

Guide to Hosting a Canal Camp

What is a Canal Camp?

A Canal Camp is a week long working holiday open to volunteers aged over 18. 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 40 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 ...

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 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, gloves 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 into the waterway restoration movement and may also be a way of recruiting new members to your group!

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 make a visit to the site once they have been appointed.

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 (Jenny or Amber) on 01494 783 453 ext 604.

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. 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.



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 for established sites 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



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.



Money - 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.



Whilst you are busy planning the work you also need to consider...

The Accommodation

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.

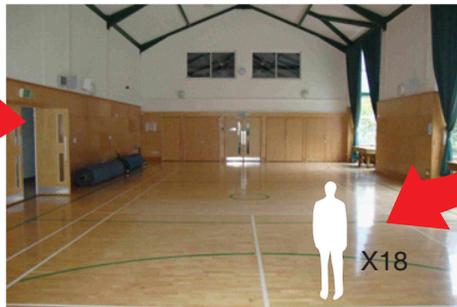
As the accommodation will be the home of the volunteers for the duration of the Canal Camp we need exclusive use of the area we are using. This means we must have a closed area, locked by a key, to which people only have access by agreement. Under exceptional circumstances, by prior agreement with WRG, 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!

Don't forget we will need tables and chairs



Personal space - each volunteer needs around 70 square feet of floor (6.5m²)

Kitchen Facilities

Good working surface for food preparation and serving



Electric points for kettles/burcos

Sink with hot and cold water

Decent sized domestic cooker with four rings and grill.

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.

Continued on page 4



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!

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.

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 'Contract'

When we agree a Canal Camp, we send you 'The Contract'. Though not a contract in the legal sense, 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.

Want to know more or arrange a site visit?

Please contact the WRG Head Office team
 Jenny Black & Amber Jenkins
 e: enquiries@wrg.org.uk
 t: 01494 783 453 ext 604



Hosting a Canal Camp Application Form

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

Canal Name:

Main Contact Name:

Phone number:

Email Address:

The Work

Site Location (including postcode):

Site Access:

Description of work:
Continue overleaf if required.

Permissions:
Do you need to obtain permissions and/or agreements before starting work? i.e. with local authorities, Canal & River Trust, land owners, environmental bodies, etc.

Does the site have any issues WRG needs to be aware of?
Access arrangements, outstanding permissions, listed structures, funding etc?

Is plant required Y/N?
If yes please provide details:



The Accommodation

Please read 'Hosting a Canal Camp' leaflet to ensure your accommodation meets all WRG's requirements.

Accommodation Name:

Address:

Parking Facilities:

Details of Toilet & Washing Facilities:

Details of Kitchen Facilities:

Will WRG have Sole Use For Duration of Camp?: Y/N

If no, please provide details:

Shower Facilities - At hall or provided elsewhere?

Please provide details:

Additional Details:

Supporting paperwork and photos

If you have any supporting paperwork or photos of the site and/or accommodation please include with your application.

Please email **completed application** to Jenny Black enquiries@wrg.org.uk or post it to WRG, Island House, Moor Road, Chesham, HP5 1WA by **15th September**.

