



# PRESS RELEASE

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Issued: 21 July 2017

## **PRESTIGIOUS GREEN FLAG AWARDED TO SHROPSHIRE UNION CANAL**

The Canal & River Trust charity is celebrating after achieving Keep Britain Tidy's coveted Green Flag Award status for 22 miles of the Shropshire Union Canal in Cheshire.

The good news comes in the same month as the Trust celebrates its fifth anniversary of taking over responsibility for the nation's 2,000-mile network of canals and navigable rivers from British Waterways. This accolade cements a record-breaking year for the Trust, with more community involvement, more volunteers and increased donations to its vital work. Leisure boating is at an all-time high too, with over 33,500 boats licensed to use the national canal network – more than at the height of the Industrial Revolution.

The award-winning section of the Shropshire Union Canal stretches from Audlem to Barbridge Junction and then connects to Middlewich. This now joins five other quality-marked waterway green spaces around the country including the Peak Forest Canal (12 miles), Macclesfield Canal (26 miles), River Lee Navigation in London (4 miles), Chesterfield Canal (14 miles) and Marple Aqueduct, England's highest aqueduct.

The waterway is among 219 parks and green spaces across the North West region judged to be some of the best green spaces in the country. (The highest regional total outside London). For the third year running, canals join a range of parks, cemeteries, universities and community gardens which have met the high standard needed to receive the Green Flag, Heritage or Community Award, in what is another record-breaking year for the award scheme.

This international award, now into its third decade, is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent visitor facilities.

The Green Flag assessment report praised the contribution made by volunteers to keeping the canal in great shape for visitors. "Litter is picked on a daily basis in popular areas, with volunteer help and litterbins are emptied when needed. Building and structure cleaning schedule is good," it reported.

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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: First Floor North, Station House, 500 Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1BB

“Community engagement and volunteering is very strong on this Waterway. The award-winning renovation of Nantwich Aqueduct is an excellent case study of partnership work with the local community, town council and local companies.”

Wendy Capelle, local waterway manager with the Canal & River Trust, said: “We are delighted to have been awarded Green Flag status for this key stretch of the Shropshire Union Canal. The award is a great boost for visitors, signalling that this canal is a high quality public place for people to use and enjoy - and a fitting recognition of all the hard work by our staff and volunteers.

“Volunteer groups SUMBA, Small Task Team Volunteers, Audlem ADAPT Lock 15, Audlem Volunteer Rangers, Volunteer Lock Keepers (Cholmondeston/Audlem), Shropshire Union Canal Society and members of the North Wales & Borders Waterways Partnership have all played a key role in helping us raise standards and achieve this quality mark. We are grateful to all volunteers for giving up their spare time to improve the canal and towpath for everyone’s benefit.”

International Green Flag Award scheme manager Paul Todd said: “We are delighted to be celebrating another record-breaking year for the Green Flag Award scheme.

“Each flag is a celebration of the thousands of staff and volunteers who work tirelessly to maintain the high standards demanded by the Green Flag Award. The success of the scheme, especially in these challenging times, demonstrates just how much parks and waterways matter to people.”

To find out more about the event or the Trust’s work on the Montgomery Canal, please go to [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk) or ring 0303 040 4040. You can also find out about volunteering opportunities or ways to donate to the Trust’s vital work. Follow the local Canal & River Trust on Twitter @CRTNWalesBorder.

**ENDS**

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**Notes to editors:**

**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. [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk) / @CanalRiverTrust / @crtcomms

**A full list of Green Flag Award and Green Flag Community Award winners is [available here](#).**

The Green Flag Awards Scheme (<http://greenflagaward.org/>) is run by the environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, under licence from the Department of Communities and Local Government, in partnership with Keep Scotland Beautiful, Keep Wales Tidy and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens and the National Housing Federation.

Keep Britain Tidy is a leading environmental charity that cares for the environment on your doorstep. We work to eliminate littering, reduce waste and improve public space. We run programmes including Eco-Schools, the Green Flag Award for parks and green spaces and the Blue Flag/Seaside Awards for beaches. To find out more about Keep Britain Tidy, our programmes and campaigns visit [www.keepbritaintidy.org](http://www.keepbritaintidy.org).

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Keep Britain Tidy has ISDN radio facilities for interviews ISDN: 01942 322178. Please contact the press office in advance to make arrangements