

# Annual Review 2016



Scottish  
Canals

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# Chairman's statement



Anyone driving past The Kelpies on a dark night can hardly fail to be inspired by the sense of imagination and ambition that characterises Scottish Canals. This is a public corporation like no other. Determined to do more for the Scottish people with the public assets in its care. Embracing novelty and welcoming innovation. There for the many and not just the few.

And 2016 was another year of solid progress despite a challenging economic context. Progress with further diversifying the benefits that we deliver to the people of this country. Progress with building a financially sustainable future for the organisation in the face of huge pressures on public finances. Scottish Canals is, in its own small way, fast becoming a significant player on the Scottish stage.

At the heart of our work is an aspiration to see more and more people making use of the canals. Not just for boating which remains a minority use, but for walking, running, cycling, fishing, paddling, birdwatching, or just sitting in the sun and chatting with friends. Our canals are now among the most visited (albeit linear) public parks in the country, with annual visits topping a remarkable 22 million in 2016.

But the provision of recreational infrastructure is only one element of what we do. Our determination to make more of Scotland's canals has led us to become an increasingly diversified regeneration organisation, and 2016 saw us make further progress in activities as diverse as housing provision, sustainable urban drainage, tourism development and wildlife conservation.

None of this would have been possible were it not for the remarkable people who make up Scottish Canals and they all deserve a huge vote of thanks. However, they do not work alone. In fact, it is our partnerships with community groups, local authorities, third sector organisations, businesses and the Scottish Government that have made 2016 another great year and I would like to say thank you to everyone who has played a part in this year's success.



# Chief Executive's statement



2016 was an exciting year for Scottish Canals with a huge number of innovative developments. But it was also the year we asked a simple question: 'what do Scotland's canals mean to you?' Like all good questions, the answer wasn't simple.

For the people of North Glasgow, the canal is a lifeline – a green and blue artery that runs through the heart of their communities and brings positive change, opportunities and investment on the water, the banks and beyond. Working with those communities and a host of dedicated partners, 2016 saw the Glasgow Canal project go from strength to strength.

The thriving urban sports hub around Pinkston Basin played host to thousands of paddlers, wakeboarders and swimmers; the blossoming cultural quarter on the banks of the Forth & Clyde Canal welcomed another iconic organisation in the form of the National Theatre of Scotland; and the world's only uphill swimming race returned to the city's iconic Maryhill Locks. North Glasgow is a fantastic example of the transformational power a few committed organisations, a passionate community, and a rejuvenated canal can have on an area.

For those who make one of the 22 million visits to our canals each year by boot or bike, the towpaths are a safe, traffic-free route for commuting or leisure. Working with our partners at Sustrans Scotland and various local authorities and funders, 2016 saw more than £4 million invested in improving the towpaths throughout Scotland. From the long-distance cycle and walking paths of the Caledonian to the bustling commuting routes of the Lowlands, the towpaths are busier than ever and are playing a vital role in active travel, bringing health and environmental benefits to communities throughout Scotland.

2016 was also the year we asked the world what our canals meant to them as, for the first time in over a decade, we welcomed the World Canals Conference to

Scotland. Over 400 experts from 25 nations made their way to Inverness for the four-day event, highlighting pioneering work in everything from water management and regeneration to climate change and engineering.

The conference was a huge success and celebrated the innovative projects, iconic attractions and incomparable experiences of our inland waterways to a global audience - all while remaining cost-neutral. But it also showcased everything that makes Scotland such an incredible place to visit. From the myth and majesty of our scenery and landmarks to our world-famous food, drink and hospitality, the World Canals Conference showcased our nation and its historic waterways at their very best.

For visitors to The Falkirk Wheel, Scotland's canals offer the chance to see a marvel of modern engineering in the soaring steel. 2016 was the year the world's only rotating boat lift underwent a revolution, with more than £1 million of investment bringing new visitor experiences and attractions to the Wheel and encouraging almost 550,000 to pay a visit to the site during the year. With The Kelpies a short canalside journey away, the Falkirk corridor continues to go from strength to strength as one of the nation's key tourist destinations, bringing benefits to the local economy and Scotland as a whole.

