



**Canal &
River Trust**

Making life better by water

The Kennet & Avon Canal

Canal Heritage Lottery Fund Partnership
(HLFP)

Annual Report

April 2018 to March 2019

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Executive Summary

This report summarises maintenance and operation expenditure on the Kennet and Avon Canal, as divided by Local Authority Area, for business year 2018 to 2019. The report sets out information that fulfils the Trust's reporting obligations as outlined in the HLF (Restoration of the Kennet and Avon Canal) agreement.

Role and Objectives of the Canal and River Trust

The Canal & River Trust (the Trust) was established in July 2012 and has guardianship of 2000 miles of canals, rivers, docks and reservoirs in England and Wales, in addition to a number of historic buildings, archives and three waterway museums. These valuable assets are recognised as a national treasure and local haven for both people and wildlife, which the Trust manages on behalf of the nation.

Over the last twelve months the Canal and River Trust has been working on rebranding itself as a charity for the waterways and wellbeing, guided by the Trust's Chief Executive Richard Parry, and has moved across to a new regional structure to support this development.

The Trust is uniquely placed to make a significant contribution to improving the physical and mental wellbeing of millions of people. Our canals and rivers run through some of the most heavily populated communities in England and Wales, providing accessible green and blue space where it's needed the most.

As part of the rebrand we have been reinforcing our local presence and transferring greater accountability and empowerment to our regional teams, ensuring we are working effectively and efficiently in order that our longer-term strategy is achieved.

The Trust works with volunteers and communities to transform canals and rivers into spaces where local people want to spend time and benefit from our free, accessible and local source of wellbeing. We continue to safeguard the nation's waterways, striving to make life better for millions of people across England and Wales.

The Kennet & Avon Canal: Key Statistics

The following tables summarise key statistics about the Kennet & Avon waterways, including the numerous engineering, environmental and heritage assets which are managed by the Trust.

Canal length in each area		Kilometres
Reading	River Kennet: London Street to Fobney lock	3
Reading	Fobney Lock to the boundary	2
West Berkshire		43
Wiltshire		65
Bath & North East Somerset	Boundary to the River Avon	9
Bath & North East Somerset	River Avon to Hanham Lock	18
Total		140 km

Assets	Bath & North East Somerset	Wiltshire	West Berkshire	Reading	Total
Locks	12	57	34	3	106
Bridges	42	90	78	12	222
Aqueducts	2	8	2	0	12
Tunnels	2	3	0	0	5
Reservoirs	0	0	0	0	0

	Bath & North East Somerset	Wiltshire	West Berkshire	Reading
Conservation areas	5	8	8	0
Non-statutory wildlife sites	Entire canal corridor	c. 10	c. 14	4
SSSI	5 (in or adjacent)	3	6	0

Permit holder moorings	26	41	36	2
Visitor moorings	17	28	12	0
AONB	Cotswolds AONB	North Wessex Downs AONB	North Wessex Downs AONB	
Heritage Sites (See Appendix 2)	1 World Heritage Site, 5 Grade II*, 2 historic Parks and Gardens, 6 Grade II, 1 Scheduled and Grade 1 Aqueduct	1 Scheduled lock flight, 1 Grade 1 Pumping Station, 1 Historic Battlefield, 1 Grade II*, 9 Grade II	1 Scheduled Lock, 2 Scheduled and listed Locks, 7 Grade II, 1 Grade II*	

Funding and Finance

Funding streams remain as reported in previous reports, noting that the Trust is becoming increasingly engaged with raising money from individual donors and sponsors. Income is derived from the following sources:

- individual donors and corporate sponsors;
- commercial income including revenue from the licensing of boats, moorings and angling; and revenue from property and utilities;
- grants from the other organisations e.g. HLFP; and
- an eleven-year contract with government.

