



Glandwr  
Cymru

The Canal & River Trust in Wales

## PRESS RELEASE

10 November 2017

### Wales's longest canal tunnel gets crucial check-up

#### MEDIA INVITATION

**Event:** Go underground along the Llangollen Canal World Heritage Site for a crucial inspection of Chirk Tunnel – Wales's longest canal tunnel. Join the Canal & River Trust's principal tunnel inspector Chris Reynard as he checks the Grade 2 -listed tunnel by boat.

**Time:** Tuesday 14 November 2018, 10am

**Place:** Chirk Tunnel. Meet Chirk Basin, near Wrexham. Just off A5 road in Wales.

Intersection roundabout of Station Road and B4500. Approx satnav postcode: LL14 5AJ.

**Contact:** Lynn Pegler, Canal & River Trust Press Office, 07783 686246

Chirk canal tunnel, Thomas Telford's 200-year-old engineering masterpiece, goes under the microscope next week as the Canal & River Trust charity carries out a vital inspection of one of the centrepieces of the 11 mile Llangollen Canal World Heritage Site.

The Trust has the challenging task of maintaining a 2,000 mile canal network which was largely constructed during the reign of George III. The Llangollen Canal is currently one of the busiest and most popular waterways in the country and keeping its iconic structures, like Chirk and Whitehouse tunnels and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, in good working order requires regular maintenance.

On Tuesday 14 November, the Canal & River Trust engineering specialists will use a boat to travel through the 421 metre-long Chirk and 174 metre-long Whitehouse tunnels to assess any structural changes that have occurred since the last principal inspection three years ago, including checks for leaks, cracks and damaged brick work. Their observations

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will then be analysed to decide if any major repairs are needed. The tunnel contains more than a million bricks, with much of the surface sealed in clay to make it waterproof.

Opened in 1805, Chirk tunnel is the longest of three canal tunnels on the Llangollen Canal, formerly a branch of the Ellesmere Canal, and is remarkable as one of the first tunnels to incorporate a horse towing path. Previously boat owners would have had to 'leg it' through a canal tunnel by lying on the roof of their vessels and effectively walking along the roof.

Chris Reynard, added: "A trip into the canal tunnel is like stepping back in time. It's dark, quiet, a little bit eerie and much of the brickwork dates back to when the tunnel was constructed two centuries ago. The Llangollen Canal is arguably more popular than ever before and our inspection is a good example of the type of work needed to keep it in top shape."

For more information about how to support the vital work of the Canal & River Trust by donating or becoming a 'Friend', check out [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk) or call the customer services team on 0303 040 4040.

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#### **Notes to editors**

For more information please contact Lynn Pegler, press officer with Glandŵr Cymru (Canal & River Trust) on 077177 60284 or email: [lynn.pegler@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:lynn.pegler@canalrivertrust.org.uk).

Glandŵr Cymru, the Canal & River Trust in Wales, cares for Wales' historic canals, made up of the Swansea, Llangollen, Montgomery and Monmouthshire & Brecon Canals. Our canals are a haven for people and wildlife and a national treasure. Built over 200 years ago as part of the world's first industrial revolution, the waterways continue to play an important part in the life of Wales today, making an annual contribution of £34m and supporting 800 jobs in local businesses.

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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