For our boating customers, many of whom were instrumental in the reopening of Scotland's inland waterways more than a decade ago, the canals hold a special significance. Throughout 2016, we've listened and reacted to feedback from our boating customers, undertaking a review of mooring and licence prices; placing an even-greater emphasis on dredging with the creation of our in-house team; and investing staff time

to consult more often with local boating groups in the form of dedicated boaters' surgeries. Our relationship with the boaters who make Scotland's canals such vibrant and interesting destinations is key to the business and will continue to be in the future.

But 2016 was not without its challenges. A combination of ageing, complex assets and continuing financial constraints means that we simply cannot do everything we would like to do. In these hard financial times, it's more important than ever that we deploy our limited resources where they are needed most – even if it's not always where the public or our users believe is a priority. With this in mind, our drive towards becoming less reliant on public funding is more important than ever and will be an increasing priority in the years ahead. Combined with the ongoing development of our Asset Management Strategy, we're committed to ensuring we are in the best possible position to safeguard the incredible assets of Scotland's canals for future generations to enjoy.

So, if 2016 has shown us anything, it's that Scotland's canals are many things to many people. We may be their custodians, but these historic waterways belong to the people of Scotland and even now, some 250 years after they were first constructed, continue to play a vital role in the lives of the millions of cyclists, walkers, boaters, anglers and paddlers who take to their water and banks each year. Thanks to our staff, customers, business partners and local communities, our canals are in the midst of a renaissance that we hope to continue for many years to come.



# Building stronger communities

## Asset Management Strategy

In 2016, Scottish Canals invested £2.6 million into caring for the historic infrastructure of the nation's inland waterways – more than at any point over the past five years. In-depth research and geotechnical investigation into the condition of assets ranging from the canal embankments at Linlithgow and Ness Weir on the Caledonian Canal, to the mechanical and electrical infrastructure ranging from lock gates

and bridges to The Falkirk Wheel, is being undertaken to prepare an asset management plan for the next 50 years.

As well as the Scheduled Monuments of the waterways themselves, Scottish Canals care for 251 bridges, 212 buildings, 256 locks, The Falkirk Wheel, The Kelpies and 19 water supply reservoirs in locations across Scotland. The reservoirs cover an area equivalent to 7,494 football pitches and supply the canals with the 332 million litres of water that flow through them each day.

Each one of the diverse assets in the organisation's care, from 220-year

old-timber and masonry structures to modern mechanical and electrical equipment, requires ongoing maintenance and management. In these times of increasing financial pressures, the Asset Management Strategy is being developed in order to prioritise the usage of available resources; develop a systematic plan for maintenance and repair; and ensure Scotland's canals are equipped to overcome the challenges of climate change and remain a sustainable, safe and capable network within the constraints of available funding.



## Rockvillia rises on Glasgow's canal

The transformation of Glasgow's canal into a vibrant cultural quarter with the Forth & Clyde at its heart took another major step forward in 2016 with the announcement that the National Theatre of Scotland's new headquarters would join the likes of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Scottish Opera at Speirs Locks.

Named Rockvillia in recognition of the industrial and social heritage of the area, the building will be a hub for supporting and developing talent and a place where people of all ages and abilities can learn and create. Currently under construction, the National Theatre of Scotland's first purpose-built facility will be a driver for the continuing transformation of Glasgow's canal, the growth of the already-flourishing cultural quarter, and a major new asset for the cultural life of the nation as a whole. The headquarters is expected to be completed in early 2017.

## Transforming Muirtown and South Kessock

A new shared vision has been created for the Muirtown and South Kessock area of Inverness – the gateway to the Caledonian Canal. Scottish Canals, in partnership with The Highland Council

and the Scottish Government, ran a series of interactive design workshops which saw a range of stakeholders, community groups and representatives generate ideas and proposals to help maximise the tourism, leisure and business opportunities offered by the Caledonian Canal and ensure the long-term future of the local area.

