

PRESS RELEASE

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NATIONAL EASTER BOAT GATHERING RETURNS TO WATERWAYS MUSEUM IN ELLESMERE PORT

The Easter Boat Gathering festival at the National Waterways Museum in Ellesmere Port returns this month after a three year gap due to Covid.

More than 40 boats, including many rare historic vessels, are travelling from all over the country to congregate for a special celebration event in the Cheshire museum grounds, hosted by the Canal & River Trust waterways and wellbeing charity.

Located at the junction of the Manchester Ship Canal and the Shropshire Union Canal, the four day festival offers visitors the chance to get up close to fascinating old commercial boats, such as Clematis, used in the BBC filming of *Peaky Blinders*, Saturn, the last surviving wooden Shropshire Union fly boat, built in Chester in 1906, and Sculptor, a renovated 1935 Northwich motor boat, which was once used as a Second World War fire boat.

A range of special attractions will be on offer from craft workshops, produce stalls and lock demonstrations to children's activities and machines working in the Power Hall. There will also be a chance to see fascinating rare canal treasures at the National Waterways Archive, giving visitors the potential to track down their own long-lost family history.

Foot-tapping music will be provided by LocTup Together, a folk song and sea shanty duo, and Rattygans band, offering sounds of old America. Visitors will also be able to enjoy short boat trips along the Shropshire Union Canal, run by volunteers from the Wirral Community Narrow Boat Trust.

The weekend celebration starts on Good Friday morning as the 40-strong boat convoy travels down the Shropshire Union Canal setting off from Chester city centre early morning and arriving at the Waterways Museum between 11am and 1pm.

Canal & River Trust

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: National Waterways Museum, Ellesmere Port.



Chris Done, visitor services manager with the Canal & River Trust, said: “It is fantastic to be able to stage the popular Easter Boat Gathering again. After more than two years of disruption due to Covid, we are delighted to welcome all these amazing boats back to Ellesmere Port for a special waterway festival of celebration.

“All the usual museum displays, a new children’s playground and enhanced outdoor café will all be open for visitors too and hopefully this special event will be the launch of a fabulous 2022 summer season for everyone.”

The museum will be open 10am – 5pm over the Easter weekend and then seven days a week for the rest of the season, 10am – 4pm. Heritage-themed Canal Town events, including characters in traditional costume, will take place every Sunday throughout the season.

For more information, visit the museum website <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/places-to-visit/national-waterways-museum>. Adult tickets cost £9.75, concessions £8.50, children £6 and families £25. Tickets give free entrance for a year.

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For further media requests please contact:

Lynn Pegler

m 07783 686246 e lynn.pegler@canalrivertrust.org.uk

or Helen Hall

m 077177 60284 e helen.hall@canalrivertrust.org.uk
NW Communications Managers, Canal & River Trust

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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