

**Welcome to the  
Lancaster Canal Trust**

Registered Charity No 1167020  
[www.lancastercanaltrust.org.uk](http://www.lancastercanaltrust.org.uk)

# Members & Volunteers Handbook



*I am very pleased that you are a member/volunteer with the Lancaster Canal Trust (LCT). You are furthering the aims of LCT in keeping the canal in the public eye, and at the same time carrying out worthwhile tasks to help maintain and restore this beautiful waterway.*

*Thank you very much indeed for helping the Lancaster Canal Trust in this way.*

*Hal Bagot President, Lancaster Canal Trust  
C.H. Bagot, FRICS, JP, DL.*

Thank you for joining The Lancaster Canal Trust (referred to as 'LCT' in this document). We hope we can provide you with an enjoyable and worthwhile membership and volunteering experience and that you, in turn, will be willing to make a useful contribution to the work of LCT and to help further its aims.

Members and Volunteers are essential. Everything we do is done by a volunteer - whether the job is recruiting new members, organising promotional events, helping with the ever popular 'Waterwitch' trips, getting 'up close and dirty' on restoration work parties, planning future engineering work or as a committee member and/or Trustee -LCT couldn't function without you.

This handbook has been written to explain how LCT is structured, its objectives, its committees and the various roles and responsibilities of those involved. It forms the basis of the relationship between you as a volunteer and LCT, and so it is important that you read and understand it. Please don't hesitate to ask if there is anything you don't understand or would like more information about.

LCT has a legal obligation to ensure a safe working environment and a separate document outlines our Health & Safety policy. All volunteers are expected, no matter what the task, to adhere to these policies, to keep yourself and others safe. If you volunteer on restoration work parties you will be asked to sign a statement stating that you have read and agreed the policies. Additionally, both as individuals and as an organisation, we must be committed to ensuring we appreciate the importance of, and meet, environmental, heritage and conservation legislation and regulations in everything we do.

Members and volunteers will at all times treat each other with respect, kindness and appreciation. This creates opportunities for cooperation and friendships. And it makes us all more productive and effective in meeting our shared goals.



## **Aims and Objectives ...**

LCT is a registered charity and as such operates to a set of governing rules prescribed by the Charities Commission. These rules form the basis of LCT's Constitution and it is this document that determines how LCT 'works', what it can and cannot do.

First and foremost in our Constitution are the Objectives, the reason LCT was formed. They are:

- (a) To promote the restoration to navigation of the unnavigable sections of the Lancaster Canal, whilst retaining its essential character and heritage, improving it for the benefit of the local community as a public amenity and promoting the needs of navigation, recreation, landscape conservation and environmental improvement and as a natural habitat for wildlife.*
- (b) To stimulate and retain public interest in the navigable and unnavigable sections of the Lancaster Canal as essential environmental and heritage features of Lancashire and Cumbria and to improve a natural wildlife corridor by providing a valuable amenity for walkers, cyclists, boaters, naturalists and visitors.*
- (c) To pursue these ends by arranging physical works of repair and restoration, meetings, lectures, cruises and other similar events and by collaboration with other bodies pursuing similar aims.*
- (d) To restore, and assist other organisations and bodies to restore, the Lancaster Canal to full navigation between Kendal and Tewitfield and to take ownership and operate any portion of the restored or partially restored or derelict canal within its ownership or control as a navigation.*

## **How we work and make decisions ...**

The activities of LCT are directed by a committee comprised of up to twelve Trustees. They are members who are elected at each AGM and accountable to the membership for ensuring that LCT's Objectives are met, for the efficient running of the organisation and to the Charity Commission for ensuring that LCT acts within the law and meets its legal obligations. Members have an obligation to always act in your charity's best interests, to critically and objectively review proposals in coming to decisions and to take collective responsibility in pursuing those decisions.

