

PRESS RELEASE

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HISTORY COMES ALIVE IN WEEKLY ‘CANAL TOWN’ SUNDAYS AT NATIONAL WATERWAYS MUSEUM

Sights and sounds of a bygone age will come alive at Ellesmere Port’s award-winning National Waterways Museum every Sunday this summer as the Cheshire visitor attraction is transformed into a living historic Canal Town.

Costumed characters, working heritage boats, demonstrations of a blacksmith forge and steam engine power hall, plus a programme of themed events, will all help to give visitors a fascinating glimpse into our rich maritime and canal past.

Cared for by the Canal & River Trust charity, the large museum site has been used as a location for the TV drama *Peaky Blinders* and is so popular with visitors it has just won a Tripadvisor 2022 Travellers’ Choice Award.

Its unique setting, at the junction of the Manchester Ship Canal and the Shropshire Union Canal, offers stunning views across the River Mersey and provides the perfect location for visitors to enjoy an interactive window into life at the historic port, explore former cargo boats and the domestic challenges of dock workers living in the Porters Row cottages, furnished in typical style from 1830, 1900, 1936 and 1952.

Supported by players of Postcode Lottery, the weekly Canal Town programme cruises into the summer calendar with a host of special themed Sundays from Steampunk Victorian sci-fi fantasy (supported by Cogwarts) (24 July) and the First World War (31 July) to 1920s Afternoon Tea (14 August) and Astounding Inventions (11 and 18 September)

Dogs are welcome on site and even get their own special event with a fabulous Village Fete and Dog Show on 28 August, plus a Peaky Pooches competition, with the winner taking home a doggy hamper and pet portrait.

Families return again and again as children can try their hand at traditional games like skittles, hoopla and hook-a-duck as well as be captain on their own boat in the colourful, new playground.

Chris Done, visitor services manager with the Canal & River Trust, said: “Ellesmere Port owes its existence to its location at the trade interchange between the inland waterway network and the

Canal & River Trust

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global port of Liverpool. We want to embrace the town's rich history and replicate how it felt to live here when the port was a buzzing hive of activity.

“This was the thinking behind the Canal Town idea – to get dressed up, go traditional, create some theatre and bring the site to life by getting our historic boats moving up and down the locks. We're stimulating the senses too, with sound from music groups like the Baker Street Belles and creating industrial smells by stoking up the amazing blacksmith forge or shining leather tack in stables once used by the old horse-drawn boats. We want our visitors to step through our doors and get that feeling they have been transported into another world.”

The museum is open seven days a week, 10am – 4pm. Heritage-themed Canal Town events take place every Sunday throughout the season, included in the standard ticket price.

For more information, visit the museum website <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/places-to-visit/national-waterways-museum>. Adult tickets cost £9.75, concessions £8.50, children £6 and families £25. Tickets give free entrance for a year.

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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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