

PRESS RELEASE

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STOKE CANALS MORE WELCOMING, THANKS TO NEW WAYFINDING SIGNS

MEDIA INVITATION

Photocall with the new Wayfinding canal towpath signs, with Cllr Daniel Jellyman (Stoke-on-Trent City Council) and Simon Papprell (Canal & River Trust).

Date: Monday 11 March, 10am

Place: Canal towpath next to Etruria Industrial Museum, Etruria Vale Road, Etruria, ST14RB.

Event Contact: Lynn Pegler, Canal & River Trust communications manager, mobile 07783 686246

Stoke-on-Trent's canals will be more accessible for walkers and cyclists from this spring, thanks to the installation of new Wayfinding signs.

Waterways and well-being charity, the Canal & River Trust, which cares for 2,000 miles of waterways, has teamed up with Stoke-on-Trent City Council in a joint project to attract more people down to the city's hidden canal gems.

More than a dozen finger posts and detailed information boards have been installed at key junctions and locations along the Trent & Mersey and Caldon canals throughout the city centre.

Their installation is part of a wider investment by Stoke-on-Trent City Council into its Legible Stoke-on-Trent initiative. The aim of scheme is to enable more local residents and

visitors to walk and cycle around the city, improving health and wellbeing, encouraging support for local businesses and reducing air pollution.

Over 70 signs in total are being installed across the city from Stoke Town to Hanley city centre, the Trent & Mersey Canal from the Bet 365 stadium to Westport Lake, and the Caldon Canal from Etruria to Emma Bridgewater Pottery.

Based on the world-renowned Legible London scheme, developed by Transport for London, the bright modern signboards feature maps, nearby attractions and landmarks, aimed at helping visitors and local residents to rediscover new ways of moving around the city

Councillor Daniel Jellyman, cabinet member for regeneration, transport and heritage at Stoke-on-Trent City Council, said: "We're delighted to be working with the Canal & River Trust as part of the wider wayfinding project across the city. Our canal network is a hugely important part of Stoke-on-Trent's heritage, and we want people to be able to experience all that it has to offer.

"This investment will help to increase visitor numbers and make it easier for people to access our canals, as well as key sites in Stoke-on-Trent that link to our waterways. As part of the wider project, these signs are being installed at specific locations in Stoke-on-Trent, which will improve accessibility, boost tourism, and help to promote our city's fantastic facilities, heritage and culture."

Simon Papprell, local enterprise manager with the Canal & River Trust, added: "This is a fantastic initiative which should make people feel safer and more comfortable exploring unfamiliar territory.

"Stoke's canals are a wonderful attraction, right on the doorstep of so many residents. The waterways provide attractive off-road routes for walking and cycling, connecting shops and housing estates, town centres, parks and community hubs.

"Originally built over 200 years ago as the motorways of their day, our canals have now re-invented themselves as tranquil places for leisure and havens for wildlife. Sometimes the access may not be clear or people may not realise how these delightful blue routes connect into the streetscape. This brilliant new signage will help people explore unfamiliar routes and broaden their horizons.



“Research has proved people feel happier and healthier by water, so we hope canals can offer the perfect opportunity for improving everyone’s physical and mental well-being. As spring approaches, we invite everyone to get out and explore Stoke’s canals – we hope it will be the first enjoyable waterway walk or ride of many in the coming year.”

For more information about walks and attractions on the Trent & Mersey Canal, Caldon Canal and other waterways, visit the Canal & River Trust website www.canalrivertrust.org.uk.

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For more media information, contact lynn.pegler@canalrivertrust.org.uk. Tel 07783 686246.

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