



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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1 March 2018

### **OXFORD CANAL NAMED AS NATION'S MOST POPULAR WATERWAY WITH BOATERS**

The Oxford Canal is the busiest canal in the country, according to an annual survey of lock usage, published by the charity, Canal & River Trust.

Built over 200 years ago the Oxford Canal winds peacefully through the Oxfordshire countryside from the centre of Oxford the Coventry Canal at Hawkesbury Junction. Despite its tranquil nature the Oxford Canal has some of the busiest locks in the country with the locks at Hillmorton having 9552 lockages last year.

In 2017, the Trust recorded a total 3.8 million lockages, across 1,586 working locks, dotted along the 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales cared for by the Canal & River Trust. The Trust's average lock holds 123,000 litres of water, equivalent to 492,000 cups of tea or 820 bathtubs. Each lockage measures a full cycle of emptying and filling a lock.

To keep boaters on the move the Canal & River Trust is currently working to replace and repair a number of locks along the Oxford Canal. Currently a team from the Trust repairing the locks at Napton-on-the-Hill in Warwickshire and has installed six new lock gates and repaired a further two set of lock gates to stop them from leaking.

Tav Kazmi, Canal & River Trust waterway manager, said: "The Oxford Canal is one of the most beautiful man-made waterways in the country. If you boat or walk along the canal in this part of the world you'll be spoilt with the rural scenery from rolling pastures to dramatic hills. You really feel like you're a world away from the noisy towns and cities.

"These lock statistics provide us with a great measure for how many boaters are using our canals. Popular canals have a double advantage. Boats add to the vibrancy of our waterways and boaters make an important contribution to the visitor economy, particularly in tourist destinations.

"There are currently more boats using the network than at any time in history – even more than during the heyday of the Industrial Revolution. Maintaining our canals, many of which are more than 200 years old, is a constant challenge and requires a huge amount of investment and effort from our staff and volunteers."

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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

For more information about the work of the Canal & River Trust including how you can volunteer or donate money to support our work visit [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)

## **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