Many individuals and organisations are supporting the Canal and River Trust on both local and national levels. The Trust has been able to raise funds to address local, specific issues. With respect to grants and contributions from other organisations, the Trust is similarly continuing to explore new opportunities all the time. For example, we hope to secure funding to improve the towpath conditions along the eastern end of the Kennet & Avon Canal.

The Trust is proactive in utilising its property assets and joint venture vehicles to bring forward land to deliver regeneration, wider benefits to the community and to attract private sector investment. As a charitable trust, all net rental income and capital receipts generated from our property estate and other commercial activities are used to maintain the waterways.

Expenditure – Kennet & Avon Waterway April 2018 to March 2019

The Canal & River Trust has undertaken an analysis of what was defrayed on the Kennet & Avon waterway in the 2018/19 financial year, on activities ranging from lock repairs and vegetation management to bank and weir maintenance. In 2018, the cost to the Canal and River Trust of operating and maintaining the Kennet and Avon Canal was **£4.6 million**.

The Trust is also now operating on a flat cash policy and needs to be able to maintain the high standards of waterway management, whilst at the same time, reducing spending in line with inflation. Therefore, the Council contributions to maintaining the K&A Canal remain vital in helping us achieve this. Some of the Enterprise projects the Trust is delivering in B19 as a result of this funding are: towpath improvements in Devizes; bank protection and towpath improvements in Bathwick; and towpath improvements in Newbury.

Maintenance works along the canal are prioritised every year, taking account of factors such as public safety, structural condition, amenity and usage. This being the case, the proportion of total expenditure in each Local Authority area varies from year to year, depending on current priorities. Note also that each of the Local Authority areas is different in both length and number of principal assets (bridges, locks, aqueducts, culverts etc.) that fall within its boundaries (see Key Statistic information, above).

The figures below have been taken from the Canal and River Trust's accounting system and summarise the breakdown of last year's spending in each local authority area:

	West Berkshire	Wiltshire	Bath & North East Somerset	Total K&A
K&A Work Orders	584,740	1,098,545	272,134	2,010,323
CSI Projects	4,234	6,158	2,598	13,471
Enterprise Projects	963	1,400	591	3,064
Total	589,936	1,106,103	275,323	2,026,857

K&A Overheads P1-P6	220,558	320,811	135,342	701,774
K&A Overheads P7-P12 estimate	220,558	320,811	135,342	701,774
Total	441,115	641,622	270,684	1,403,548

Priority Projects:				
K&A Pumping Resilience	2,337	3,399	1,434	7,436
River Avon Navigation Improvements 18/19		8,513		8,513
Froudes Culvert, Culvert 3 Repair	46,136			46,136
K&A Dredging Upstream of Monkey Marsh	422			422
K&A Culvert 9	141,122			141,122
Dredging Lock 76 to 77	314,452			314,452
Crofton Pumping Station Improvements		43,208		43,208
Honeystreet Embankment Badger Exclusion		851		851
Harris Lock Forebay Repairs EMERG		568,691		568,691
Honey Street Leakage Detection		16,836		16,836
Total	504,468	641,498	1,434	1,147,666

Total	1,535,520	2,389,224	547,441	4,578,071
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Advisory Boards

Across the Trust we continue to work with six advisory boards, in addition to Bwrdd Glandŵr Cymru in Wales, all of whom support us in shaping our regional direction and strategic programmes. They guide the Trust's decisions in developing local engagement and forming new partnerships, advising us on spending and external funding, whilst also championing the interests of their local waterways.

Our three-year strategic programme for the western Kennet & Avon Canal has been published and shared with local partners as well as our customers. The programme was developed in consultation with the South West Regional Advisory Board and the waterway's numerous external partners and stakeholders through Study Days held at the beginning of 2019. The programme continues to be reviewed at advisory board meetings.

Our Strategic Programmes

In 2019 we launched two, three-year strategic programmes based on the Kennet & Avon Canal: 'Communities on the Western K&A Canal' and 'Brand Awareness: The Great West Way'. We held study days with partner organisations and the local authorities in order to help develop the programmes and find ways in which we could work collaboratively.

