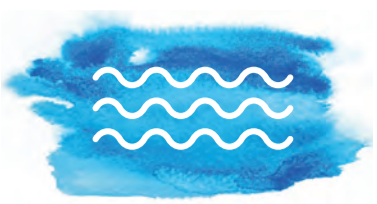


## EXPLORE THE CANAL

Walk the canal towpath and discover over 200 years of history



## TAKE A TRIP

Hire a boat for the day and explore the Grand Union Canal



## GET ACTIVE

Try canoeing, running, or cycling on the canal and get fit for MK50



# ISSUE 1 canals EDGE



Canal & River Trust

January 2017

canalrivertrust.org.uk

# Happy Birthday Milton Keynes!

**50** things to do on the canal for MK50

**FREE** to canal lovers!

Welcome to the first of four editions of **canals EDGE**, a quarterly publication for 2017 bringing you 50 things to do on or by the Grand Union Canal in Milton Keynes throughout the year as a birthday present to the people of Milton Keynes: whether you live here, work or visit.

We are the **Canal & River Trust**, the charity that cares for over 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England and Wales. From our national headquarters in central Milton Keynes, we wish you a **Happy 50th Birthday**.

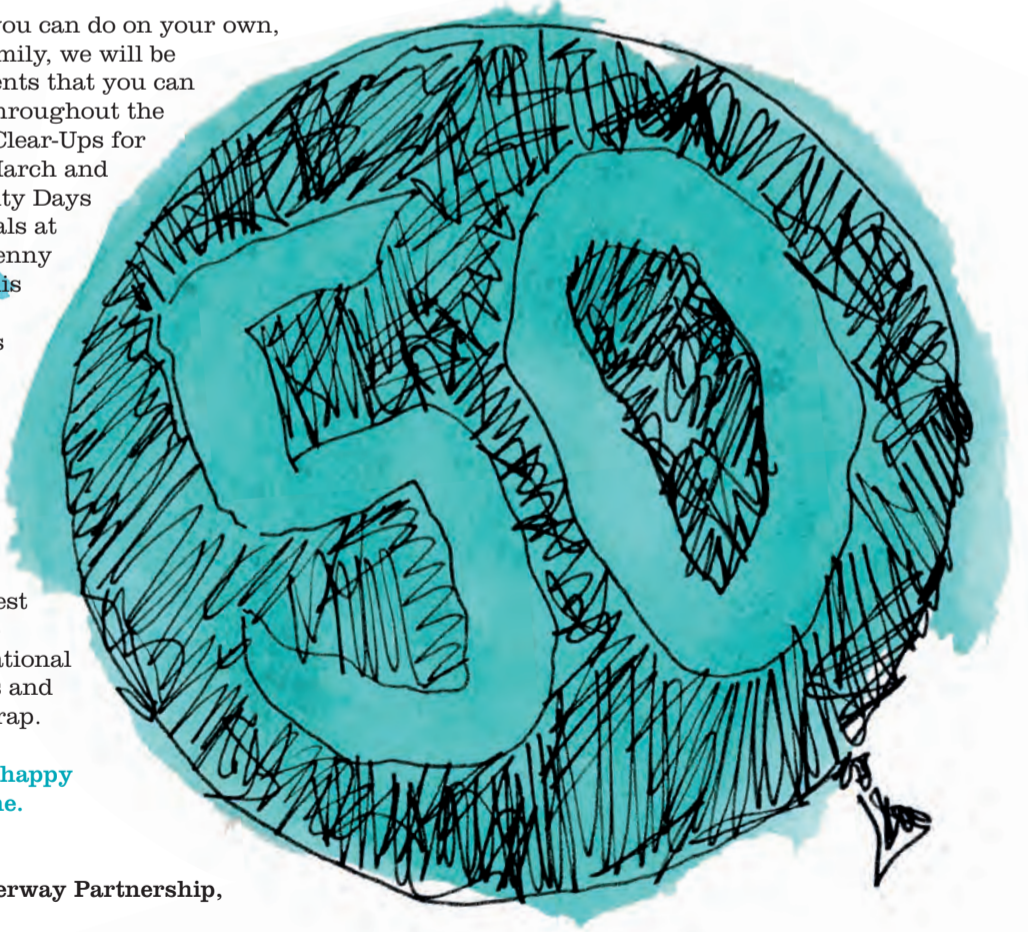
There's so many things to do along your local waterway and every year more than 10 million people across the country visit their local canal or river. They go boating, run, walk, cycle, exercise their four-legged friends, have picnics, study wildlife, go fishing, volunteer to help restore ancient structures, admire the canalside art, watch the boats, or just sit and dream. There's something for all ages and preferences: from pre-school to pensioner, from solitary to large groups, from vigorous to peaceful activity.

