

summer
2026

edinburgh canal festival

Zine

free festival events

open to all



part of the
fountainbridge
canalside community

community open/ festival day



SAT 20th JUNE
11-4pm

LOCHRIN BASIN TO
FOUNTAINBRIDGE GREEN

*music/performances
canoe polo, model boats
activities, local organisations
and more*

picnic in the park



SAT 25th JULY
12-3pm

HARRISON PARK

*picnic
music
and more*

raft race



SAT 22nd AUG
12-4pm

LEAMINGTON LIFT
BRIDGE

*raft race
water activity tasters
music, barge boat trips*

Welcome to our Edinburgh Canal Festival summer zine/programme 2026

Every year the Edinburgh Canal Festival brings people together to celebrate the waterways, green spaces and communities that make this part of the city feel alive - and we're so happy to welcome you back for another year of events, music, activities and enjoying the canalside.

As you may know, this year we're trying something a little different by spreading the Edinburgh Canal Festival across three separate summer events - Community Open/Festival Day on 20th June 11-4pm, Picnic in the Park on 25th July 12-3pm, and the Raft Race on 22nd August 12-4pm.

What makes this festival possible is the incredible mix of people behind it. From our small FCCT team and dedicated volunteers to the local businesses, community groups, charities, performers, artists and partners who give their time, ideas and energy - this festival is truly built by the community, for the community.

Alongside the festival, we're preparing for a big new chapter with the opening of our new community space and office at Union Path - a place we hope will become a welcoming hub for creativity, wellbeing, learning and connection all year round. We're also looking forward to introducing a new electric boat to the canal, helping us continue making the waterways more accessible, sustainable and enjoyable for everyone.

Whether you're joining us for the Community Open Day, relaxing at Picnic in the Park, cheering on the Raft Race, volunteering behind the scenes, or simply stopping to enjoy the atmosphere - thank you for being part of it.

We can't wait to share this summer with you.

from everyone at the FCCT

Marie

Rob

Fiona

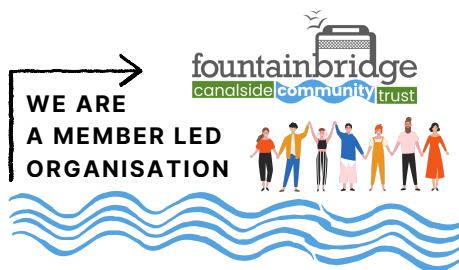
Liga

Jelen



the Fountainbridge Canalside Community Trust is a charity registered in Scotland.
Charity No: SC035342 Company Reg. No: 265866
reg'd address: % Scottish Canals Office, 23 Lower Gilmore Place, Edinburgh EH3 9NY

MAKING OUR LOCAL AREA A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, DO BUSINESS AND VISIT



Volunteering



Walking group



Greenspace group



Heritage project

Fountainbridge Canalside Community Trust has a range of weekly projects and one-off events and workshops.