Communities on the Western K&A Canal

The initiative's purpose is to improve conditions along the waterway, with a canal and towpath, which is materially fit for purpose with an environment of respect and consideration between all communities, in order to enhance the wellbeing of all. Amongst the key aims of this programme is to create a canal community zone, implement a new towpath ranger role, deliver a clear towpath policy and ensure mooring time limits and correct cruising requirements are respected. Key to achieving our aspirations will be effective collaboration with our partners and the local authorities.

Brand Awareness: The Great West Way

This programme aims to enhance brand awareness of the Canal and River Trust as the custodian of the K&A Canal and promote wellbeing opportunities along the waterway. It also aims to increase visitor numbers and footfall along the canal and improve the visitor experience once there. Through this project we hope to capitalise on opportunities for mutual promotion through our Great West Way partners.

Community Engagement

Engaging with community and promoting wellbeing opportunities is at the heart of the Trust. In 2018/19 we took part in a variety of events, including our own Open Day in Bath, as well as succeeded in securing the Green Flag Award for the full length of the K&A Canal another year running, and have continued to improve and expand our reach across social media platforms.

Bath Deep Lock Open Day

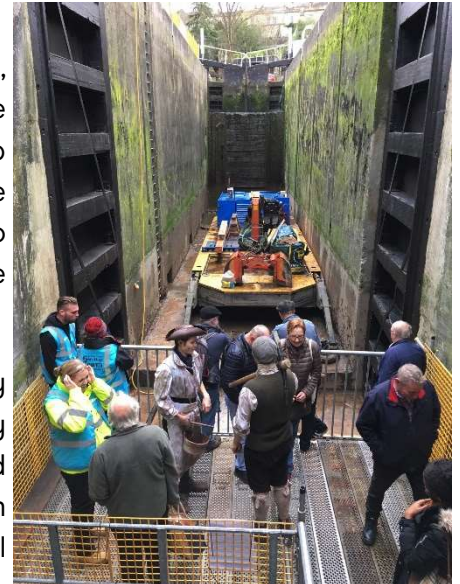
In December 2018 the Trust ran an open day at Bath Deep Lock, which received 600 visits from members of the public. There were a range of activities available at the open day, done in partnership with KACT, Bath Waterspace and Claverton Pumping Station. We had considerable positive feedback, including from the Mayor who appeared hugely impressed with what the Trust contributes to the community in Bath.

The Facebook Live event for the open day, also proved a great way to promote it, reaching over 10,000 people online! Water safety messages were key to communicating to people in the lead up and on the day, with support from the Avon River Safety Forum in delivering these. We had two visits from Widcombe Primary School during the works – the first group of 60 came to see the fish rescue, and the second group of 30 were the first to view the works from the staircase. The fish rescue and open day generated a lot of media interest, including BBC Radio Bristol, BBC Radio Somerset, BBC Points West and ITV West Country.