There's a lot going on this year to celebrate Milton Keynes' 50th birthday and we want the waterways and canalside to be in the thick of it. We have included lots of everyday opportunities for you to explore the Grand Union Canal **on the center spread**. You could visit one of the many canalside pubs in Milton Keynes, see some of the heritage and engineering features such as locks or aqueducts, feed the ducks, or take up a waterside sport to help you get fit in 2017: from running to angling, cycling, or canoeing. Every canalside community from Cosgrove to Soulbury is invited to join in this canalside celebration. You may already have your favourite canalside spot...why not organise your own family-sized event there?

In addition to things you can do on your own, or with friends and family, we will be advertising special events that you can visit along the canal throughout the year including Canal Clear-Ups for budding volunteers (March and October), Sports Activity Days (June) or Canal Festivals at Cosgrove (July) and Fenny Stratford (August). This canalside programme of events and activities is being co-ordinated by the Milton Keynes Waterway Forum (made up of interested community, boating, arts and heritage organisations) so that you can explore and enjoy what is the largest historic artefact in the city, the longest recreational park in Milton Keynes and everybody's local suntrap.

**Above all, have a very happy 50th birthday, everyone.**

**John Best**  
Chair, South East Waterway Partnership,  
Canal & River Trust



Canal & River Trust



For more 'things to do' look out for the next issue in **APRIL**

# Grand Union Canal

There are lots of ways to get involved in new activity on the canal in 2017 to celebrate MK50. This edition of **canals EDGE** focuses on the first 11 things you can do (either on your own or along with friends and family) to explore the canal. Later in the year there will be a programme of future activities and events to look out for.



canalrivertrust.org.uk



mk50.co.uk

## Towpath

Caroline Cook

Green doesn't know where it is. Seed falls random as light rain as light falls and nothing knows where it falls.

Water doesn't know its own state, or where it is or where it comes from. See how it slides in vague indolent drift unaccountable for leavings unaware.

Air doesn't know how it is still today, or how it feels or that it seems wrung-out, hung over everything like rags.

Suddenly the swags of rosehips on low dusty bushes sway en masse and rise and rest again, and never know what lifts them. Hangdown heads of thistles brown some silver, even powdery do not remember only hours ago how stiff they were, how fervent.

Stab of new-cut grass opens a memory. These brambles scratch on little sparks that flare and shrivel. Out of the blue above me seldom splash of clear sky takes me back to sea.

Scrag-land doesn't know that it is, or where it is, or what it now replaces. Tiny flower-faces wind round brick-stumps. No one needs to know their names. The brick says nothing being useless having lost all trace of what it once adjoined.

Green doesn't know where it is. It is lidding the water. This is the live lime-green of covering weed and that the sombre green of leaves et cetera on trees I see no point in naming. Everything is shifting like the clouds and nothing knows where it has been what makes it what it is or was or where it goes to and the towpath closes suddenly in padlocked gates.

This poem was published on The Poetry Society's website for the Canal Laureate, [waterlines.org.uk](http://waterlines.org.uk). The Poetry Society is one of Britain's most dynamic arts organisations, representing British poetry both nationally and internationally. For more information visit, [poetrysociety.org.uk](http://poetrysociety.org.uk).

## 50 things to do on the canal for MK50 (1-11)



### LEARN TO FISH

Fishing can be a great way to unwind and spend time outside in the fresh air. Apart from a rod and some bait, you will need a rod licence (for people over 12 years old and available from the local Post Office) and an angling membership (either a cheap day ticket or a longer term membership if you get hooked).