The resulting Development Brief includes ideas for new development, improved

transport connections, green spaces, and more diverse uses for Muirtown Canal Basin. The brief will guide future planning applications for the area and will lead to the creation of a vibrant new waterfront quarter in Inverness with the Caledonian Canal at its heart.

## Transformation of Bowling Harbour continues

The transformation of the Forth & Clyde Canal's western gateway took another step forward in 2016 as a £1 million project to create a vibrant tourism and leisure destination in the area got underway.

The development at Bowling Harbour in West Dunbartonshire, funded by the Coastal Communities Fund, Scottish Canals, West Dunbartonshire Council and Sustrans, will see the area's disused railway arches transformed into a suite of commercial units, as well as delivering landscaping and access improvements. The scheme, which is due for completion in early 2017, will also create scenic viewpoints to make the most of the area's vistas over the River Clyde.

The work follows an earlier £1 million project undertaken last year which saw four of the arches of the historic Caledonian and Dunbartonshire Railway

bridge brought back to life as business premises thanks to funding from the Scottish Government. The project, which saw the local community, stakeholders and agencies develop a shared masterplan for the area, won the prize for community involvement at the 2014 Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning.

As part of the project, a website focusing on Bowling's past and future has been launched at [www.bowlingbasin.com](http://www.bowlingbasin.com). While it features information on the ongoing regeneration of the area, a key part of the website is community participation and residents of Bowling – past and present – are encouraged to share their stories.

The site already features interesting tales about the village's past – including local boater Jimmy MacFarlane's recollections of living aboard a converted lifeboat in Bowling Harbour and a childhood spent

chasing midget submarines through the canal - but anyone with a story to tell is encouraged to get involved. Full details are available on the website.





## World Canals Conference comes to Scotland

More than 400 experts from around the globe arrived in Scotland in September 2016 as the prestigious World Canals Conference made its way to Inverness, the gateway to the majestic Caledonian Canal.

The cost-neutral four-day conference took place from the 19th to 22nd September and saw business leaders and global professionals from 25 nations celebrate innovative thinking and cutting-edge delivery in a range of disciplines including sustainable tourism development, regeneration, heritage management, climate change and engineering within the iconic landscape of the Scottish Highlands.

Returning to Scotland for the first time in over a decade, the conference also showcased the many attractions of Scotland's rejuvenated 137-mile canal network to a global audience, from the incredible Kelpies – the largest equine sculptures on the planet – and The Falkirk Wheel, to innovative projects underway in surface water management, asset monitoring and place-making.

Featuring more than 80 presentations and plenary sessions, the conference offered attendees the chance to hear from world-renowned speakers such as Roland Lewis, President and CEO of the New York Waterfront Alliance; Pete Grannis, former Commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; and Daniel Fabrega, Panama's Ambassador to the United Kingdom.

Firmly putting Scotland's canals on a global stage, the 80 media articles generated during the World Canals Conference resulted in almost seven million opportunities to see or hear coverage of the event, while 1.3 million people had the chance to see tweets using the hashtag #WCCScotland on social media platform Twitter during the four-day event.

The conference also featured the first-ever World Canals Awards, which celebrated innovative design and cutting-edge delivery by public, private and community organisations in a range of disciplines including sustainable tourism development, regeneration, heritage management, climate change and engineering.

The winning projects, from using modern technology to encourage people to engage with the rich history of centuries-old canals, to the creation of wide-ranging guidelines for waterside regeneration and the construction of Scotland's own majestic monuments to horse-powered heritage – The Kelpies, highlighted the increasingly vital role waterways around the globe play in the communities that line their banks.

The 2017 World Canals Conference will take place in Syracuse, New York. For more information, see the [WCC2017 website](#).