Volunteering

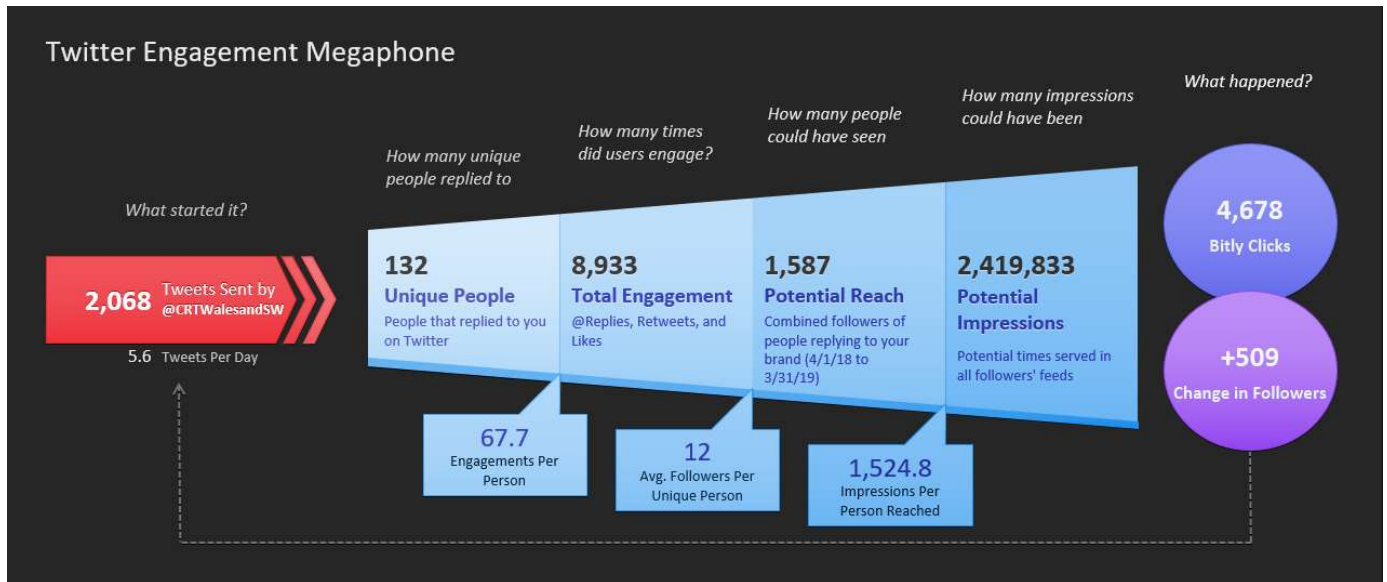
To date we have approximately 330 volunteers along the K&A Canal, including community and adoption group members. This makes up a significant contribution to the total 500 active volunteers we have across the entire Wales & South West region.

The volunteers along the K&A continue to play a crucial role in the day-to-day maintenance of the waterway: working in a towpath taskforce group; carrying out preventative maintenance works; volunteering in customer service and administrative roles; attending events; and taking part in heritage and environment projects. We have a range of partner groups along the waterway, including Bath College, Claverton, Devizes Moorings and Community Matters Newbury. Current projects which our volunteers are supporting include: Vicarage Bridge repairs, towpath resurfacing at Thatcham, Dundas Aqueduct repairs, and the Jubilee Woodland project.



Social Media

The Wales & South West Twitter account, which reports partly on the K&A Canal, has performed consistently well over the last year, with a steady growth in followers and an impressive engagement rate. In turn, communicating using this social media platform has led to improved brand awareness of the Trust, and has also proven a successful method of communicating with our customers and visitors.



Planned Future Works

K&A Priority & Capital Projects FY (2019-22)

- KA-055-001 Crofton Pumping station pumping improvements: Complete redesign and new build of pumping infrastructure
- KA-000-000 Pumping Resilience
- KA-022-001 Thatcham to Brimpton towpath: KA towpath improvement from lock 92 - under Brimpton road - to bridge 38 Colthorpe Bridge, c 750m of towpath
- KA-066-008-L and 007-R Milkhouse Embankment Badger Exclusion: Works to mitigate the effects of significant badger activity on canal embankment
- KA-106-017-R Avoncliff Embankment 95 Subsidence: Embankment Stabilisation
- KA-074-014-R Honeystreet Embankment Badger Exclusion: Exclusion of Badgers from Offside Embankment
- KA-044-001 Bridge 83 Replacement: Replace life expired understrength accommodation bridge
- KA Long Pound Dredging: Dredging FL's to be determined
- River Avon Navigation Improvements: Installation and replacement of weir and major lock signage
- K&A Barlow Rail Footbridges Replacement: Replacement of life expired towpath bridges

K&A Enterprise Projects FY (2019-20)