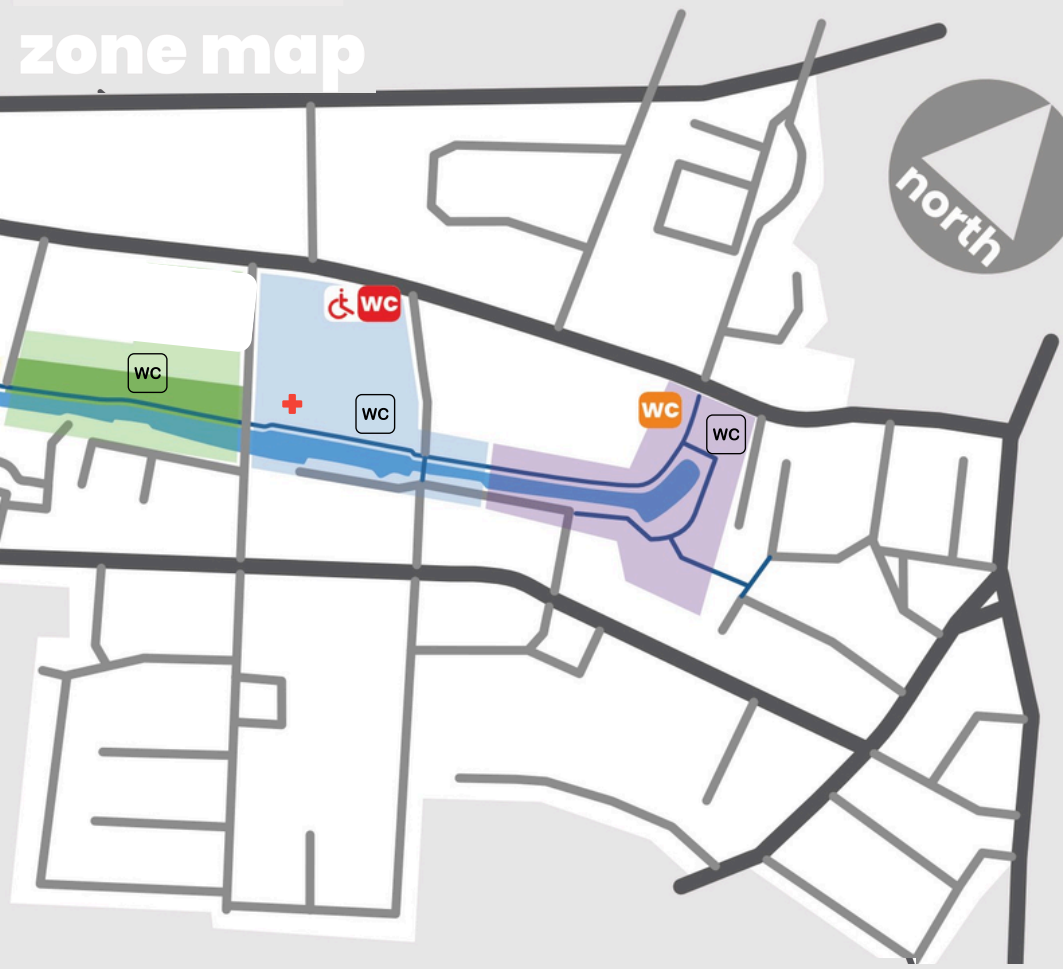
If you have an interest in supporting a vibrant canalside, find out about our projects on our website **fctt.scot**

OR scan the QR code to sign up for our e-news.

SCAN ME !



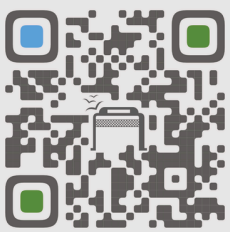
zone map



Festival Zones:

-  **Lochrin Basin**
-  **Leamington Liftbridge**
-  **Fountainbridge Green**

online programme at edinburghcanalfest.org.uk
or scan the QR code



Key:

-  first aid
-  toilet (accessible)
-   toilet
-  canal
-  main road
-  side road
-  footway
-  park / public space

REFORMER PILATES STUDIO “SOLLO”

Open day

EDINBURGH MODEL BOATS

An exhibition of selected radio controlled boats with a couple of small examples for the public to try on the canal using radio control.

EDINBURGH LIVING STREETS

information about Living Streets, interactive mapping of improvements

WOODLAND TRUST

Fundraising

EDINBURGH COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK

Fostering community-led initiatives for a just, thriving, and resilient Edinburgh. Come to our stall for climate discussions, to share about your ideas, network and discuss opportunities.

THE FOUR SISTERS BOATELS Open day

FIR ESPESSO BAR

speciality coffee, pastries and snacks

FORTH CANOE CLUB

canoe Polo Mini Tournament

ANDYS MAN CLUB

a peer-led charity to help with mental health in men through the power of awareness, sharing stories and sharing experiences..

RE-UNION CANAL BOATS

STALL BETWEEN LOCHRIN BASIN AND LEAMINGTON LIFT BRIDGE ZONE
social enterprise/Find out more about plans to replace Lochrin Belle boat with a new electric community canal boat



leamington lift bridge zone



NETWORKING KEY SERVICES LIMITED (NKS)

hot food stall with vegetable pakoras, vegetable samosas, tea/coffee, soft drinks, crisps and cakes; information, henna hand painting, face painting for children and glitter tattoos stall.

ST. ANDREW BOAT CLUB rowing for all since 1846.

ASSOCIATION OF UKRAINIAN WOMEN IN GREAT BRITAIN

selection of small ukrainian gifts and crafts

ALL ABOARD

boat open to the public, with volunteers on hand to discuss our work with the public. Would likely have teas/coffees/biscuits available.

EDINBURGH PRINTMAKERS

more about Edinburgh Printmakers, live printmaking demonstrations, printmaking workshop at Edinburgh Printmakers and run building tours throughout the day.

BANZAI be the part of the change you want to see!