If you want to have a go, the Canal & River Trust and Milton Keynes Angling Association will be holding some angling taster events for all ages as part of National Fishing Month throughout August.

To find out more about learning to fish go to: [canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk)

For more on the where to fish in Milton Keynes, please visit [mkaa.co.uk](http://mkaa.co.uk) or contact the Milton Keynes Angling Association by emailing [info@mkaa.co.uk](mailto:info@mkaa.co.uk) or calling 07801183381.

### HIRE A BOAT

A great way to explore the canals is to try boating. Locally, day boats can be hired from around £150 for the day from Cosgrove Narrowboat Company (23) or Milton Keynes Marina (2).

If you are looking for a longer canal holiday in Milton Keynes, try local hire boat company Wyvern Shipping ([canalholidays.co.uk](http://canalholidays.co.uk)) or visit the Association of Pleasure Craft Operators website to find out more about those supplying a little piece of floating paradise.

Get a discount! Become a Friend of the Canal & River Trust to get 15% off your next Drifters boating holiday. See [canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk) for more details.

### EXPLORE THE CANAL

Milton Keynes boasts a scenic stretch of the Grand Union Canal running from historic Bletchley to picturesque Cosgrove. The canal passes Fenny Stratford Lock and leafy Giffard Park. Much of the town remains hidden behind greenery, pretty bridges and narrowboats. It's a perfect retreat from the hustle and bustle, and you could imagine yourself being deep in the English countryside. Follow the towpath and see where it takes you!

Walk, jog, cycle or take the dog! However you decide to travel remember to Share the Space and Drop your Pace (our towpath code).

**share the space drop your pace**  
on Canal & River Trust towpaths

### CONNECT WITH HISTORY

The stretch of the Grand Union Canal around Milton Keynes has barely changed since it was constructed over 200 years ago, when it was an integral part of the Industrial Revolution. The impressive Cosgrove 'Iron Trunk' aqueduct between Wolverton and Cosgrove was added in 1811, replacing a failed brick structure and was restored in 2012. Stroll along and soak up the history! The aqueduct is a 10 minute walk from Cosgrove Wharf (parking at Cosgrove village, MK19 7JR) or 10 minutes from Galleon's Wharf (parking at Ouse Valley Park or the Galleon Pub, MK12 5NL).

### KAYAKING OR CANOEING?

Get involved in a new sport whilst seeing the wonderful nature along the canal corridor. The great thing about canoeing is that almost everyone can join in regardless of age, gender or their level of fitness. While you can visit a retailer, kit yourself out and take to the water by yourself, remember you will need a licence (available from [canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk)). You can master the basics with taster events at local canoe clubs (take a look at the British Canoeing website to find your local club). Look for **Get Active** events in later editions of this programme for opportunities to have a go at canoeing.

### CANAL PUB TRAIL

- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 35
- 36

### VISIT THE LOCKS

- 30
- 29

A lock is a chamber with gates at either end. By emptying or filling that chamber with water, a boat can move up or down onto a new section of the waterway.

As the landscape through Milton Keynes is so flat there are only two locks at either end of the town, at Cosgrove (MK19 7JR) to the north and Fenny Stratford (MK1 1BY) in the south.

#### Map Key

- Parking
- Towpath Access Points
- Locks
- Aqueducts
- Pumping Station
- Grand Union Canal

- #### Arts and Museums
- 5. Gt Linford Arts Centre **MK14 5DZ**
  - 19. Bletchley Park Museum **MK3 6EB**
  - 32. Autumn Slendour by Melanie Watts
  - 32. Shire Horse by Andrew Kay
  - 32. Three Post Bench by Jeremy Turner
  - 32. Local Birds & Plants by Laura Boswell
  - 32. What Lies Beneath by Rob Griffiths
  - 32. Dragonfly by Ptolemy Eltrington
  - 32. Arachne Weaves by Linda Johns
  - 32. Commemorative Plaque over Gyosei Foundations Stone by Justin Tunley
- #### Marinas & Moorings
- 1. Pennylands Marina (Private marina) **MK6 3BX**
  - 2. Milton Keynes Marina Ltd **MK6 3BX**
  - 3. Willow Bridge Marina **MK2 3JZ**
  - 23. Cosgrove Narrowboat Company (Boat Hire) **MK19 7JR**
  - 24. Lionhearts Cruising Club **MK14 5EL**