### #WCCScotland feedback

"The best conference I've been to in my 37-year career"  
Phil Wright, Director, Peter Brett Associates



355  
delegates



84  
speakers



25  
countries



4  
days



First ever  
World Canals Awards

### #WCCScotland feedback

"This event was brilliantly conceived and executed, I could not have had a more positive experience"

Gavin Landry,  
Executive Director of Tourism, New York State



Caledonian Canal - Boots n Paddles



Linlithgow Union Canal - Raymond JP Watson

## Capturing Scotland's #CanalMagic

From uphill swimming races to bustling canal festivals and Willy Wonka-inspired recreations of The Falkirk Wheel, 2016 saw Scottish Canals showcase everything that makes Scotland's inland waterways magical places throughout the Year of Innovation, Architecture & Design.

A year-long programme of events, organised by Scottish Canals and supported by the Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design, asked cyclists, runners, walkers, boaters, canalside communities and businesses to share what the nation's 137-mile network means to them in the run-up to the 2016 World Canals Conference.

From Red Bull Neptune Steps on the Forth & Clyde Canal – the world's only uphill swimming race – and the Edinburgh Canal Festival, to the creation of a chocolate clad scale model of The Falkirk Wheel for Cake Fest Scotland and the #CanalMagic Festival in Inverness, the events attracted more than 6500 people.

The public were also encouraged to share their images and videos of what Scotland's canals mean to them on social media. From pictures taken standing in the shadow of

The Kelpies, sailing through the sky on The Falkirk Wheel, or watching the sun set over the Caledonian Canal, the submissions showcased the many incredible experiences to be found on Scotland's inland waterways.

An exhibition of a selection of the images is planned at The Falkirk Wheel in early 2017. To share your own #CanalMagic, follow Scottish Canals on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).





## Stepping up the standard of Scotland's towpaths

Scotland's canals welcomed even more boots and bikes in 2016 thanks to the completion of a £4 million project to improve their towpaths – one of the biggest revamps that they have seen since their restoration as part of the Millennium Link.

The works improved more than 43 kilometres of towpaths throughout Scotland, which already attract around 22 million visits per year from the likes of long distance runners, commuting cyclists and daily dog walkers. The paths also travel past some of the nation's top tourism attractions, from The Falkirk Wheel and The Kelpies to the iconic lock flight of Neptune's Staircase, and form a key part of the Great Glen Way and John Muir Way long-distance walking and cycling routes.

It's hoped the project will encourage even more Scots to enjoy the towpaths, which sit at the heart of many rural communities and provide vital green spaces within the nation's busiest towns and cities. Undertaken by Scottish Canals and funded by Sustrans Scotland, the Scottish Government's Future Transport Fund and various local authorities and organisations including Scottish Natural Heritage; WREN; and the Heritage Lottery Fund, the project also improved access to the towpaths with the installation of new signage, ramps and solar lighting at key locations.

The towpaths of Scotland's 220-kilometre-long canal system are a vital part of sustainable transport charity Sustrans' National Cycle Network and connect to more than 800 kilometres of pathways across the country.

The Network provides long-distance cycling opportunities as well as important community links to encourage everyday journeys to be made sustainably. With a 300% increase in usage over the last decade, the towpaths provide safe, off-road travel and recreation for all ages and abilities.

Over the past seven years Scottish Canals, Sustrans, local authorities and other organisations have jointly invested more than £16 million upgrading Scotland's towpaths, creating important links between rural communities and vital active travel arteries in some of the nation's busiest cities.

With almost a million Scots living within two miles of a canal, the towpaths also play an important role in the health of the nation. A recent report estimates that the benefits of the four million miles-worth of additional physical activity carried out on Scotland's waterways save the NHS more than £6 million per year.



## Rethink the Link: the Crinan Charrette

2016 saw Scottish Canals and Argyll & Bute Council hold a series of collaborative design workshops, known as a 'charrette', to help shape the future of the Crinan Canal Corridor at the [#CrinanCorridor](#) charrette.

Over four days, local residents, businesses, landowners, community groups, and other agencies worked together to create a shared vision for the canal corridor and the communities on its banks.

Supported by technical experts and designers, the sessions generated a number of ideas and proposals to help maximise the tourism, leisure and business opportunities offered by the canal and ensure the long-term future of Ardrishaig, Crinan and Lochgilphead.

