

Family Activity Trail

Exploring the canals



Follow our page to keep up with our fun family events!
Facebook / Instagram @cotswoldcanalsconnected

Where can I go on the canal?



Saul - Cotswold Canals Trust Visitor Centre

Fromebridge - Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust site (from June 2025), Pocketts Orchard

Stonehouse - Cotswold Canals Trust Bookshop, the former Ship Inn site
Laburnum Park play area, train station, St Cyrs Church

Ebley - Victory Park play area, Council Offices

Cainscross - Queen Elizabeth II Park play area & pond,
The Lake at The Lawn, Dudbridge crane

Stroud - Museum in the Park, Cotswold Canals Trust Visitor Centre,
Stroud Valleys Project Eco Shop, Capel's Mill nature area, train station

Brimscombe - Cotswold Canals Trust Bookshop

Get around by...

Train - Stations at Stroud and Stonehouse

Bus - regular bus services on the A419 -
see www.bustimes.org

Foot / Bike / Buggy - excellent towpath
between Brimscombe and Stonehouse
and a bit more rugged past these points.

Boat - Cotswold Canal Trust runs boat
trips from Stroud and Saul.

Car - the canal is never far from the A419!



Water Safety

**Canals have deep water with steep sides, stay on the paths
and keep away from the edges of locks.**

What can I do to help?

Around 400 volunteers across the Cotswold Canals Connected partnership work towards connecting people, places and wildlife along the canal. There are many ways you can help too!

Be inspired and Enter our Competition!

Create a picture, poem or work of art capturing your favourite things about the canal and what it means to you. Let us know what you love, and tell your friends too - we want everyone to enjoy the canal!

To enter the competition: Send poems, artwork or photos of enjoying your time at the canal to canalvolunteering@stroud.gov.uk or **drop it off** in the Cotswold Canals Trust Visitor Centre at Wallbridge or the bookshops in Brimscombe or Stonehouse. **(Deadline for the competition is 1 June 2025. Please read terms & conditions online at stroud.gov.uk/canalcomp)**



Donate a book, DVD or jigsaw to a CCT bookshop

Help to **raise money for the canal** with your donations.

Litter Picking

Help us keep the canal paths clean by litter picking. Check out the **Litter Champion Hubs** with litter pickers available at **The Long Table** (Brimscombe), **Wallbridge** and **Saul Junction**.

Volunteering

To find out more about **volunteering opportunities**, visit linktr.ee/cotswoldcanalsvolunteering



Journey Book



There are many interesting historical canal stories preserved on the **Stroud Navigation Archive Charity** website. Use this Journey Book activity to record your own history!

You will need:

- A4 paper
- Pencil

Instructions

- Fold the paper in half to make a **long rectangle**.
- **Fold the rectangle in half**
- **Fold each half back on themselves**, to create a zig zag sketchbook.
- Take this on your walk along the canal. When you **spot something that interests you**, **draw it** in the first page, and continue on your walk, repeating for the other pages to create a record of your walk.
- Optional extra: **Take it further by researching more** about the things that interested you. You can write notes on the back of each page.



There is a **Ghost Hunters canal trail** for older children, with stories at various sites, use the QR code to access.



Canal boats carried cargo like coal, seen here at Eastington.

Find out about this and more online
stroudwaterhistory.org.uk





Nature Walk with Senses

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust encourages everyone to value, enjoy and share wildlife. Being in nature can help us to feel calm, especially using mindful activities like this one.

You will need:

Just your senses!

Instructions

- **Head to the canal.**
You can do this while walking or find a place to settle.
- You could choose to **talk about** the following questions with others, or you may want to try it **quietly by yourself**.
- **Do not do any tasting** as some plants are **poisonous**.
- **Notice how you are feeling** before you start.
- Look at the nature around you, **what can you see?** What tiny things can you see **close up**? What can you see in the **distance**? Do you notice any **signs of creatures**? Maybe a hole, nest, feather, footprint, or even some pool!
- **What can you feel / touch?** Is it a warm / cold day, can you feel a breeze? Are your hands brushing past leaves?
- **What can you smell?** Are there scented plants?
- Find somewhere **safe to sit, close your eyes and listen**. **What can you hear?** How many different noises can you count? Maybe it's birds, the wind in the trees, water.
- **How are you feeling now?** Has it changed from earlier?



Find a reserve to visit at gloucestershiREWILDLIFETRUST.CO.UK

Facebook & Instagram @gloswildlife



Bird Watching



Stroud Valleys Project helps people to take care of green spaces, so there are lots of places for birds, insects and other animals to live. You can see nature thriving along the towpath... such as the birds below!



Useful items (not essential):

- Binoculars
- Bird ID guide / book



Instructions

- You'll spot birds as you walk along; however, you may be able to observe them for longer if you can **quietly stand or sit somewhere** they can't see you, such as behind a tree. Each person could look in a different direction so you don't miss any!
- When you spot a bird, try to **observe what it is doing** - is it looking for food, gathering nest materials, or something else?
- **Listen to them too** - you may hear singing or warning calls, which are usually short, repeated noises.
- The **Wren, Grey Wagtail and Dipper** above are often seen along the canal and the streams nearby.

Visit Stroud Valleys Project Eco Shop on Threadneedle Street in central Stroud; stroudvalleysproject.org

Facebook @[stroudvalleysproject](https://www.facebook.com/stroudvalleysproject) Instagram @[svpcharity](https://www.instagram.com/svpcharity)





Weaving

The **Stroudwater Textile Trust** helps to keep the memory of our area's historic woollen cloth mills alive, and there are two that you can visit! Try your hand at weaving with this activity - you could collect grass, feathers and thin bendy sticks on a canal walk and weave as you go along!

