

**WATERWAY  
RECOVERY**  
GROUP

GUIDE TO:  
**HOSTING A  
CANAL CAMP**





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## WHAT IS A CANAL CAMP?

A Canal Camp is a week long working holiday open to volunteers aged 18 and over. Waterway Recovery Group volunteers come from a wide range of backgrounds, with different skill levels and motivations. Each Canal Camp is run by a volunteer leadership team (Leader and Assistant Leader) approved to each camp by the WRG Board.

## HOW CAN CANAL CAMPS HELP YOUR RESTORATION PROJECT?

WRG and its volunteers have an excellent reputation in the field of canal restoration which has been earned over 50 years and is still growing.

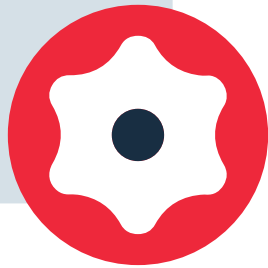
## HOSTING A CANAL CAMP ON YOUR RESTORATION PROJECT CAN:

- Act as a catalyst to your project – making significant progress in just one week.
- Attract lots of positive publicity.
- Help you complete jobs which may require skills and experience your volunteers currently lack.

## WRG ALSO BRINGS:

### PROJECT PLANNING

WRG will provide a risk assessment and method statement for the work to be undertaken and will ensure current health and safety practices are followed. Our Technical Support Officer is on hand to provide this support.



### ENGINEERING ADVICE

WRG's Sites Group will advise on methods of work whenever engineering work is involved, and if the project requires additional technical support. The Inland Waterways Association's honorary consultant engineers are also on hand to give their advice and support.



### VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT

Each Canal Camp is assigned two WRG minibuses, and a kit trailer with hand tools and catering equipment (including fridge and freezer). Further specialist equipment is available on loan if requested in advance. WRG also kits out all its volunteers with the correct personal protective equipment for working on site (hard hats, safety specs, etc).



### EXPERTISE & VOLUNTEERS

Your Camp will be led by two experienced volunteers, usually supported by a core of highly competent restoration volunteers. Behind the scenes there is also a great deal of back up from others experienced in engineering, plant operation and site safety. Canal Camps are a way of recruiting new volunteers and members into the restoration movement.



**Please note:** Whilst we welcome host society volunteers joining us on site it must be remembered it is a WRG site for the duration of the Camp, and your members must be prepared to work to the direction of our leaders.




## WHERE TO START...

### THE WORK

First of all you need to find a job that needs doing. 18 volunteers, working 7 hours a day for a week can achieve an incredible amount of work. A Canal Camp may also be able to tackle projects which you feel unable to tackle through lack of experience, confidence or skills. WRG Canal Camps get involved in a wide range of work – from lock restorations and bridge repairs to vegetation clearance and towpath improvement works. It is a good idea to think about a wide range of jobs to fit a diverse volunteer base with different skills and fitness levels.

If your site is unfamiliar to WRG we will carry out a site visit before considering it for a Canal Camp. Our leadership team will also visit the site once they have been appointed by the WRG Board.

If you would like to discuss the work further or are unsure if it is suitable for a Canal Camp, please contact WRG Head Office team:

 01494 783 453



## OTHER SITE BASED THINGS TO CONSIDER:

**Permissions** - Permissions to carry out the work can be complex and time consuming but it is essential that they are in place before work starts, WRG will check your permissions before booking the camp. Make sure you have contacted all the relevant bodies such as your local authorities, English Heritage, English Nature, Environment Agency, Canal & River Trust, land owners, and any other bodies that you have a legal or diplomatic duty to consult. WRG can offer support if you are unsure of who to contact.

**Site Welfare** - The site must have adequate welfare facilities including a toilet and hand washing facilities.

**Plant & Equipment** - As the host society you will provide major items of plant and equipment (including scaffolding, acrow props, etc) required to carry out the job safely. There might be the option of loaning WRG equipment. If you'd like to discuss this further with the WRG plant team please contact George Eycott at:  
✉ [bungle@wrg.org.uk](mailto:bungle@wrg.org.uk)

**Heritage** - The host society must ensure relevant permissions are acquired for the work on heritage structures. Where applicable, the host society should also ensure sympathetic construction methods are incorporated into the project and the correct materials are used.

For guidance on working on heritage structures, read:

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/refresh/media/thumbnail/40173-heritage-in-waterway-restoration-projects.pdf>

**Materials** - The host society is also responsible for providing all the materials required for the work to be carried out. Materials should be on site by the start of the camp. We also usually like to have accounts opened, and usable by our Leadership team, with local builders merchants and plant hire firms.