As part of the project, a disused oil works on the canal was transformed into an industrial art canvas as an innovative pop-up exhibition celebrating the creativity, history and future of the canal corridor during the summer.

Showcasing the ideas of the charrette, and in support of Artmap Argyll's Open Studios event, Scottish Canals and Argyll & Bute Council commissioned local artists and Scottish Canals' Artist-in-Residence Lesley Banks to transform the derelict Gleaner Oil Works in Ardrishaig into a unique art installation.

The free event, 'Refuelling the Crinan Corridor,' featured art and video installations focusing on the area's rich history, as well as exhibitions showcasing the outputs from the charrette. The Scottish Waterways Trust also ran historical walking tours of the canal at Ardrishaig and captured visitors' stories of living and working in Argyll and on the canal.



## World's only uphill swimming race returns to Glasgow's canal

The toughest open-water swimming race in the UK returned to Glasgow's Forth & Clyde Canal in April, with 200 elite athletes taking on the challenge of swimming uphill.

Part of Scottish Canals' events supporting the Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design, Red Bull Neptune Steps challenged endurance swimmers in an adventure race like no

other - swimming through 420 metres of cold water, climbing 18 metres over the iconic lock gates of Maryhill Locks, and pushing participants to their limits in a true test of speed, strength, and resolve.

The event launched in 2015 as the first ever fully supervised swimming event to take place in a Scottish canal and has grown year-on-year. 2016's event saw more than 2500 spectators take to

the banks of the Forth & Clyde Canal to marvel at the experienced swimmers brave enough to take on the challenging course offered by Glasgow's historic waterway.

The event will return to the area for the third time in spring 2017.



## The Yot Spot opens in Ardrishaig

A Victorian building which once welcomed thousands of steamer passengers to Ardrishaig and the Crinan Canal has been brought back to life as

The Yot Spot. Hosting a yacht chandlers and gift shop with local arts and crafts, a restaurant, showers, a laundry and other services such as bike hire, tourist info and boat brokerage, the new attraction has lots to offer visitors travelling 'Britain's most beautiful shortcut' by boat, boat or bike.

Operated by Forbes Boat Care, The Yot Spot has also partnered up with Scottish

Canals to offer an independent assisted passage scheme for short-handed or inexperienced boat crews looking to navigate the locks of the historic nine-mile-long waterway, which links Ardrishaig at the Firth of Clyde with the picturesque village of Crinan and the world-class sailing of the west coast. It's hoped that the scheme will encourage even more boaters to explore the many attractions of the canal and the surrounding area.

# Increasing financial sustainability

## Reinventing The Falkirk Wheel

The Falkirk Wheel underwent a mini revolution thanks to a £1million programme to revamp and develop new visitor experiences at the world's only rotating boat lift.

The project saw the Wheel, which links the Forth & Clyde Canal to the Union Canal 35m (115ft) above, refurbished

inside and out, with the existing visitor centre, trip boats, conference rooms and activity hub refreshed with new branding, signage and interpretation celebrating the engineering behind the iconic structure.

The project forms part of a phased investment plan which will see further improvements and exciting new visitor experiences developed over the coming years to keep the attraction fresh and encourage people to come back time and again.

The revitalisation of the Wheel, the construction of which formed a key part of the £84.5 million Millennium Link project, comes on the back of its busiest year ever, with more than 600,000 people enjoying a visit to the working sculpture in 2015. It's hoped the project will encourage even more people to take a turn on The Falkirk Wheel in the years to come, with the profits generated by the attraction reinvested in safeguarding the rich heritage of Scotland's 250-year-old canals.



## Boating on Scotland's canals

The number of people from Scotland and further afield transiting the country's canals after entering the network through one of its six sea locks remained consistent with previous years.

The opportunity to travel at a leisurely pace through world-renowned scenery remains a big attraction and Scottish

Canals staff continue to regularly welcome boaters from Scandinavia, the USA and Western Europe. In 2016, the Caledonian Canal saw 1182 transits, 1580 on the Crinan Canal and 45 on the Lowlands.

