

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **HERITAGE SKILLS TRAINING GETS A MAJOR BOOST ON PEAK FOREST CANAL COURSE**

The traditional heritage skill of lime pointing has been given a major boost this month (July), thanks to a special course run by the Canal & River Trust charity on the Peak Forest Canal.

Nearly 50 different employees, volunteers and apprentices from the Trust attended a series of day-long training sessions held in the historic canal basin at Bugsworth, a scheduled ancient monument at the end of an arm off the Peak Forest Canal in north Derbyshire.

Constructed in 1796 by the famous canal and tramway engineer Benjamin Outram, Bugsworth Basin is part of the 16-mile long Peak Forest Canal, which connected the limestone and gritstone quarries of Derbyshire to Manchester and the trans-Pennine canal network.

Much of the Peak Forest Canal is lined with ageing stonework, dating back more than two centuries, and keeping this historic infrastructure in good working order is a top priority for the Trust, which cares for 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England and Wales.

Judy Jones, Canal & River Trust northwest heritage adviser, said: "It is really important that our employees, contractors and volunteers understand the importance of our wonderful heritage structures and maintain them with appropriate skills and materials.

"We have been granted Scheduled Monument Consent to repair washwalls in the upper Bugsworth Basin, so this seemed a perfect opportunity to combine this vital maintenance task with some specialised training.

"Although the canals were originally built to transport goods during the Industrial Revolution, they have now been reinvented as leisure destinations and havens for wildlife. Particularly during the coronavirus lockdowns, people have noticed how waterways offer an amazing, tranquil space, where everything slows down – a great place to escape the

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pressures of modern life. We know from research that people are happier and more relaxed when they're by water, and activities such as walking, cycling, boating, fishing, canoeing and paddle boarding improve people's mental and physical wellbeing.

"Maintaining the nation's historic canals is a constant challenge but it is so important to preserve this wonderful resource for future generations to enjoy."

Today the Peak Forest Canal, along with the Macclesfield Canal, form part of the popular 100 mile Cheshire canal cruising ring, which provides boaters with a chance to combine the beautiful rural Cheshire scenery with the urban waterways of Greater Manchester.

To donate or become a volunteer with the Canal & River Trust, please check out the 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.

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