal, boaters won’t then be inconvenienced again by a winter works closure.

“And even though the Macclesfield and some other canals are not open for navigation, most of them are still in water and available for angling and paddle sports, and the towpaths still provide a great place to enjoy walking, jogging and cycling.”

Opened in 1831, the 26 mile Macclesfield Canal connects the Peak Forest Canal with the Trent & Mersey Canal and is part of the popular Cheshire Ring. In 2015, the work of the Trust and its volunteers saw it become the first canal in the country to be awarded Keep Britain Tidy’s coveted Green Flag – the mark of a quality green space.

For more information about volunteering, donating or visiting the Macclesfield Canal, check out the Canal & River Trust website, www.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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