



Canal &
River Trust

PRESS RELEASE

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CANAL & RIVER TRUST AWARDED SPORT ENGLAND FUNDING TO HELP CHESHIRE'S OLDER ADULTS GET ACTIVE

The Canal & River Trust charity has been given £222,305 National Lottery funding from Sport England to help reduce the number of inactive older adults in Cheshire. Sport England has put tackling inactivity at the heart of its strategy 'Towards an Active Nation' and launched the Active Ageing fund to promote healthy exercise to people over 55.

The Trust project, in partnership with Active Cheshire, aims to use the grant funding and the county's extensive waterway network to find new ways to encourage older people to get active on and alongside water. The charity, which cares for 2,000 miles of the nation's waterways, plans to run a three year project which will include the recruitment and training of 12 active volunteers to develop a programme of activities along Cheshire's canals and rivers.

Sport England research shows that inactivity among people over 55 is responsible for just as many deaths as smoking.

In Cheshire and Warrington just over 40% of the population (373,600 people) are over 55 and of these 53% (199,502) do less than two and a half hours exercise a week. Research from Active Cheshire shows the main reasons for inactivity are health (54%), work and family commitments (26%) and lack of interest (15%).

In the first year, the Canal & River Trust will run pilot projects in Macclesfield and Winsford, plus an extensive research project to inform the best way to engage with people over 55, understanding any barriers to exercise. In the second and third years, four more community projects will be initiated around the county.

Gillian Renshaw, development and engagement manager with the Canal & River Trust, said: This is a fantastic opportunity for the Trust and older people in Cheshire. We know our canals already offer great opportunities for walkers, boaters, anglers, joggers and cyclists. This project will help us to understand their motivation and behaviour, and explore how we can encourage and better support them to enjoy the big outdoors. We want people to get outside, take in their environment, make friends whilst becoming more physically active and where better to do this than along our wonderful waterways.”

Mike Diaper, Executive Director at Sport England, said: “Being active is one of the most important things people can do to maintain health and wellbeing as they age. We’re delighted to be supporting the Canal & River Trust with National Lottery funding to help get older adults lead happier and healthier lives. We’ll be sharing learnings so successful approaches can be scaled-up or replicated across the country.”

Anyone in Cheshire, over 55, who would like to get involved with this project, please email gillian.renshaw@canalrivertrust.org.uk. For more general information about volunteering or donating to the Trust, please go to www.canalrivertrust.org.uk or ring 0303 040 4040.

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Contact Sport England at: media.team@sportengland.org
020 7273 1593 / 020 7273 1800

For more information on the Active Ageing fund please visit:
www.sportengland.org/funding/active-ageing-fund/

Note to Editors

Cheshire’s waterways include the Trent & Mersey, Macclesfield, Peak Forest and Shropshire Union canals and the River Weaver Navigation. The Canal & River Trust charity 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. www.canalrivertrust.co.uk
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About Sport England

Sport England is a public body and invests more than £300 million National Lottery and government money each year in projects and programmes that help people get active and play sport. It wants everyone in England, regardless of age, background, or level of ability, to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. That's why a lot of its work is specifically focused on helping people who do no, or very little, physical activity and groups who are typically less active - like women, disabled people and people on lower incomes.