- #### Parks
- 6. Campbell Park **MK9 4AD**
  - 7. Stanton Low Park **MK14 6FS**
  - 18. Gullivers Land (Theme park) **MK15 0DT**
  - 33. Linford Lakes **MK14 5AH**
  - 34. Ouse Valley Park **MK12 5NN**
- #### Inns and Pubs
- 8. The Red Lion, Fenny Stratford **MK1 1BY**
  - 9. The Plough, Simpson **MK6 3AH**
  - 10. The Peartree Bridge Inn, Milton Keynes Marina **MK6 3PE**
  - 11. The Black Horse, Great Linford **MK14 5AJ**
  - 12. The New Inn, Bradwell **MK13 0EN**
  - 13. The Galleon Pub, Old Wolverton **MK12 5NL**
  - 15. The Navigation, Cosgrove **MK19 7BE**
  - 16. The Barge - Woolstone **MK15 0AE**
  - 17. Ye Olde Swan - Woughton on the Green **MK6 3BS**
  - 35. The Giffard Park **MK14 5QN**
  - 36. The Barley Mow, Cosgrove **MK19 7JD**

- #### MK Centre
- 20. Centre Milton Keynes **MK9 3ES**
  - 21. Milton Keynes Theatre **MK9 3NZ**
  - 22. MK Gallery **MK9 3QA**

## CANAL PUB TRAIL

Walk to a historic pub along the canal and enjoy a drink



## VISIT THE LOCKS

Discover the beauty of the canals by visiting Fenny Stratford and Cosgrove Locks



## LEARN TO FISH

Learn to fish and unwind in the fresh air



### GET INVOLVED AND VOLUNTEER



Whether it's repairing a towpath, clearing hedges or simply litter picking, the Canal & River Trust are fortunate to have a wealth of support from local volunteers who are always looking to make improvements to our network by adopting areas. Want to get involved? One of our adoption groups, the Milton Keynes branch of the Inland Waterways Association, will be hosting their bi-annual clean-up over two days (31 March and 1 April, and again on the 13-14 October) which last year saw 50 volunteers fill a 30 tonne work boat full of waste pulled from the canal. If you would like to join us and help improve your community, email [Sonny.King@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:Sonny.King@canalrivertrust.org.uk) for details of the clean-up days or why not consider adopting a stretch of canal to make a difference to your community.

### FEED THE DUCKS



Whether you are young or old, this is a great pastime to get your boots on, go out for a walk and explore the wildlife surrounding the canal. Swap bread for healthy food that is closer to a duck's natural diet (such as oats, corn or peas).

### VISIT THE GYOSEI ARTS TRAIL



To commemorate the Gyosei International School which opened in Willen Park in 1987, Great Linford Parish Council opened an Art Trail in 2016 with eight works of art placed along the Grand Union Canal between H5 Portway and H3 Monks Way. A guide to the art trail can be downloaded from the parish council website at [great-linford.gov.uk/multimedia-archive/canal-art-project](http://great-linford.gov.uk/multimedia-archive/canal-art-project)

### GET ACTIVE



From walking to cycling to jogging to Tai Chi on the towpath, using the canals through Milton Keynes is a great way to exercise in a different environment in 2017! Parks and Run 5 February & 12 March, 10am. FREE Fun runs for all ages and abilities with a choice of routes from 2km to 10km. Meet in the Art Centre car park, Parklands, off St Leger Drive, Great Linford. [theparkstrust.com/sports-and-activities/running](http://theparkstrust.com/sports-and-activities/running)

## Coming soon...

### January

#### Volunteering opportunity: Buckingham Canal Society

**24 January** This canal restoration charity holds a Tuesday Team Task every week. The location of the work party varies each week. For details, contact Mark Hunt – support worker (07950 735507)

[buckinghamcanal.org.uk/event](http://buckinghamcanal.org.uk/event)

### February

#### Volunteering opportunity: Woughton Towpath improvements

Old Woughton Parish Council will be carrying out canal towpath improvements in February. If you would like to get involved:

Please contact [Sonny.King@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:Sonny.King@canalrivertrust.org.uk)

### March

**Inland Waterways Association** (Milton Keynes Branch) **31 March-1 April** – IWA Milton Keynes Branch Clean-Up. This six-monthly event is sponsored by Wyvern Shipping Co. and supported by the Canal & River Trust.