DALRY PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENTS AND CARERS COUNCIL

second hand toy and book stall, our ever popular Lucky Dip, face painting, the Potato and Spoon Race and the Sack Race.

HOME START children's tatoos, crafts and colouring



CORSTORPHINE FIRST AID

fountainbridge green zone



BOROUGHMUIR HIGH SCHOOL Boroughmuir Summer Fayre

LINZER BAKER ON LOCHRIN BELLE 11-2PM

sweet pastries and baked goods

THE SORTED PROJECT visit Panacea canal boat

**FOUNTAINBRIDGE CANALSIDE COMMUNITY TRUST
GREENSPACE GROUP**

Nature discovery activities and nature themed crafts, gardening activities with Grove community garden

FOUNTAINBRIDGE LIBRARY

Bookbug session (Sing Songs)
crafts and Fountainbridge Spinners

19TH PENTLAND SCOUT GROUP cake & soft drinks stall



COORIE PIZZA

great pizza with a purpose/Social enterprise

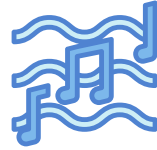
BIRCHWOOD ART STUDIO

art-based activities, information about Summer exhibition,
and a free prize draw

FORM & STRENGHT STUDIO sports activities and games

EDINBURGH CANAL FESTIVAL DAY

MUSIC SCHEDULE



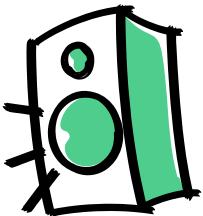
LOCHRIN BASIN ZONE

- 11:00 AM FEVER
K-pop
- 12:00 PM JAWBONE WALK
Scottish traditional
acoustic
- 1:00 PM EDINBURGH
COLLECTIVE
- 2:00 PM EDINBURGH
COLLECTIVE
- 3:00 PM EDINBURGH
COLLECTIVE



FOUNTAINBRIDGE GREEN ZONE

- 11:00 AM BOOK BUG
- 12:00 PM YOUNG MUSICIAN
ARTHUR
- 1:00 PM TRIPPYTAKKA
blues/rock
- 2:40 PM BUSKIN' SHARKS
bigband jazz/funk



LEAMINGTON LIFT BRIDGE ZONE

- 1:00 PM TAKE NOTE CHOIR
- 2:00 PM UKEHOOT
pop and rock songs performed by
Ukulele collective



EXPLORE THE UNION CANAL BY BOAT

**10%
OFF**

BOOK YOUR TRIP
WITH 10% DISCOUNT
BY USING CODE

EDCANALFEST



WATERWITCH

UP TO 8 PEOPLE

Narrow Canal Boat



LOCHRIN BELLE

UP TO 35 PEOPLE

Wide Beam Canal Boat

UNIQUE FLOATING VENUE HIRE AND CANAL EXPERIENCES IN EDINBURGH

Re-Union Canal Boats is part of the Fountainbridge Canalside Community Trust. We are a social enterprise.

All our profits go to supporting local community activities and supporting the aims of the organisation.



07716 745978



www.re-union.org.uk



info@re-union.org.uk



We are fundraising to build a new electric community boat. This will save CO2 emissions, be almost silent to run so you will see more wildlife and be more comfortable. The new boat will be the first of its kind in Scotland with renewable energy features. We hope to develop the new boat into an environmental classroom for use by groups.



We are asking for donations so we start building it in July this year and launch it next Spring. If you would like to donate towards our new community boat at Fountainbridge, please donate via this QR code or visit www.fcct.scot and donate directly

Thank You!

Picnic in the Park



**HARRISON
PARK**

**FREE
FOR
ALL AGES**

SATURDAY, 25th JULY

12-3PM



Connect with others in the park by sharing a picnic



music

free drop-in activities



and more



edinburgh canal **raft race**

SAT 22nd AUG 2026

12-4pm

a fun day out

• free and

open to all •

GO TEAM



canal boat trips
(pre-booking advised)

raft race
(pre-booking essential)



*meet Fountainbridge Canalside
Community Trust and the
greenspace group*



*Whether you're racing with your team or
cheering from the towpath, come and
be part of the fun!*

we are looking for you!

JOIN OUR CANALSIDE GREENSPACE GROUP

Explore and improve
our local green spaces
e.g Fountainbridge Green
and Harrison Park, for the
benefit of people and nature.

You are invited to connect with
others in these greenspaces and
learn and share practical skills. All
equipment and training provided.

