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Sir Samuel Whitbread KCVO

[www.b-mkwaterway.co.uk](http://www.b-mkwaterway.co.uk)

## Press Release

### Embargo: Immediate Release

B&MK Waterway Trust unveils new wood carvings

The proposed route of the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park is being marked by the installation of unique wood carvings at the Forest of Marston Vale's Forest Centre & Millennium Country Park. The Trust commissioned the carvings by local wood carving artists – Carrie Yuen and Tony Langston. The carvings portray examples of wildlife – birds and animals – that will live on, or near, the waterway and associated canal boat activities.

The carvings will be unveiled by the High Sheriff for Bedfordshire, Julian Polhill, on 10th July. A poem entitled Bold Beginnings by Nancy Campbell, the Canal Laureate, written for the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway will be heard for the first time at the event. This will be read by local storyteller, Mark Steinhardt.

Jane Hamilton, Chair of B&MK Waterway Trust said "We must thank Central Bedfordshire Council for awarding us a grant from their Green Infrastructure Funds which has enabled us to install these fantastic carvings in a very popular location at the Millennium Country Park. We are delighted that Nancy Campbell, the Poet Laureate for the Canal & River Trust agreed to write a poem for us which beautifully reflects our vision for the new waterway. The carvings will create points of interest for visitors to the Millennium Country Park whilst enabling us to promote the route of the waterway in a most effective way."

Councillor Nigel Young, Executive Member for Regeneration at Central Bedfordshire Council, said: "We want to ensure that new housing developments are delivered alongside attractive open space and leisure opportunities. The waterway is an amazing scheme that could boost tourism to Central Bedfordshire and provide wonderful family fun for new and existing residents in a great setting."

The carvings can be found at Forest of Marston Vale's Forest Centre & Millennium Country Park, Station Road, Marston Moretaine, Bedfordshire MK43 0PR.

The path through the Millennium Country Park follows a stretch of the route that will one day be a major new waterway connecting the River Great Ouse in Bedford and the Grand Union Canal at Milton Keynes. When completed, it will provide a unique pastoral location for boaters, walkers, cyclists, anglers and horse-riders, as well as linking and uniting new and existing villages.

The new waterway – the first to be built in England for 100 years – is expected to lead to an increase in visitor numbers to the area and the creation of new tourism-related jobs. Potential environmental benefits include flood prevention and improved water management



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WATERWAY TRUST

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## Notes to editors

Please credit the B&MK Waterway Trust, if you use the picture.

The B&MK Waterway Trust was established in 1995 to promote the development of a broad waterway park which will link the Grand Union Canal in Milton Keynes to the river Great Ouse in Bedford through a series of waterway parks. More detail can be found at: <http://www.b-mkwaterway.org.uk> 2009 saw the first section of the waterway actually dug when a wide tunnel designed for use by the Waterway, a footpath and cycleway, was constructed leading under the newly dualled A421. It joined the Marston Vale Millennium Country Park with Berry Wood, Wootton.

The Forest of Marston Vale ([www.marstonvale.org](http://www.marstonvale.org)) is a 61 square mile area and Community Forest, between Bedford and Milton Keynes. The project is entirely funded by charitable donations (Registered Charity No. 1069229) with all funds raised at the Forest Centre & Millennium Country Park going directly into the planting of trees and managing of woodlands.

Funding awarded by Central Bedfordshire Green Infrastructure Planning Obligations Fund

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The Canal Laureate project is collaboration between The Poetry Society and the Canal & River Trust, part of the Arts on the Waterways programme supported by Arts Council England and the Arts Council of Wales. For more details, visit [waterlines.org.uk](http://waterlines.org.uk) and [poetrysociety.org.uk](http://poetrysociety.org.uk)

**Websites:**

Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust [www.b-mkwaterway.org.uk](http://www.b-mkwaterway.org.uk)

Central Bedfordshire - A great place to live and work [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Forest of Marston Vale [www.marstonvale.org](http://www.marstonvale.org)

Carrie Yuen [www.carrieoncarving.co.uk](http://www.carrieoncarving.co.uk)

Tony Langston [www.thewoodartist.co.uk](http://www.thewoodartist.co.uk)

Mark Steinhardt [www.marksteinhardt.co.uk](http://www.marksteinhardt.co.uk)

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