



**Canal &  
River Trust**

Making life better by water

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **ANDERTON BOAT LIFT HOSTS ITS BIGGEST EVER STEAM FESTIVAL SPECTACULAR (May 11 & 12)**

Around three dozen historic steamboats and traction engines are travelling from all over the country to congregate at Anderton Boat Lift, Cheshire's historic 'Cathedral of the Canals' near Northwich, on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 May, for its biggest ever spectacular 'Steam at the Lift' Festival.

Canal & River Trust

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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.



Hosted by the Canal & River Trust charity, the event will feature for the first time a celebratory steamboat flotilla sailing along the River Weaver Navigation from Winsford Marina to Anderton on the Saturday morning, showcasing vintage vessels from the Steamboat Association of Great Britain.

During the weekend festival, visitors will be able to enjoy a wide range of activities from 'Top of the World' guided tours of the lift and a Saturday night barbecue to Lego and face painting for children. The Daniel Adamson art deco steamship 'the Danny' will be hosting an onboard craft beer festival and tours, and the Cheshire Live Steamers will be demonstrating miniature traction engines at the top of the lift.

The Edwin Clark trip boat will be offering short cruises up and down the lift, giving visitors a unique view of the stunning 1875 Victorian structure, the world's first major commercial boat lift. Trust staff will also be on hand to explain the need for a programme of vital repairs and upgrades to the lift as part of the 'Engineering the Future' project.

Ani Sutton, destination and attraction manager with the Trust, explained: "Anderton Boat Lift is one of the seven 'Wonders of the Waterways' and this festival is a great opportunity to showcase its fascinating history, enjoy some glorious heritage steam engines and demonstrate why it's important to preserve the lift as a working Scheduled Monument for the next generation.

“This year we are thrilled to be hosting a record number of traction engines and steamboats, both vintage and modern, and we’re very grateful to all their passionate owners who have travelled long distances to be with us. All the ships and steam rollers and lorries will be operated and demonstrated by volunteer enthusiasts, offering visitors a fantastic behind-the-scenes peek into their mechanical history and heritage. The steamboat flotilla along the River Weaver is a first for Northwich and we do hope lots of visitors will join us to view the cruise for what promises to be a truly spectacular sight.”

Steamboats will start arriving at Winsford Marina and Anderton Boat Lift on Friday 10 May and then congregate as a flotilla on the River Weaver by the Odeon Cinema in Northwich on Saturday 11 May at 10am to take part in a half hour cruise to the boat lift.

People can enjoy the river spectacle starting in Northwich town centre from 10am onwards and then follow the flotilla’s progress downstream on foot along a connecting riverside footpath. The 30-minute route starts by Cumberland Street car park, behind Asda supermarket, through Carey Park and the path then follows the river, a footbridge over Witton Brook, along the edge of Anderton Nature Park and into the boat lift site.

Admission to the weekend festival event and the Anderton Boat Lift visitor centre is free but some activities, such as boat trips and Lego, incur a charge and need to be booked in advance. Festival opening times are Saturday (10am – 10pm) and Sunday (10am – 4.30pm).

For the rest of the 2024 summer season, Anderton Boat Lift and visitor centre will be open six days a week (closed Thursdays), 9.30am – 4.30pm, offering four boat trips a day. Entrance to the visitor exhibition, shop and café are free. Special events include a Pirate Weekend on August 10 and 11 and a Steampunk Lift -Off celebration on September 28 and 29.

For more information about visiting, check out the Canal & River Trust website: <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/places-to-visit/anderton-boat-lift-visitor-centre> or call 01606 786777.

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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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