

# WATERWAYS ACTION SQUAD

MARCH 2010

ISSUE 1

## The Story So Far....



**Waterways Action Squad is a youth volunteering project funded by v, the national young volunteer's service and Bank of America.**

The project aims to encourage more 16-25 year olds to get involved in the care and promotion of their local rivers and canals

and is being delivered by The Waterways Trust and British Waterways.

Since welcoming its first volunteers in July 2009, over 200 volunteers have been involved in a wide range of volunteering activities and this number is increasing all the time.

A major contribution made by our first enthusiastic recruits was to organise the project's official launch event.

Held at the National Waterways Museum, Ellesmere Port in October 2009, over 400 people attended and spent a fun-filled day finding out about the project and busying themselves with all things water-related!

All activities were organized by our hardworking team of young volunteers and included; traditional arts and crafts, wildflower planting, face-painting, bellboating, angling, horse-boating and a variety of local Bands on Barges.

Over 50 young volunteers helped out on the day to ensure that the event was a great success.

A massive thank you goes out to the students of West Cheshire College, lots of whom gave up many, many hours in the weeks leading up to the event— We really couldn't have done it without you!!

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## Highlights

*Youth Involvement Day on 12th August marked the first WAS activity, a mural painting on a canal bridge along the Shropshire Union Canal*

Waterways Action Squad volunteer, Gemma Jerome attended the annual AINA Conference in November 2009 and co-delivered a presentation to over 150 delegates.

*WAS volunteers helped out at the Anderton Boat Lift's Big Draw event in October, before returning to assist with Christmas arts and crafts.*

The project's website went live in November—Check out [www.vinspired.com](http://www.vinspired.com) for all the latest info

*We also have a blogging site at [www.waterwaysactionsquad.com](http://www.waterwaysactionsquad.com)*

**WAS volunteers helped to transform a 1/2 mile stretch of the Rochdale Canal at Fails-worth over 3 days in October**

*BW Chairman, Tony Hales and Waterways Trust CEO, Roger Hanbury met a panel of WAS volunteers at a Volunteering Taster Day in October*

**In November 09 Waterways Action Squad volunteers extolled the virtues of youth volunteering during an hour long radio talk show on Cheshire fm**

*12 students from West Cheshire College conducted a piece of market research into young people and The Waterways Trust before presenting their findings to Project Manager, Lucie Unsworth in December 09*

TO DATE OVER  
250  
VOLUNTEERING  
OPPORTUNITIES  
HAVE BEEN  
CREATED BY  
WATERWAYS  
ACTION SQUAD

## Facts and Figures...

We know it's not all about the numbers but here are a few of the key facts and figures to date...

*Over 250 young volunteers have volunteered with the project and got involved in the care and promotion of their local waterways*

*Over 150 short term opportunities have been created and filled*

The WAS team has created over 100 part time opportunities across the North west

150 volunteers have received their v t h a n k y o u certificates so far

50 young volunteers are working towards their v50 Award (Certificate awarded after 50 hours)

## Volunteer Profile.... Mark Martin



WATERWAYS ACTION SQUAD VOLUNTEER, MARK MARTIN

*Each issue we'll introduce you to a Waterways Action Squad volunteer. To get the ball rolling, we have quizzed 21 year old Marketing student, Mark Martin. Here's what he had to say...*

**What is your volunteer role within WAS?** to assist in the marketing and publicity work. I got

involved in the marketing of the main launch event in October as well as dealing with a number of press releases.

**How do you feel you have benefited from your volunteering?** I gained a vast amount of experience of the areas in which I hope to have a career which will hopefully also prove to be invaluable on my CV when I am applying for a job. All of this will prove particularly

helpful given the current difficult job market.

**What have you enjoyed most about volunteering with WAS?** Gaining experience in aspects of marketing to which an undergraduate would not normally have access was very exciting.

**What 3 words best sum up your volunteering experience?** Exciting, useful and fulfilling

## Opportunities

*Here is a selection of Waterways Action Squad volunteering opportunities created to date:*

**Short Term:** mural painting, practical towpath improvements, radio show volunteers, The Big Draw, launch event stewards, Local History Weekend (NWM), taster days, event speaker, waterway

womble!

