

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **GO QUACKERS AT EASTER! DISCOVER MARPLE'S INDUSTRIAL HISTORY WITH LAUNCH OF NEW TRAIL, APP AND FAMILY ACTIVITY PACKS**

Discover Marple's fascinating industrial history with the launch of a new walking trail, family activity pack and app focusing on the legacy of Stockport industrialist and canal entrepreneur Samuel Oldknow.

Waterways and well-being charity Canal & River Trust, which cares for 2,000 miles of waterways, and the Mellor Archaeological Trust have just completed a four-year £2.3 million project to 'reveal' three important historic landmark sites connected to Samuel Oldknow (1756 -1828) near Stockport, Greater Manchester.

Marple Aqueduct, England's highest aqueduct, has been extensively renovated to reveal stunning views along the River Goyt Valley. Mellor Mill, which burnt out in 1892, and Oldknow's mansion have been excavated and the joint site opened up to the public, and Marple Lime Kilns have new interpretation and landscaping.

Funded by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £1.5 million and public donations to the Canal & River Trust, the project has engaged the local community on exciting events like archaeological digs, story-telling and clay clog making and enabled the three heritage sites to be opened up to the public

A creative project with two Stockport schools, All Saints primary school in Marple and Thorn Grove primary school in Cheadle Hulme, resulted in the production of a colourful children's storybook about Samuel Oldknow, which will soon be available in Stockport libraries.

The interactive packs are suitable for children aged 2- 11 and are available to borrow, free of charge, from two locations - Roman Lakes tearoom, near Mellor Mill, and the Trust's canal Toll House Welcome Station at the junction of the Peak Forest and Macclesfield canals.

They include pre-school story challenges, bum bags containing 18 heritage and wildlife activity cards for younger school age children and for older boys and girls, activity bags focus on a fictional apprentice who lived 200 years ago.



Lucy Rogers, enterprise manager with the Canal & River Trust explained: “This has been an amazing project which has provided a window on a forgotten world for thousands of people. The three sites are situated at various locations around Marple but are now united by a circular walking trail, which starts at Marple Railway Station. A new map and guide marks out interesting sights as well as toilets, parking and refreshment stops. The full trail has been broken down into several smaller routes and also includes notes on disabled access.

“And to complete the trio of resources - our technology revolution brings to life Samuel Oldknow’s 18<sup>th</sup> century industrial revolution with an amazing new app. Visitors simply plug in headphones and open the app as they explore the heritage sites. On-site ibeacons interact via smartphone Bluetooth to play audio clips, videos and provide an immersive experience. Using virtual reality, visitors can even point their phone cameras at a specific location to see an animation of the same view 200 years ago.

“As spring arrives, we hope lots of people will be tempted to get out on the canal towpath and around Marple to join Samuel Oldknow for a fascinating journey into the past.”

### **Easter Family Activities**

Revealing Oldknow’s Legacy project volunteers will be running three exciting family activity mornings during the Easter Holidays, all based at the Roman Lakes tearoom. These free drop in events will take place on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> and Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April, 10am – 1pm.

For more information about ‘Revealing Oldknow’ activities and waterway walks around Marple, visit the Canal & River Trust website [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://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 [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)

**Samuel Oldknow** brought prosperity to the Marple and Mellor areas and in addition to the construction of the Peak Forest Canal, was responsible for the building of roads, bridges, coal mines, Mellor Mill and housing for his workers.

**Mellor Archaeological Trust** was formed in 2000 when an Iron Age settlement was found next to Mellor Church. It now has a wider remit to promote the investigation, interpretation, and preservation of the archaeology of Mellor and to organise displays, educational activities, or other means of bringing the history and archaeology of Mellor to the public. [www.matrust.org.uk](http://www.matrust.org.uk)

**About the Heritage Lottery Fund.** Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk) Follow us on twitter [@heritagelottery](https://twitter.com/heritagelottery)

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