**Environmental Considerations** - It is important to identify and assess any potential environmental impacts of your project. This could include carrying out a bat survey on a bridge, a tree survey before clearing the line of the canal or deciding on the best methods of waste disposal on site to prevent contamination of a watercourse. For more information, please contact:

✉ [alex.melson@waterways.org.uk](mailto:alex.melson@waterways.org.uk)

**Funding** - A Canal Camp can use a staggering amount of materials, fuel and hired equipment. The host society is responsible for paying for fuel used by plant and vehicles, materials, and for the accommodation. WRG can help you estimate the costs of the Camp if you are unsure.

## THE ACCOMODATION

Good quality accommodation is essential to a volunteer's enjoyment of a Camp. It is the responsibility of the host society to book and pay for the accommodation, and liaise with the owners beforehand. This section is designed to give guidance on the needs and requirements for WRG Canal Camp accommodation. It should be treated as a guide only, and not always taken literally; we will always try to be flexible.

As the accommodation will be the home of the volunteers for the duration of the Canal Camp we need exclusive use of the area we are using. We must have a closed area, locked by a key, to which people only have access by agreement. Under exceptional circumstances, by prior agreement with WRG, very occasional other use of the hall may be possible. But please consider the disruption this will cause to the volunteers and the Canal Camp Cook who is responsible for preparing lunch and evening meals.



## THINGS TO CONSIDER...

### SLEEPING FACILITIES

WRG volunteers expect Canal Camp accommodation to be basic but clean and warm. If beds are not provided they will bring their own sleeping bags and mats. The accommodation must therefore have space for volunteers to sleep and eat i.e. lots of floor space!

- We will need tables and chairs
- Personal space - each volunteer needs around 70 square feet of floor (6.5m<sup>2</sup>) - 18 volunteers (see picture)

### KITCHEN FACILITIES

- Good working surface for food preparation and serving
- Decent sized domestic cooker with four rings and grill
- Electric points for kettles/burcos
- Sink with hot and cold water

### TOILET & WASHING FACILITIES

Adequate toilet and washing facilities for 18 volunteers must be provided at the accommodation. This should comprise of at least two men's and two ladies' toilets, with basins (large enough for washing your face/ brushing your teeth etc.) and mirrors.

### SHOWERS

Canal Camp volunteers must have daily access to showers. If the hall does not have shower facilities, then alternatives must be arranged by the host society. Alternatives can include the following - hiring in of a portable shower unit with two male and two female showers or arranging the use of showers at a local sports centre or sports club.

### PARKING

A suitable area for parking vehicles belonging to individual volunteers as well as WRG vans and trailer are essential. This should ideally be next to the hall and secure.

**JANUARY–SEPTEMBER**

Applications to host a Canal Camp accepted.

**MID SEPTEMBER**

Deadline for Canal Camp Applications from Host Society.

**END OF SEPTEMBER**

WRG Board meeting to discuss Canal Camp applications.

**OCTOBER**

Site visits carried out.

**NOVEMBER**

WRG Board planning meeting.

**MID NOVEMBER**

Host societies informed if application has been successful.

**DECEMBER/JANUARY**

Canal Camps launched.

**JANUARY–APRIL**

Canal Camp Leadership Teams appointed.

**MAY**

WRG Leaders Training Day (host societies welcome!).

**MAY–JUNE**

WRG Leaders visit site and finalise work for Camp.

**JUNE**

Final planning and paperwork completed.

**JULY–SEPTEMBER**

Canal Camp time!

**WANT TO KNOW MORE OR ARRANGE A SITE VISIT?**

Please contact the WRG Head Office team

✉ [enquiries@wrg.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wrg.org.uk)  
☎ 01494 783 453 ext 604

**WHAT NEXT?**

The first stage of the process invites canal societies, trusts and waterways groups to express their interest in hosting a Canal Camp using the 'Hosting a Canal Camp' Application Form. We appreciate that many of the details depend on funding and many other variables, so we understand if a definite proposal cannot be made. However, we would like to hear from you if you would like to be considered for a Canal Camp at this stage. In order to arrange site visits for any potential sites WRG need final submissions for Canal Camps by mid September.

**CANAL CAMP AGREEMENT**

When we agree a Canal Camp, we send you the Canal Camp Agreement. It is intended to be a clear statement of our commitment, your commitment, the agreed work, and any other matters which have been discussed and agreed on. It must be agreed by your committee, and cannot subsequently be changed without full discussion with us. If this agreement is seriously breached, for example changing the work without prior notice or by failing to provide the necessary plant and materials, we reserve the right to move the entire camp to another canal without prior notice either before or during the camp.