- Devizes towpath phase IV - £265k - towpath improvements between London Road and Coate Road (Wiltshire Council)

- Bathwick Towpath, Bath - £200k - bank protection & towpath improvements between Bathwick Hill and Cleveland House (B&NES Council)
- Newbury Towpath S106 - £402k towpath improvements between bridge 57 (A339) and Ham bridge (West Berkshire Council)

K&A Stoppages 2019-2021

Waterway	Location	Details of Stoppage
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-015-002: Lock 97: Towney	Resolve leakage Top and Btm gates: Pre-Christmas stoppage
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-043-003: Lock 71: Picketsfield Lock	Top and bottom gate replacement: Pre-Christmas stoppage
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-054-002: Beach Grove Lock	T&B Gate repairs: Post Christmas
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-055-004: Crossing Lock	T&B Gate repairs: Post Christmas
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-056-005: Lock 56: Crofton	T&B Gate repairs: Post Christmas
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-061-001: Lock 54: Cadley	Leaking ground paddle: Post Christmas
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-061-003: Lock 63: Brimslade	T Gate repairs: Post Christmas
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 3	Bottom gate replacement
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 6	Top & Bottom gate replacement
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 37	Top gate refit
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 39	Top gate refit
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 40	Top gate refit
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 60	Bottom gate refit
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 67	Top gate refit
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 72	Bottom gate refit
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 100	Top gate refit
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 3	Top gate relining
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 37	Bottom gate relining
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 38	Top and Bottom gate relining
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 40	Bottom gate relining
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA Lock 67	Bottom gate relining
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-008	£25K Repair failing bank protection (piling)
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-025-003	£20K Replace Monkey Marsh swing bridge bearing
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-53	£50K Soft bank repairs & towpath maintenance/improvement

Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-062-010	£15K Brickwork repairs: Bridge 109 Wotton Rivers Farm bridge
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-092	£50K: 200m Soft bank protection
Kennet & Avon Canal	KA-101	£50K: 200m Soft bank protection

Key Projects, Operational Works and Events, 2018/19

Bath Community Workboat: On 25th September 2018 a relaunch ceremony was held for the Bath Community Workboat, which was renamed Sulis to reflect its connection with Bath. The relaunch was attended by key partners, including representatives from Wessex Water, Bath and North East Somerset Council and the Trust.



Dissertations for Good, October 2018 : As part of developing our health and well-being agenda, a student research role has been created through 'Dissertations for Good' in order to better understand the current level of activity taking place along the K&A. The scope of the research will include identifying which health and well-being activities are currently taking place on or around our waterways in this area.

Sustrans: The South of England launch of the Sustrans led 'Paths for Everyone' national NCN review was held on the 30th November 2018. The review identified the K&A canal as one of the eight Activation projects selected across the south of England with a timescale to undertake prioritised enhancement over the next three years. The section of the canal corridor between Thatcham and Reading is the priority (NCN4), and £250k has been secured from Department for Transport to tackle barriers around Reading. Link to Action Plan (p14): <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/pathsforeveryone/national-cycle-network-action-plans>

Sustrans was also successful in securing £21 million from the DFT towards the 'Paths for Everyone' programme nationally. From this award a significant funding allocation in excess

of £1 million was made available towards the Activation project on the Kennet & Avon Canal between Thatcham and Reading. The SWS team are already working with partners including Reading BC and West Berkshire Council on the priority towpath works through this area. The funding will need to be spent by 2022.

K&A: Prison Bridge, December 2018. There was another accident at Prison Bridge in Devizes, which demolished the railings and parapet wall two weeks after the last rebuild was completed following the fatal accident in August. As a result, the canal was closed for five days due to the danger posed by the railings and coping stones over the navigation. The repairs were completed and the bridge was reopened on 15th February. The Trust has purchased the water filled barriers currently protecting the site, which we plan to leave on site initially. This may force WCC to take action to improve road safety.