### **There are three sub-committees:**

The **Recruitment and Promotions Committee's** terms of reference are: to deal with recruitment of members and promotions that help to raise the profile of LCT in any way; to design and publish information and promotional material, and to submit ideas and make recommendations on promotions to the Exec for approval.



The **Northern Reaches Committee's** (NR) remit is principally concerned with the canal from Tewitfield to Kendal. It exists to identify restoration projects or improvements to the canal environment, cost them, and present them to the Trustees Executive Committee for approval. Projects may be carried out using volunteers, contractors, or through the Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership.

It is responsible for ensuring that Workplans, Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) and Environmental Assessments(EA) are written and agreed before any work is carried out. On sections of the canal owned by the Canal & River Trust (CRT) it is responsible for liaising with CRT and submitting RAMS and EAs for approval.

On non-CRT owned sections the NR committee will work in agreement with the land owners and within the same restraints and standards as with CRT. It will organise working parties to carry out these projects and to ensure that Work Party Supervisors are appropriately briefed and instructed.

The **Waterwitch** committee ensures the proper maintenance of our trip boat, organises its use during the summer, and trains the band of 'skippers' and assistants. Waterwitch is a valuable resource providing publicity and a source of potential new members.



## **Who we work with ...**

### **Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership (LCRP) ...**

Is a partnership comprising representatives of: Lancaster Canal Trust, Inland Waterways Association, Canal & River Trust, Cumbria County Council, South Lakeland District Council, Kendal Town Council, Lancashire County Council and Lancaster City Council.

Its vision is simple - to have a fully restored and well maintained navigable canal running from Preston to Kendal.

LCT recognises that the full restoration of the canal will be a multi-million pound project involving major engineering works and a raft of legal and funding issues to resolve. We contribute our expertise, knowledge and time into supporting the LCRP who are responsible for determining the priorities for restoration, raising the funds etc., and who will ultimately project manage the exercise. Members of LCT do work in assessing options and plans for engineering work on which restoration depends but this is with the intention of the work being fed into LCRP for action. That said, we are actively working to restore a quarter of a mile or so of the canal at Stainton on land owned by one of our members and we have an ongoing programme of work on the many bridges.

### **Inland Waterways Association ...**

The Voice of the Waterways: The Inland Waterways Association(IWA) is a registered charity, founded in 1946, that advocates the conservation, use, maintenance, restoration and development of all inland waterways for public benefit. It is a democratic organisation that campaigns locally and nationally on behalf of its members for all waterways users as well as actively

supporting waterway restoration



## **Canal & River Trust ...**

Much of the Lancaster Canal, and all that is currently navigable or has water in it, is operated and maintained by the Canal & River Trust. They are a registered charity that cares for around 2000 miles of canals and rivers in England and Wales. Across their network they are responsible for many bridges, towpaths, embankments, aqueducts, docks and reservoirs, many of which are heritage structures over 200 years old. They also support the restoration of derelict canals, working with local canal societies as well as with their own volunteer force around the country, endeavouring to restore navigation to disused waterways.

CRT have to ensure they fulfil their legal obligations under the 1995 British Waterways Act and work to the rigorous environmental, heritage and conservation policies of the Environment Agency and Historic England when carrying out their functions. All organisations who work with them have the same obligations placed on them.



## **And the future ...**

It is LCT's aim to continue to drive forward the concept of restoring the canal from Tewitfield to Kendal to navigation, and to continue to raise the profile of the work which has been undertaken over the years – such as halting the deterioration of individual bridges and locks and securing their restoration. In so doing we will work with all the partners mentioned above, and take every opportunity to persuade other organisations and members of the public of the case for restoring the Lancaster Canal.

To achieve this aim we need to mobilise the huge range of skills and expertise and contacts of our members. This includes the obvious practical and technical skills but also talents such as management, administration, education, training, IT skills, fundraising, graphic design, copywriting and so on. If you feel you can contribute any of these we want to hear from you!

Thank you for joining us in this endeavour.