You will need:

- Cardboard A5 size
- String
- Scissors
- long fibres to weave: wool, grasses, leaves etc.



Instructions

- **Make tiny cuts** 1-2cm apart down one side of your cardboard, and then **repeat for the opposite side**, trying to match the same number of slits.
- **Wind your string around the cardboard**, pulling it once into each cut. This makes the 'warp' of your weaving.
- For the 'weft' you might **find long leaves, feathers, thin twigs or grass on your walks** (don't pick wild flowers), or try wool. Thread under one string and over the next, repeating to form a fabric.
- You can **experiment with different patterns**; go under one string, over two strings etc.
- **Wash your hands** after using nature finds.

Share your weaving via Facebook & Instagram
@stroudtextiletrust and find out more about mill open days
and mill walks at **stroudtextiletrust.org.uk**



Go Back In Time



There's always lots to learn at **The Museum in the Park!**
Visit the museum or their website to find out lots more about
the painting *A View of Wallbridge*, and sketch it yourself.

You will need:

- Coloured pencils
- Paper / sketchbook

Instructions

- **Imagine being the artist** seeing this view when it was painted around 1790.
- **Visit the museum or website**, and **make a sketch** of the painting, looking out for some of the following details:
- **Can you spot the canal** and the bridge it goes under? This is at Wallbridge. The roads at the time were not very good, so canals were built so boats could be used to carry heavy goods, much like lorries do now.
- The area around Stroud became famous for dyeing cloth. There were lots of freshwater springs and skilful people working as dyers. It was especially well known for a colour called 'Stroudwater Scarlet'. **Can you see the dyed cloth drying on the slopes of Rodborough?**
- **In the centre of the houses is Wallbridge Mill**, with its six chimneys. At the time this picture was painted, lots of people in the Stroud area had jobs to do with making woollen cloth, including working in mills like this.



A View of Wallbridge - from the collections of Museum in the Park, Stroud

Check out museuminthepark.org.uk for information about family friendly events. **Museum in the Park** is free to enter. Follow on Facebook @[@themuseuminthepark](https://www.facebook.com/themuseuminthepark) & Instagram





Boat Windows

Cotswold Canals Trust run regular boat trips from Stroud and Saul. You will see lots of canal boats at Saul Junction. Find things to display in these boat windows that you find on any of your journeys along the canal.

You will need:

- A4 card
- Scissors
- Sticky tape (wide is best)
- Leaves, tiny twigs etc
- Glue



Instructions

- **Fold the card in half along its length.**
- **Draw a simple boat shape**, with windows, as pictured, and get an adult to help you **cut it out**, cutting through the windows on both sides.
- Take the boat and the sticky tape with you **on your walk**. When you **find something to stick in**, open out the folded shape, put sticky tape over a window, place your nature treasure, and then stick tape over the other side.
- **Repeat for other windows** as you go along.
- Remember to **wash your hands** after collecting items.
- When you have finished the windows, you can **glue the frame sides together** for a neat finish.

Find out more about **Cotswold Canals Trust's** restoration work and boat trips at **cotswoldcanals.org**
Facebook & Instagram **[@cotswoldcanalstrust](https://www.instagram.com/cotswoldcanalstrust)**



Word Games



Boatmobility provide 'freedom on water' - accessible boating for all with mobility or learning disabilities, together with friends and families. Have fun with your friends and families with these games as you explore the canal!

Adventure Story

Weave things you **spot along the canal** into an imaginary adventure. Eg. "Once upon a time, there was a bridge, and under that bridge lived a troll". Then the next person adds a sentence with something they can see.



Connecting words

Start by **naming something you can see**. The next person says **a word that is somehow connected to that word**, and so on, each word linking to the last. Eg. canal, water, fish. Use words in alphabetical order to make it more difficult!

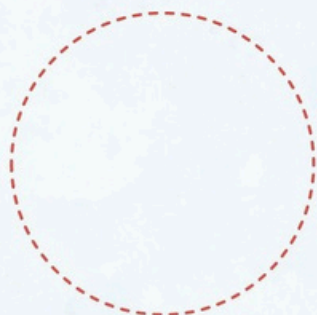
Going on a boat trip

One person starts by saying **"I'm going on a boat trip and I'm going to take..."** and names an item. The next person says the **same phrase, with the first person's item, and then adds their own**, and so on, with the list getting longer each time.

Visit the website for more information
cotswoldboatmobility.org.uk
Facebook **@cotswoldboatmobility**



Visit & Collect Stamps



Museum in the Park, Stratford Park

Lots to see and do here
with events and trails for
all the family.

Cotswold Canals Trust Bookshop Stroud or Stonehouse

Why not bring along a book,
DVD or jigsaw to donate.

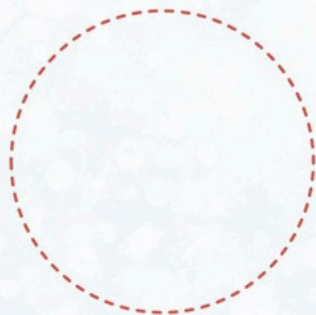


Stroudwater Textile Trust Mill Open Days

See how the historical
mills worked, check the
website for open days.

Stroud Valleys Project Eco Shop

Lots of eco goodies as well
as info on projects and how
you can get involved.



Can you spot?



Bridge



Lock



Mill



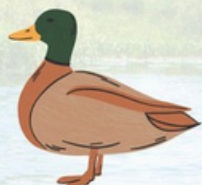
Boat



Heron



Swan



Duck



Otter



Kingfisher



Teasel



Horsetail



Rushes