



Milton Keynes Branch



Canal &
River Trust

The **Parks** Trust
MILTON KEYNES

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LINSLADE SCOUTS HELP WITH CANAL CLEAN-UP

Members of a Linslade Scout group were among those who joined in with a will on 12-13 October when the Milton Keynes Branch of the Inland Waterways Association held its second Canal Clean-up of 2018. The event focussed on the Grand Union Canal from Fenny Lock, Bletchley to Grove Lock, just south of Leighton Buzzard.

Once again we were supported by Canal and River Trust (CRT), who provided safety equipment, workboats and a dredger with crew. James Griffin of Wyvern Shipping Co Ltd provided his usual stalwart support, sponsoring the event, supplying specialised equipment, and skippering *Ocean Princess* as tug for the hopper (large workboat), whose crew recovered the usual haul of scrap and discarded/dumped goods from the canal.

On Friday we were joined by 11 volunteers from The Parks Trust, who worked through their areas of responsibility adjacent to the canal, and also by volunteers from CRT, led by their new volunteer co-ordinator, Laura Summerbell. The CRT volunteers welcomed the chance to get better acquainted with their waterway. With IWA members and the general public, our headcount on Friday reached 43, surely the largest number seen for many a year, if not since IWA started the clean-ups.

On Saturday the number was reduced, but without detriment to our overall recovery of rubbish. Fewer from CRT and IWA, but compensated by the attendance of members of 1st Linslade Scouts. These youngsters pitched in with great enthusiasm and worked hard all morning until they finished opposite Tiddenfoot Park.

The volunteers scoured the towpath and hedges adjacent, gathering general rubbish and piling larger items for collection by the hopper crew. Eventually, on the Saturday, supermarket trolleys also featured, pulled from the canal adjacent to Tesco in Leighton Buzzard.

Our endeavours were supported by powered assistance from Athina Beckett and Jonathan Brown on their narrowboat *Brown Trout*, towing a pan (shallow draught workboat) from which its crew could tackle the offside vegetation and rubbish. Diane and Andy Witts provided much-needed refreshment from their boat *DiAndy*, a valuable source of tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits.

Thanks are also due to Pat Titmas, who did a great job in mustering volunteers, several of whom have declared their interest in the next clean-up. This will be back in Milton Keynes next Spring, when we hope to be joined by local businesses, fulfilling their community work programmes.

Finally, of course, a big thank-you to all the volunteers on the two days, who once again helped improve the Canal, its environs and overall quality for all to enjoy. It was all worthwhile; the encouraging comments of the many who came past us, with families or otherwise, gave due testimony to the input from all involved.

And all achieved despite a brief cameo on Three Counties Radio by the Branch Chairman on the Saturday morning . . .

ENDS

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

About IWA

The Inland Waterways Association (IWA), a registered charity, leads campaigns to conserve, maintain and restore Britain's network of canal and river waterways. With a membership of around 16,000, IWA provides a strong voice for waterways users, working with navigation authorities, local and national government and other organisations to keep all our waterways alive. Through its extensive national branch network, IWA organises and supports numerous waterways events and activities across the country each year, helping communities to discover, appreciate and enjoy the benefits of their waterways heritage. IWA Milton Keynes Branch has around 400 members living in Milton Keynes, Bedford, Leighton Buzzard, Luton and Dunstable.

www.waterways.org.uk

About the Canal & River Trust

The Canal & River Trust is the guardian of over 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales, caring for the nation's third largest collection of listed structures, as well as museums, archives, navigations and hundreds of important wildlife sites. We believe that living waterways transform places and enrich lives and our role is to make sure there is always a place on your doorstep where you can escape the pressures of everyday life, stretch your legs and simply feel closer to nature.

www.canalrivertrust.org.uk

About The Parks Trust

The Parks Trust is an independent charity that cares for over 6,000 acres of parkland and green space in Milton Keynes, including river valleys, ancient woodlands, lakesides, parks and landscaped areas alongside the main roads, all of which make the city such a great place to live, work and visit. The Trust is also committed to delivering environmental education for both children and adults, and providing exciting leisure and recreation facilities and events.

www.theparkstrust.com

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	Scouts at Leighton Buzzard Photo: Tim Armstrong
	Loaded hopper at Leighton Buzzard Photo: James Griffin
	Parks Trust volunteers Photo: The Parks Trust