On the Lowlands, the savings resulting from a new four-day operation pilot scheme allowed Scottish Canals to increase the amount of staff time and resources devoted to dredging and resulted in a 10% year-on-year increase in transit numbers.

## Scotland-wide Pricing Review

An in-depth independent review to set out a long-term plan for ensuring continued fair pricing for living and traveling on Scotland's canals is being undertaken.

In October 2015, following customer feedback, property consultants Gerald Eve and GVA, working with British Marine and Royal Yachting Association Scotland, were procured to carry out an independent review of the price of leisure and residential moorings, as well as the cost of navigation and transit licences.

The pricing review was introduced after some customers told us they weren't happy with the price changes that were introduced in April 2015 to bring leisure, residential and transit charges in line with market rates, help Scottish Canals become more financially sustainable and ensure prices are fair, reasonable and transparent.

The comprehensive review saw consultants meet with boaters all over Scotland and visit every residential mooring site on the nation's 137-mile canal network. As well as assessing the amenities, attractiveness, location and accesses of each leisure and residential site, Gerald Eve and GVA also compared the price of each residential mooring to the cost of a two-bedroom flat in the

same area.

In July 2016, Gerald Eve/GVA published a report setting out their proposed methodology for setting the market price of all residential and leisure moorings and licences on Scotland's canals, as well as a clear plan for implementing future price changes.

Boaters were asked to have their say via a consultation on how Gerald Eve/GVA's recommendations should be implemented and over what timescale. These submissions are being evaluated and a final report finalising Scottish Canals' approach to pricing moorings and licences will be published in early 2017.



## Scottish Canals digs up £250,000 investment in dredging

2016 saw Scottish Canals invest £250,000 in new machinery to help carry out a comprehensive programme of dredging and weed cutting along the nation's waterways.

Scottish Canals' in-house dredging team, who are working with boaters to identify areas causing navigational issues, is delivering the works and removed almost 3,000 tonnes of sediment from the nation's inland waterways in 2016.

By investing in its people, Scottish Canals is strengthening the in-house expertise needed to continue safeguarding the heritage of the valuable historic assets. The move also saves around £50,000 per year on contractor costs.

The investment follows the completion of a successful Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) between Scottish Canals and the University of Strathclyde to generate additional income from finding innovative new uses for the waste materials generated by dredging which included turning it into building materials or feedstock for producing biogas.

"While this investment won't solve all our dredging needs, it will help to improve the navigation channel along Scotland's canals for boaters to enjoy and ensure we are tackling weed and dredging hotspots throughout the year.

Andrew Thin, Chairman of Scottish Canals

# Empowering and motivating people



## Volunteers help unlock the potential of Scotland's canals

A high-profile campaign to recruit over 100 volunteers each year got underway in Glasgow this summer to help safeguard the future of Scotland's canals.

More than 30 volunteers turned out to repair mortar and operate locks on the Forth & Clyde Canal at Maryhill Locks during Volunteer Week 2016 as part of the 'Canal Volunteers' project. People with spare time are being encouraged to make friends, learn new skills and help ensure the nation's biggest linear park continues to welcome millions of cyclists, walkers, boaters, kayakers and anglers each year.

Volunteers from Dell joined pupils from Kelvindale and St Mary's Primary Schools to call for engineers, stone masons and joiners as well as lock keepers, archivists, marketing specialists and environmental experts to step forward and offer a few hours, evenings or weekends to help preserve the nation's 250-year-old heritage assets.

A partnership between Scottish Canals, the Scottish Waterways Trust and the Lowland Canals Volunteer Group, 'Canal Volunteers' will build on many years of volunteering success by putting volunteers at the heart of Scottish Canals' repair and maintenance programme for many years to come.

The Lowland Canals Volunteer Group, which has been running since 2010 and was set up to harness the power of volunteering, has a history of contributing to the long-term sustainability of Scotland's canals and played a key role in the development of the project.