K&A: Semington Lock 16. A planned inspection of Lock 16 in early December 2018 revealed a large void in the chamber wall and a badly damaged lock invert. The Lock was closed to boat traffic until the end of the winter stoppage period. On Friday 21st December, a controlled passage was facilitated for those boaters who had been 'caught out' by the closure.

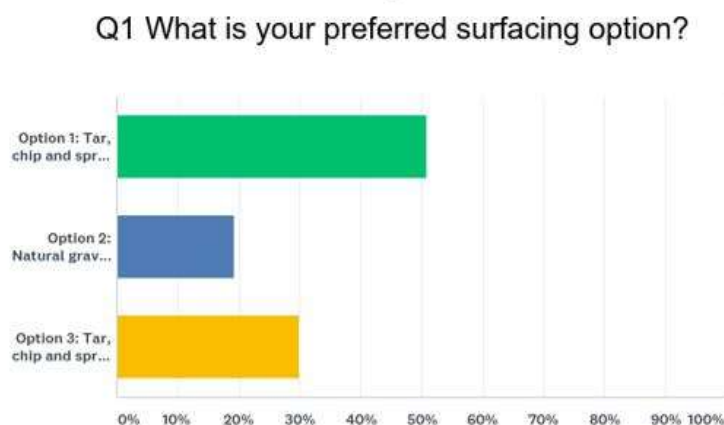


Great West Way: We became a Title Ambassador for the new initiative, Great West Way (led by Visit Wiltshire), which aims to create one of the world's premier touring routes and will be the first of its kind in England and the only touring route in the world to be multi-modal, focusing on the waterways. It is helping the Trust develop and distribute engaging contents, drive domestic and international visits and connect us with key GWW influences. It is also the focus of one of our strategic programmes, which contributes to the Trust's strategic programme of increasing brand awareness within communities along our waterway 'corridors' and broader communities. Further information can be found at <https://www.greatwestway.co.uk/>.

The GWW Rough Guide was launched in March as well as their new travel magazine, which features the Canal & River Trust. We are looking at joint signage and opportunities to link

with our campaigns on ideas such as the installation of water bottle refill points along the waterway. The partnership also enables us to raise our brand amongst the 25 key destinations along the route, plus accommodation and leisure facility providers, tour operators and make new strategic links with organisations such as Reading UK. Through connectivity, we will be able to provide our visitors with information on neighbouring facilities and attractions (and vice versa), and thus widen their experience of visiting the waterway.

Newbury Towpath. The Environment Team and regional colleagues developed a public consultation video for the upcoming Schedule 106 funded towpath improvements in Newbury, and shared via email and across social media platforms. It will raise the Trust's profile and at the same time seek the views of customers on the type of towpath surfacing they would like to see. The results will help inform the final design of the Newbury towpath. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Jnrcia7NVc&feature=youtu.be> The three-minute video was live for one month. It had a total number of 330 views and was linked to a simple survey. 115 participants took part in the survey, with over 60 free text submissions. Surface option votes were as follows:



Nordic Walking UK. Caroline Kendall and Caroline Robson met with Nordic Walking UK (NWUK) in November to continue exploring the potential of a two-strand partnership proposal, with scope to support each other's health and wellbeing agenda. A pilot project is to be developed to trial this partnership, which may also lead to the opportunity for NWUK customers to volunteer and supporter the Trust.

Jubilee Woodland: The K&A's youth engagement project is underway, with Forest School visits and regular activities for our key youth wellbeing groups in and around Jubilee Woodland. The team ran activities over half-terms in partnership with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and Splash Wiltshire (a Police charity, providing positive outdoor experiences for disadvantaged young people). A new shelter within the woodland was installed in March 2019.

Claverton Pump Station has been designated a Grade I listed building, having been elevated from its Grade II status. This generated considerable proactive media attention and also resulted in the Bath Chronicle covering the changing of the station's listed status.