

Some Notes from the Macctastic March Meeting - 18th Mar 19

Canals & Rivers Trust

Canal & River Trust speakers, Duncan Learmond (Secretary of Macclesfield Canal Society) and Ashleigh Carden (CRT Volunteer Team) spoke about the work the Canals & Rivers trust undertake, both at a National level and the activities of volunteers local to the area.

We learned that the Canal and River Trust was formed in 2012, taking over the guardianship of British Waterways' canals, rivers, reservoirs and docks in England and Wales. The charity looks after 2000 miles of waterways, and relies on government support, boater fees, investment and donations to support their aim of 'Making life better by water'.

Canals were built at the height of the industrial revolution to carry freight between cities like Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds. These days canals are seen as a vital amenity, places to relax, connect with 200 years of history and the wildlife that they support.

Of local interest is the Macclesfield Canal, stretching over 26 miles from Marple to Kidsgrove, completed in 1831, it was built to serve the mills, mines and quarries of the Marple, Bollington, Macclesfield and Congleton areas.

The **Macclesfield Canal Society** with a 130 members, support the canal by means of liaison with local authorities, including the CRT. The group undertake important restorative and sustainability focussed works – regular litter picking, putting up bird boxes, provision of a herb garden at Lock 5, re-instatement of the Lock-keeper's garden at Lock 11, an annual 'veg bash', creating gravel paths and a variety of restoration projects.

The society is particularly proud of the Green Flag Award status of the Macclesfield Canal, the first canal in the world to be recognised as a public space of green merit. Macclesfield Canal has been awarded the Green Flag status, for the entire length of the canal, every year since 2015.

The CRT, partnering with the Macclesfield Canoe Club, are holding an event to support the **Great British Spring Clean (GBSC)**, which runs from the 22nd March to the 23rd April. On **Sat 13th April 19** they are planning a **Litter Pick** along the canal from Bollington to Macclesfield. Those interested should gather at **10am at Adelphi Mill** in Bollington. Equipment, refreshments and transport back to Bollington will be provided.

Follow the links to find out more about how the [CRT](#) and the [Macclesfield Canal Society](#) help promote and preserve our valuable green spaces, and for details of their events, meetings and how to get involved.

Litter Group

Mary spoke on behalf of the Litter group about the planned **Spring Clean** on **Sunday 14th April**. This event is to tie in with the St George's Day parade in Macclesfield Town Centre.

The idea is to encourage local people to do some litter picking whilst in town for the parade, rather than it being an organised event for a group, collecting litter along the route of the parade and meeting back at the town hall for the bags to be collected.

Those interested should gather outside the town hall at 1.45, and it is expected that the litter pick will run until 3pm.

There will be music, face painting and stalls for the St George's event so it will be a good opportunity for litter picking and making the activity visible to attendees.

The Hurdsfield Rangers were represented at the meeting and told us of their regular litter pick on the first Sunday of every month.

There was support for 'A Litter Pickers Map to Macclesfield' – mapping out the whole of Macclesfield and dividing the town into zones so that people can easily join a group or set up their own if they see a gap. (A draft is available [here](#)). It was suggested that a map of litter bins along these routes would be helpful, also indicating where bins have been removed.

An idea was raised about the possibility of holding or encouraging Parent/Child litter picks, as a means of teaching young children about the importance of keeping our public spaces and countryside free of litter. Contact: litter@macctastic.org

Mug library

Jane spoke about Jess's plans to launch the Mug Library at the next Treacle Market on Sunday 31st March, which will be based at the entrance to the Grosvenor Centre.

The Mug Library now has over 100 mugs already collected (thank you to all donators), and there will be an opportunity to drop off more at Treacle but to also use them too.

Volunteers for the day to man the stand are needed. Those that can spare half an hour are asked to contact Jess at muglibrary@macctastic.org .

Note, collection of mugs is still open, drop off to the Print Mill on ground floor of Heritage Centre.

EcoYouth Group

Esther spoke about the various meetings and activities that the group have been involved with including the FridayForFuture protest outside Macclesfield Town Hall on the 15th March, in which students from Tytherington High School and Kings Schools participated.

The next meeting of the EcoYouth group, which is open to primary and secondary schools, is on Wednesday 27th March from 16.00 – 17.00 at St Michael's Church.

A Youth Event is planned for the 30th March, from 12.30-2pm at St Michael's Church. This event is open to all ages and will be an opportunity to learn about the Grow Wild ecobrick project, how to make an ecobrick for the Grow Wild flower bed and to hear about other eco-initiatives local schools are involved with.

Materials to make ecobricks (clean, dry non-recyclable plastic and large plastic bottles) as well as completed ecobricks are needed for the event. There is an ecobrick collection point at the Rustic Coffee café on Churchill Way, or bring them along on the day.

Repair Café

Victoria gave an update on the Repair Café, which is on pause at the moment until enough 'fixers' and a group leader is found.

If you would like to get involved, please get in touch repairing@macctastic.org.

Transport

The transport group has decided that its focus should be to make Macclesfield safer, and more appealing to all in terms of travel.

They have made good progress on approaching schools to help with travel plans and working towards more sustainable travel to schools to reduce congestion and air pollution and emissions.

Work is ongoing with Macclesfield Town Council on the Town's cycling strategy, with Macctastic advising on the draft document and questionnaire to inform future decisions. Contact: transport@macctastic.org

Plastics

Although Adam couldn't attend, there was renewed support for a focus/drive on reducing plastic waste and takeaway containers around the town. Please get in touch if you would like to get involved. admin@macctastic.org

Cath asked for people to come forward with positive stories about how people and businesses are working to reduce plastic waste. The idea is that Macctastic will look to promote and raise awareness of these initiatives.

It was also noted that 'A Plastic Free Macclesfield' Facebook group has been set up, with the aim of working with businesses, schools and the local community within the Macclesfield area, to reduce the amount of plastics we use.

Branding

We had the first look at the new Macctastic logo. Louise talked through the inspiration for the design and some preliminary ideas on how the logos can be used.

The inclusion of the word 'Network' reflects group feedback on the purpose of Macctastic:

- Networking on Green issues plus talks.
- Pull things together. 2) Network. 3) Pressure group / liaison
- Networking. Point of contact for local groups.
- Communication conduit. Talk organiser. Motivator. Network hub.
- Networking. Facilitating. Empowering. Feeding back (but not pointless whinging).
- Networking. Ideas put into practice.
- Library of ideas. Central point of contact. Principle node for connecting people.
- Link to other groups & charities – like park run
- To provide a central point for sustainable action in Macclesfield – linking individuals, businesses, schools, other organisations etc..

The Website and [Facebook page](#) will be updated with the logos and a brand guideline document is to be created.

Other Groups and Events Discussed

Xtinction Rebellion

There will be an event in Macclesfield on 15th April between 5-7pm, legally stopping traffic on pedestrian crossings around the town. Meet at the Print Mill Gallery. Becca is the main point of contact for details. She suggested wearing white paper boiler suits, stressed that the activities are non-violent but is activity rebelling against leaders who are not responding to climate changes. See XRMacc on Twitter and on FaceBook.

TEDX Macclesfield

Need cereal boxes for goody bags, Button Warehouse accepting them, as long as the boxes are flattened

Recycling

A Visit to Cheshire East's recycling plant had been made. [See visit notes](#)

Date of Next Macctastic Meeting

Monday 20th May 7.30-9.30pm, at St Michael's Church.