

Python gets tooled up

Python is a narrowboat that belongs to the Chesterfield Canal Trust. It does maintenance work along the Chesterfield Canal, crewed by volunteers. This volunteering has proved so beneficial that it is also part of the new Green Prescribing Programme from South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Integrated Care System.



Python works in partnership with the Canal & River Trust which owns and manages the canal. The volunteers do seasonal vegetation cutbacks, remove rubbish from the water, clear litter from the towpaths, clear stonework round locks, clear bywashes, deal with discarded fishing line and clean signs and milestones.

A consignment of brand-new tools and personal protective gear for the Python volunteers to use on its taskforce days throughout this year and into the future was recently delivered by Dan Hazard of C&RT.

Python boat manager, Dave Warsop, said “We are delighted to receive these tools and equipment from C&RT. They are of excellent quality and will make a huge difference to our working when we have strong teams of highly motivated volunteers wanting to make a difference.”

You can sign up online to join Python’s Spring Clean work along the canal by searching for Chesterfield Canal Trust.

Built in 1929 by Yarwood’s of Northwich, Python was originally 71’ 6” long and became part of Fellows, Morton & Clayton’s carrying fleet.

Around 1980, British Waterways cut a slice out of it to make a 50’ workboat based on Regent’s Canal in London.

In 2009, the Chesterfield Canal Trust leased it for £1 a year; two years later the lease was waived, and it became part of the CCT fleet.

Trust volunteers did a cosmetic makeover but were not able to address serious structural issues.

By 2015 its hull was found to be perilously thin, and it almost sank. It underwent full restoration. The result is the fully operational workboat you see today.

The Chesterfield Canal Trust is campaigning to get the canal fully restored by 2027, which is the 250th anniversary of its opening.