**INLAND  
WATERWAYS**  
ASSOCIATION

WRG is a part of The Inland Waterways Association (IWA) and together we aim to support, enable and champion restoration nationally. IWA spends around a third of its membership subscription income to benefit WRG's practical hands on work. It is not just financially that IWA supports restoration. Volunteers regularly lobby politicians, provide advice, expertise and publicity and combined with WRG volunteers, our aim is to ensure the future of our waterway heritage.



# HOSTING A CANAL CAMP APPLICATION FORM

Please read 'Hosting a Canal Camp' leaflet before completing the application form.

To complete this form online, please visit: [https://www.waterways.org.uk/wrg/useful\\_information/host\\_a\\_canal\\_camp](https://www.waterways.org.uk/wrg/useful_information/host_a_canal_camp)

**We appreciate that depending on funding and many other variables, we understand that a definite proposal cannot be made. However, we would still like to hear from you so please submit as much information as you can at this stage.**

## SECTION 1: CONTACT INFORMATION

Canal Group Name:.....

Main Contact Name:.....

Phone Number:.....

Email Address:.....

## SECTION 2: THE WORK

**Please send supporting information such as photos, designs and drawings to: ENQUIRIES@WRG.ORG.UK**

Site Location (including postcode):.....

Site Access Details:.....

Do you have a preferred date(s) for the camp?

*Please include details here if there are any restrictions to when the work can be carried out.*

Detailed description of work:.....

Are there any specialist skills required for undertaking this project such a bricklaying, plant operation or surveying?

*The Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015 are the main set of regulations for managing the health, safety and welfare of construction projects. CDM will apply to most waterway restoration projects. Please outline proposed responsibilities under Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015 for your project. If you are unsure please contact WRG Head Office or for more information about CDM please read our CDM guidance note [https://www.waterways.org.uk/wrg/wrg\\_documents/practical\\_restoration\\_handbook/cdm\\_regulations\\_2015\\_guidance\\_for\\_waterway\\_restoration\\_groups](https://www.waterways.org.uk/wrg/wrg_documents/practical_restoration_handbook/cdm_regulations_2015_guidance_for_waterway_restoration_groups)*

Is the project notifiable under Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015? YES  NO

## SECTION 3: PERMISSIONS

*All permissions must be in place at least 3 months before the start of a Canal Camp. Outline details below of any permissions that may be required for the camp to run. This could include agreements with local landowners, environmental bodies, Historic England, permits from Environment Agency or approval from the Canal & River Trust.*

***Please include details of permissions that are already in place for the project. Select all that apply.***

- Agreement in writing to undertake work by landowner
- Environmental consents gained such as permits/approval from the Environment Agency
- Approval from heritage organisations/advisors if working on heritage structures
- F10 submitted under CDM 2015 Regulations
- Relevant planning permissions from your local authority (if required)
- Other

***Please include details of other permissions that will be required before work starts.***

Does the site have any issues WRG needs to be aware of (access, listed structures, preservation orders etc)?

## SECTION 4: ACCOMMODATION

*Please read the 'Hosting a Canal Camp' leaflet to ensure your accommodation meets all WRG's requirements. If you do not have an accommodation sorted please leave this section blank.*

Accommodation Name: .....

Address: .....

Parking Facilities: .....

Details of toilet and washing facilities: .....

Details of kitchen facilities: .....

Will WRG have sole use for the duration of the camp? If no, please provide details: .....

Shower Facilities. Are these provided at the hall or arranged at another venue? .....

Additional Information: .....

## SECTION 5: FUNDING

*Running a Canal Camp can cost a lot of money in materials, fuel and hired in equipment. The host society is responsible for paying for fuel used by plant and vehicles, materials and for the accommodation. Recently WRG have been asked to cancel camps last minute due to funding issues. If an alternative site cannot be found cancelling a camp costs WRG around £2000 as we are required to cover volunteers travel costs. We therefore need a firm commitment from the Restoration Groups that they have funding in place to run a Canal Camp.*

I can confirm funding has been allocated to this project: YES  NO

*If no, please specify how much funding is being sought and by what methods (donations, grants, crowd sourcing).*

Do you have a contingency plan if money is not found through these avenues? YES  NO

## SECTION 6: SITE VISITS

*Every site will be visited by our Technical Support Officer and leadership team prior to the canal camp starting but we can also arrange for the TSO to visit your site prior to WRG Board discussions in November.*

Would you like a Site Visit to discuss your canal camp proposal before the WRG Board put together the Canal Camps 2020 schedule in November?

YES  NO  MAYBE

Please send form to: [enquiries@wrg.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wrg.org.uk)