TUESDAYS 10-12



We are a member led
organisation working to make
our local area a better place
to live, work, do business and
visit!

Our Greenspace Group is
currently supported by the
Longstone Fund, administered
by Foundation Scotland and
the Scottish Government's
Community Mental Health
and Wellbeing Fund
administered by EVOC



Contact and more information:

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fiona@fcct.scot

www.fcct.scot



SAVE it
FOR LATER

How to preserve spring's abundance

*By Lili Bor and Catherine Moar
Illustrations by Isabella Claydon*

The Canalside Greenspace Group in Edinburgh is a community of people who care deeply about the environment. While we mostly garden along the Union Canal, these recipes are inspired by our annual foraging tour around Edinburgh, where we learn about cleavers (known colloquially as sticky willy), stinging nettle, wild garlic and many other edible plants. Fresh cleavers and nettle make a wonderful tea – invigorating and rich in minerals, it's long been cherished as a spring tonic. Wild garlic and few-flowered leek, on the other hand, are ideal for preserving as larder staples. We hope you'll enjoy these recipes!

GOLDEN RULES OF FORAGING

1. Only harvest plants you can identify with certainty – wild garlic and few-flowered leek resemble toxic plants like lily of the valley.
2. Collect sparingly from abundant populations. Wild boar, deer, rabbits, squirrels and pollinators all love wild garlic.
3. Leave the roots in the ground and allow plenty of flowers to bloom for ecosystem health and regrowth.

Did you know?

Word has it that few-flowered leek escaped from the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh in 1863 and soon became an invasive species throughout Scotland. Today, it grows alongside the native wild garlic.



Wild Garlic Pesto

Slather this vibrant pesto on bread, mix it into pasta, or serve it as a dip for vegetables and crackers.

Ingredients:

- wild garlic leaves
- nuts (pine nuts, almonds or walnuts)
- grated Parmesan cheese (or nutritional yeast for a vegan option)
- olive oil
- salt and pepper
- a squeeze of lemon juice (optional)

Method:

1. Toast the nuts over medium heat until golden, then set aside to cool.
2. Wash the wild garlic leaves and pat them dry.
3. Add the wild garlic, toasted nuts, and grated cheese to a blender.
4. Blend while gradually pouring in the olive oil.
5. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Optionally, add a squeeze of lemon juice.
6. Use right away – or keep in a jar, topped with a thin layer of olive oil. Seal tightly and refrigerate for up to 2-3 weeks.

Pickled leaves, buds

Here are three options for tangy pickles which can be added to sandwiches, salads, cheese boards, or diced into sauces.

Ingredients:

- 1 • few-flowered leek stems, leaves and flowers
 - white wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar
 - salt, whole mixed peppercorns and a bay leaf
- 2 • few-flowered leek bulbils*
 - balsamic and raspberry vinegar
- 3 • few-flowered leek bulbils*
 - white wine vinegar
 - chilli
 - kaffir lime leaves

**Bulbils are small, bulb-like structures that form between the leaf and stem or in place of flowers*

Method:

1. Rinse and trim the plant.
2. Pack into sterilised jars.
3. Boil vinegar with salt and spices.
4. Pour the hot vinegar into the jars, leaving a little space at the top.
5. Seal the jars and allow them to sit for a week before use.



Wild garlic oil

Perfect for drizzling over warm salads, roasted vegetables and seafood dishes.

Ingredients:

- wild garlic or few-flowered leek leaves
- extra virgin olive oil

Method:

1. Rinse and dry the leaves.
2. Lightly bruise the leaves to allow flavour to escape.
3. Put them in a bottle with olive oil and store in a cool, dark place.



Leek cubes

Stir straight into soups, stews, or stir-fries to enhance flavour.

Ingredients:

- few-flowered leek leaves and stems
- melted butter (or olive oil for a vegan option)

Method:

1. Rinse, dry and chop the leaves and stems.
2. Pack into ice cube trays and top up with melted butter.
3. Label and keep in the freezer for up to 6 months.

EVENT CALENDAR

Fountainbridge Canalside Community Trust loves to organise events that connect people to community and place they live, work or play in! We especially focus on activities that bring people together and our events often have a wellbeing, outdoor or creative focus.