**Meet on 31 March at 9.30am at Fenny Stratford lock** or contact [Sonny.King@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:Sonny.King@canalrivertrust.org.uk)

### April

**Exbury Egg 3 April-14 May** – Grand Union Canal, Stanton Low Park.

Nearest parking at Black Horse Pub. 11

**Everything comes from the egg** is the touring exhibition of Stephen Turner's Exbury Egg

For more information visit: [exburyeggtour.com](http://exburyeggtour.com)

### May

#### Alarum Theatre presents: Idle Women of the Wartime Waterways

**Mid May** will bring Alarum Theatre on board Narrowboat Tench – bringing tales of women at work on the wartime waterways. See [alarumtheatre.co.uk](http://alarumtheatre.co.uk) for dates and times of shows.

### June

#### Mikron Theatre presents:

**In At The Deep End** – Lionhearts Cruising Club 24  
**10 June – 7pm**  
Nicholas Mead, Milton Keynes, MK14 5EL.

### July

#### 2017 Annual Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair

Don't miss the **24th annual Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair**, presented by the Buckingham Canal Society on the weekend of the **22-23 July**.

For details see [buckinghamcanal.org.uk](http://buckinghamcanal.org.uk)

### August

#### Fenny Stratford Canal Festival

### September

**7-10 September:** Heritage Open Days  
Look out for talks along the canal, including one at the Iron Trunk Aqueduct.

TM 26

More details to follow in future editions of **canals EDGE**.

### October

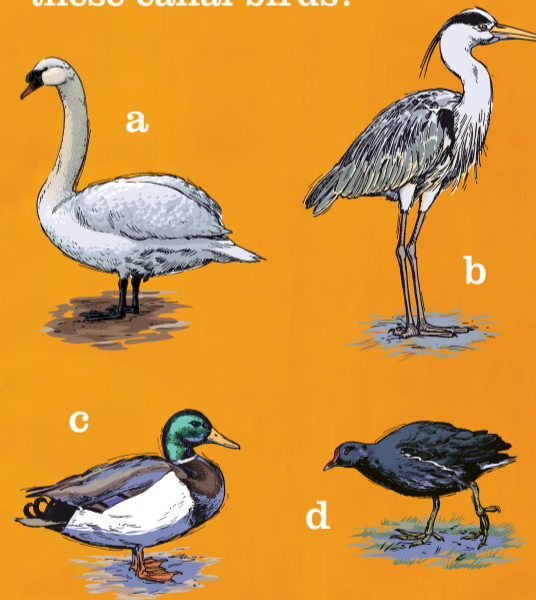
**Inland Waterways Association** (Milton Keynes Branch) **13-14 October** – IWA Milton Keynes Branch Clean-Up. This six-monthly event is supported by Canal & River Trust.

For more information contact [Sonny.King@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:Sonny.King@canalrivertrust.org.uk)

**Look out for more events in the next issue of canals EDGE.**

## Name that bird

Can you name all these canal birds?



a:Swan b:Heron c:Mallard duck d:Moorehen

### Subscribe to our newsletter

to read the stories of the people we meet along the waterways. Get the latest offers, learn about our work and keep up-to-date with news and events.

Find out more at [canalrivertrust.org.uk/newsletter](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/newsletter)



Canal & River Trust



[canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk)  
[mk50.co.uk](http://mk50.co.uk)

Canal & River Trust  
First Floor North  
Station House  
500 Elder Gate  
Milton Keynes  
MK9 1BB

T: 0303 040 4040  
E: [enquiries.southeast@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:enquiries.southeast@canalrivertrust.org.uk)  
Twitter: [CRTSouthEast](https://twitter.com/CRTSouthEast)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/canalrivertrust](https://facebook.com/canalrivertrust)

The Canal & River Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales with company number 7807276 and charity number 1146792.