## Plans for canal college<sup>®</sup> sailed closer

Plans to see Scotland's first ever canal college double in size sailed closer with a £1.12m grant from Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), awarded in December 2016, following an extensive 18-month development phase supported by HLF and Scottish Canals.

Created by Scotland's only national waterways charity, Scottish Waterways Trust, canal college is a unique outdoor employability programme designed to help address youth unemployment by teaching practical heritage and environment skills to disadvantaged 16-30 year olds on the nation's canals.

Scottish Waterways Trust aims to reach twice as many young people (360 participants) as the first, successful canal college by offering the programme once again in Falkirk and in two new locations, Inverness and West Dunbartonshire.

Between 2013 and 2015 canal college helped 162 young people facing significant barriers in their lives towards a brighter future. Of those taking part, over 70% moved into work, further education, training or a new volunteering role.

Over the two years, the young volunteers contributed 14,712 hours towards work on the canals and their mentors contributed 4,856 hours. The total figure of 19,568 volunteer hours equates to £978,400 worth of volunteer time (calculated using Big Lottery Fund guidance).



## A guide to using Scotland's canals by boat, bike, boot and beyond launched

From the water to the banks and beyond, Scotland's canals are busier than ever, with more than 22 million cyclists, runners, walkers, boaters, anglers and paddlers enjoying the diverse environments of the nation's waterways

each year. To help ensure everyone can enjoy the routes safely, 2016 saw the launch of 'Boats, Bikes, Boots and Beyond: A guide to using Scotland's canals responsibly'.

The Lowland Canals Key Stakeholder Group – which includes members from Spokes, Ramblers Scotland, Scottish Federation for Coarse Angling, RYA Scotland, Forth & Clyde Canal Society, Glasgow Watersports and general interest groups – worked together to develop the easy-to-understand and follow code for those who use Scotland's 137-mile-long canal network.

Centred around three easy to remember pointers – 'share the space', 'drop your pace' and 'it's a special place' – the guide lets users know what to expect from other groups on and around the canal as well as reminding them to take care, stay safe and share the space considerately.

For more information on the guide, see the Scottish Canals website.

## To the future



## Volunteering at the Heart of Scotland's Canals

Volunteering has played a special role in the restoration and renaissance of Scotland's canals, particularly in the Lowlands, and Scottish Canals is committed to ensuring local people continue to get involved in managing and looking after their canals in a sustainable and productive way which helps everyone.

Scotland's canals contribute hugely to the nation's economic, social and environmental prosperity. They also run through

some of the country's most densely populated communities. As such, it's only right that local people are involved in safeguarding them for future generations to enjoy whilst learning new skills, getting outdoors and meeting new people.

Volunteering will play an even bigger role in safeguarding the rich heritage of Scotland's 200-year-old inland waterways in the future. Working alongside local communities, canal societies and other stakeholders and partners, we plan to build on many years of volunteering success by putting volunteers at the heart of Scottish Canals' repair and maintenance programme for many years to come.

## Hilltop Village to crown Glasgow's Canal

The ongoing transformation of the communities around Glasgow's canal could take a huge step forward in 2017 with the development of a derelict brownfield site into a thriving 'hilltop village' featuring hundreds of houses, commercial properties, art installations, and urban sports areas.

Bigg Regeneration, a partnership between Scottish Canals and Igloo Regeneration Fund, has submitted a planning application for the site, which was lain vacant since 2010. It's hoped the project will continue the recent renaissance of the area, which in recent years has seen the creation of a flourishing cultural quarter featuring the likes of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland; the opening of Scotland's first urban watersports centre at Pinkston Basin; and the continuing success of canalside businesses.

As a catalyst for change, the historic Forth & Clyde Canal will continue to drive the future prosperity of the Glasgow Canal project, with a partnership between Scottish Canals, Glasgow City Council, Bigg Regeneration, local residents, community groups, the creative sector and public and private sector organisations creating a healthy, high quality and exciting place to live, work, visit and invest.



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