JUNE

INSPIRATION WALK AND BUGGY WALK

Wednesdays 24 June
10am

Wednesdays 24 June
1:30pm

**SAT
25
JULY**

EDINBURGH CANAL FESTIVAL PICNIC IN THE PARK

12-3PM
Harrison Park

EDINBURGH CANAL FESTIVAL RAFT RACE

12-4PM
Leamington Lift Bridge

**SAT
22
AUG**

SEPT

BAT WALK

Harrison Park

SEPT

BAT CRUISE

More details soon

OCT

PUMPKINS IN THE PARK

Harrison Park

NOV

FLOATILLA OF LIGHTS

More details soon

DEC

CANALSIDE CHRISTMAS

FOR UPDATES AND MORE INFO VISIT
www.fcct.scot/welcome

OR EMAIL
ahoy@fcct.scot

A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY DOWN EDINBURGH'S CANALS

By Allan James McNaughton

I was born in Edinburgh in 1959, but while I have lived in the city most of my life, it was only when they started work on the Falkirk Wheel in 1997, that I found out about the canal on our doorstep.

The Falkirk Wheel now links the Forth and Clyde Canal (which runs from Glasgow to Falkirk) with the Union Canal (which runs from Falkirk to Edinburgh). It is the world's only rotating boat lift, and while it has become a tourist attraction in its own right, there's loads more to see on the canals.

For the past ten years, I've been volunteering as a helmsman on the Lochrin Belle based at Fountainbridge – a fully accessible boat that can be rented out for different activities. I have developed a keen interest in the history and heritage of the canals. In 2024, I joined the Seagull Trust Cruises at Falkirk. The Seagull Trust has four boats at Ratho, two at Falkirk and two at Kirkintilloch. They run pleasure trips for residents of care homes and for children with additional support needs. The two at Falkirk can travel through the Falkirk Tunnel, the Falkirk Wheel and into the basin and back.



There are five Scottish canals in total, which make 141 miles of linked waterways: the Caledonian, Crinan, Forth & Clyde Canal, Monkland, and Union. The original purpose of the canals was to transport goods between towns and cities, and they originally used Clydesdale horses to pull the barges.

In the early 19th century the Lord of Callender refused to allow canal boats to go through his land so the engineers came up with a plan to build a tunnel going not through his land but underneath it. That is why the Falkirk Tunnel (pictured above) was built, and completed in 1822 – to allow the canal boats to pass through to get to the locks going down to the Forth and Clyde Canal.

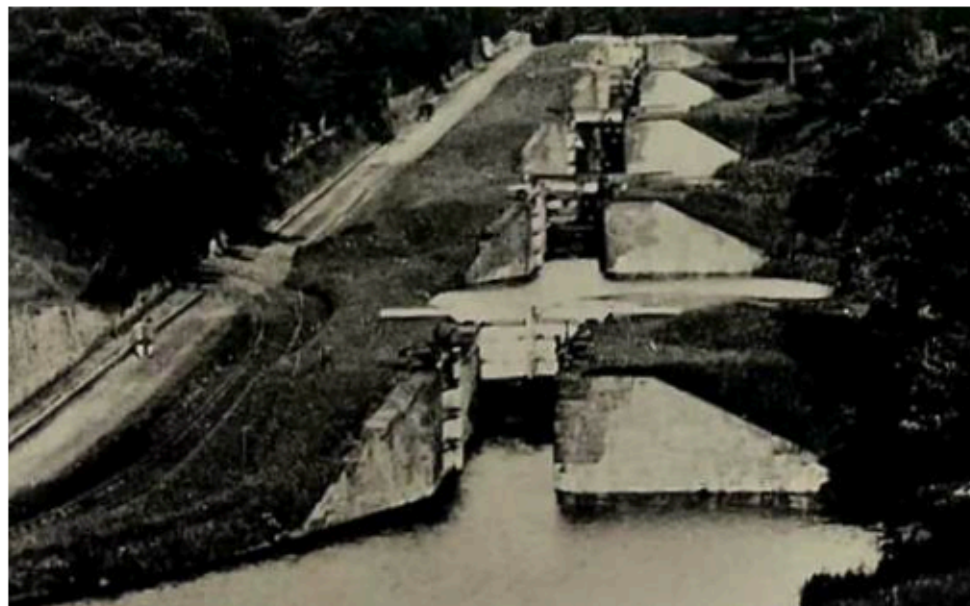
The tunnel is three-quarters of a mile in length and now has colourful lights that guide the way through what was once solid rock – hand carved and blasted by the navvies



who built it. After the canal boats pass through the Falkirk Tunnel, the boats travel along the Union Canal for 20 minutes until they reach the turning point to start down the fourteen locks of the Forth and Clyde Canal.