**Part Time:** Wildlife Ambassadors, admin, bat box project, archive volunteers, boat guides, local roving reporters, marketing, press and PR, event planners, bloggers

**Full Time:** Welcome to Christy, our first Voluntary Project Assistant who joined us in March



Allen perfects his Lowry inspired panel for the mural

## Photograph Competition!!!

October saw the launch of Waterways Action Squad's first photography competition.

The theme is *'The Secret Life of Canals and Rivers'* and we want to know what the canals and rivers mean to you.

Boating, angling, cycling, wildlife, the environment, culture and heritage—Your photos can focus on any aspect of waterway life you like!

As long as you are aged 16-25 and the photo you are submitting has been taken by you then you are welcome to take part.

Email your photos to Emma Wright, Volunteer Coordinator at [emma.wright@thewaterways-trust.co.uk](mailto:emma.wright@thewaterways-trust.co.uk) or post them to us at the address on the back of this newsletter.

You can enter as many photos as you like.

We must receive all entries by 12th May 2010.



PHOTO CREDIT: KERRY MORRISON, "WILD AND PRODUCTIVE 2009". LEEDS LIVERPOOL CANAL. COMMISSIONED BY LIVERPOOL BIENNIAL

TO HAVE AN INPUT  
 INTO THE  
 DEVELOPMENT OF  
 THE YOUTH  
 INVOLVEMENT  
 STRATEGY FOR  
 WATERWAYS,  
 CONTACT PROJECT  
 MANAGER, LUCIE  
 UNSWORTH

## Coming Soon....

**2010 promises to be a very busy year indeed for the Waterways Action Squad and we have many plans and project ideas in the pipe-line...**

Tom Rolt was one of the co-founders of the IWA (Inland Waterways Association) To mark his centenary in June 2010, Waterways Action Squad volunteers

will be working closely with the IWA and British Waterways to plan and deliver an exciting weekend of activities to celebrate Rolt's impact on the waterways' past, present and future.

From March onwards, volunteers will be offered the opportunity to work towards a range of additional accreditation including; Youth Achievement Awards, John Muir

Award and Peer Leadership Awards.

The Trust and British Waterway's Youth Involvement Strategy looks set to transform the way young people engage with their waterways—If you would like to have an input into this, please contact Project Manager, Lucie Unsworth on 0151 373 4375

## Meet the Team... Hazel Mayow

Hazel has been the team's Volunteer Leader since July 2009; planning & delivering many of our practical opportunities. Hazel has a wealth of experience & has previously volunteered full time placements for Groundwork & Lancashire Wildlife Trust. Hazel has made some friends for life amongst the Boat Museum Society members recently as a result of her expert chainsaw skills which came in very handy in the Heritage Boat Yard!!

### 5 Minutes with Mayow...

**Favourite biscuit?** Dark Chocolate hobnob

**Favourite band?** This week its got to be Enslaved - they go so well with the grim and frostbitten yet progressive landscape ;-). Next week, who knows...

**Do you have any hidden talents?** I can speak a bit of KiSwahili, and sometimes make my own clothes

**What has been your project highlight so far?** meeting so many fabulous volunteers! (and) the mural project...the volunteers came up with a brilliant design & got it painted in double-quick time...it was a really great start to the project.

**What are you most looking forward to in 2010?** Getting out and about with all our new conservation opportunities - I need some fresh air after Christmas slobbering!



**VOLUNTEER  
 LEADER, HAZEL  
 MAYOW**

Finally we would like to say a **big thank you** to all of our wonderful *Waterways Action Squad* volunteers, the staff and volunteers at the National Waterways Museum, our funders at v and Bank of America, our partner organisation British Waterways and all of the groups, organisations and societies who we have worked with so far.

We look forward to continuing this work, developing new and exciting projects and creating ever-more diverse, innovative and enjoyable volunteering opportunities for young people across the North west!

## CONTACT US....

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