

# PRESS RELEASE

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## CANAL TOWPATH IMPROVEMENTS UNDERWAY NEAR ALDERMASTON

The Canal & River Trust, the national charity which cares for 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales, is working with Sustrans to upgrade 2.5km of towpath along the Kennet & Avon Canal at Aldermaston.

The work will benefit walkers, cyclists and those with wheelchairs or buggies, and improve access to the water for boaters, as new bank protection is put in place along the canal. Bridge improvements are being made for pedestrians and cyclists, while a World War II pillbox on the route is being developed as a new habitat for bats.

The £1 million project is being funded by Sustrans Paths for Everyone programme which is supported by the Department for Transport. The programme is delivering transformative projects across England to make walking, wheeling and cycling safer and more accessible for everyone.

The 2.5km stretch of improvements begins at Aldermaston Wharf and heads eastwards along the Kennet & Avon Canal to Sulhamstead.

Mark Evans, Canal & River Trust regional director, said: "These improvements will make it easier for us all to use this section of the canal and enjoy the benefits that being by water can bring for our physical and mental health.

"As a charity the Canal & River Trust benefits massively from support from partners such as Sustrans which enables us to continue looking after and improving these important green spaces. This is more vital than ever as we face the challenges of a changing climate on our 250-year-old canal network.

"Our towpaths connect people and places and need to be fit for purpose. This project will benefit the thousands of people who use this route on the canal for many years to come."

Canal & River Trust, National Waterways Museum Ellesmere Port, South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire

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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: National Waterways Museum Ellesmere Port, South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH65 4FW

Sarah Leeming, director for the south of England at Sustrans, said: "Creating safe and accessible walking, wheeling and cycling spaces helps so many people to leave the car at home. Time spent being active, surrounded by nature and fresh air, makes for happier and healthier everyday journeys.

"We're pleased to be working alongside Canal & River Trust to upgrade this stretch of National Cycle Network Route 4 and make this a reality for more people. We're looking forward to seeing the improved route open and ready to welcome everyone soon."

To find out more about the work of the Canal & River Trust and how you can support, either through volunteering or making a donation, visit [canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk)

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**For further media requests please contact:**

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**Notes to Editors**

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 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)

**About Sustrans**

Sustrans makes it easier for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle. We work for and with communities, helping them come to life by walking, wheeling and cycling to create healthier places and happier lives for everyone.

Across the UK we involve communities in shaping our towns and cities. Together we campaign for and create spaces where everyone can move around safely and give people the tools and confidence to get out of their cars.

We inspire people to change the way we all travel every day, forging closer connections with our neighbours and reducing traffic to create a better environment and more sustainable society for everyone.

Join us on our journey. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk) Sustrans is a registered charity no. 326550 (England and Wales), SCO39263 (Scotland).