There would have been whole families living and working along the length of the canals. There would be lock keepers who would operate the locks to let barges and boats change heights to cross the hills of Scotland.

Families lived in the stable blocks to look after the horses. There were nine stable blocks to rest the horses for the night, so they would be ready for the next morning. Some stables have been demolished while others have been repurposed for community use. There were three in Edinburgh – one in Fountainbridge, another in Polwarth and another located on the site which is now Bridge 8 Hub in the Calders, Wester Hailes. The next stables were



located at Ratho, Broxburn and Winchburgh, which is now home to a scout hall. Next were Linlithgow, Polmont and Falkirk.

There are three bridges in Edinburgh and one near Falkirk. Bridge 49 has two faces on it – one side has a crying face, the other a laughing face – each telling a story. The crying face looks west to Falkirk, built by Highland navvies who faced tough terrain, a tunnel, and eleven locks – so difficult that the contractor went bankrupt. The smiling face looks east, where Irish navvies had a much easier job and the builder made a tidy profit.

The other three bridges are in Edinburgh between Polwarth and Harrison Park. These are painted in blue, black, brown and red, representing different aspects of the canal. Blue is for sky or water, black is for the coal that was transported, brown is for bricks or wood, and red is

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY. THE UNION CANAL

IS DIVIDED INTO FOUR STAGES AS FOLLOWS, VIZ.:-

The First Stage, styled the Edinburgh Stage, eight miles in length, commencing at Edinburgh, and extending to the commencement of the Sixth mile from Edinburgh.
The Second Stage, styled the Forthburgh Stage, eight miles in length, commencing at the western termination of the First Stage, and extending to the commencement of the seventeenth mile from Edinburgh.
The Third Stage, styled the Leithburgh Stage, eight miles in length, commencing at the western termination of the Second Stage, and extending to the commencement of the twenty-fifth mile from Edinburgh.
The Fourth Stage, styled the Haddingburgh Stage, eight miles in length, commencing at the western termination of the Third Stage, and extending to the junction of the Forth and Great Ouse Canals, and to the western termination of the Extension Cut.

ACCOUNT OR LIST

TOLLS, DUTIES AND DUES

OF THE
UNION CANAL, AND WORKS THEREOF,

AS KEPT BY THE
NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY COMPANY.

TOLLS AND DUTIES.

No.	Description of Goods.	PER TON, PER MILE.				No.	Description of Goods.	PER TON, PER MILE.			
		1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.			1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.
1st.	Coal, (Bleached) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10	11th.	Stags, (Bleached) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10
2nd.	Coal, (Black) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10	12th.	Stags, (Black) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10
3rd.	Coal, (Grey) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10	13th.	Stags, (Grey) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10
4th.	Coal, (White) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10	14th.	Stags, (White) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10
5th.	Coal, (Red) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10	15th.	Stags, (Red) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10
6th.	Coal, (Green) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10	16th.	Stags, (Green) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10
7th.	Coal, (Blue) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10	17th.	Stags, (Blue) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10
8th.	Coal, (Purple) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10	18th.	Stags, (Purple) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10
9th.	Coal, (Yellow) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10	19th.	Stags, (Yellow) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10
10th.	Coal, (Black) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10	20th.	Stags, (Black) ...	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10



Milestones pace out the 31 miles between Falkirk and Edinburgh accompanied by larger stage posts which mark the 'Division Betwixt Third and Forth Stages'. Four stages divide the Canal into approximately 8 mile lengths which govern the payment of dues, and may also have been

for the men and women and children who lost their lives building them.

For me, it's a great honour to be a volunteer on the canal boats. I enjoy what I do and like helping people as well as welcoming guests onto the boat. When I'm on the boat I always wonder what the canal would have been like 200 years ago. I would have loved to have seen the horse-drawn barges and boats, or the ones with coal fires, as well as visiting the stable blocks and speaking to the teams that managed them. I would have enjoyed getting the chance to speak to the people that worked along the canal and hearing their stories in their own words.

It is a privilege to be part of the canals' history - and I hope to continue to do so.



part of the



online programme at
edinburghcanalfestival.org.uk
or scan the code

THANKS:

to the GroundsWell and contributing authors for permission to reproduce selected articles in this publication



GroundsWell
Transforming our cities from the ground up



**Scottish
Canals**



This Festival would not be possible without all the support we are receiving from volunteers, organisations, sponsors and funders. Thank you!

Information and activities correct at time of printing. For any updates or changes, check the event website and/or social media.