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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hillingdon's Canal Boat Celebrates 50 years' Community Service

The London Borough of Hillingdon's narrowboat *Pisces* has given over 50 years' service to the community.

At a celebration at the Hillingdon Narrowboat Association's boat house on the Grand Union Canal Richard Parry (Chief Executive, Canal & River Trust) praised the enthusiasm and dedication of the volunteers who work so hard to run *Pisces* and her sisters, introducing many thousands of people to the canals.

He said "Community boats like *Pisces* are the unsung heroes of the waterways, doing such a lot of good work promoting their benefits for the well-being of everyone, and especially getting young people onto the waterways"

He then presented the Mayor of Hillingdon, Councillor David Yarrow with a specially painted traditional water can <<Image 1>> as a token of the canal community's respect <<Image 2>>

Thanking Mr Parry, Councillor Yarrow explained that in the 1960s a young borough purchased a fairly old *Pisces* to use as a floating youth club, hostel and classroom. She was run by Youth and Community Services .

The borough still owns the boat, but her operation has moved to the Third Sector in the form of Hillingdon Narrowboats Association. They have run *Pisces* and an increasing number of other boats on behalf of the people of Hillingdon since the 1990s.

Councillor Yarrow said "the canals in Hillingdon provide a much loved leisure facility, a slow fast track to nature and countryside for the people of the borough. Walking, cycling, angling and boating all provide a chance to slow down and escape the traffic and bustle of the nearby towns.

"*Pisces* has introduced thousands of people to the fascinating and relaxing world of the waterways. She's now carrying the grandchildren of her earliest users and we believe she is the country's longest serving community boat

"Her 50 years of community service show what can be achieved by people of goodwill and vision for the benefit of the community"

"As the owner of the boat the Borough is obliged by the Canal Boats Acts to provide the



steerer with a suitable water container.

Much as I'd like to keep this can in the Mayor's Parlour It gives me great pleasure to present it to Loraine Grainger, chairman of Hillingdon Narrowboats Association”
<<Image 3>>

Accepting the can, and setting it in pride of place on Pisces cabin top, Loraine Grainger thanked Mavis Waldron (90), the last of her generation of traditional canal painters, who had painted it

She went on to thank the large number of individuals whose dedication had kept *Pisces* running over the years

She said “We all know Doctor Canal is a great healer It's great that so many organisations are working together all over the country to look after and preserve the waterways for their changing uses, and It's a great pleasure and privilege to be part of this.

“We agree with Ratty from *the Wind in the Willows* when he said 'Believe me, my young friend, there is NOTHING--absolutely nothing--half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats”

<<Image 4 – Group shot of all speakers>>

==ENDS==

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

Hillingdon Narrowboats Association www.hna.org.uk is a charity operating six community narrow boats from its base near Coppermill lock on the Grand Union Canal. The Association offers day and residential canal trips to youth and community groups and has one boat specially adapted for wheelchair users and other mobility impaired people. The association operates *Pisces* on behalf of the London Borough of Hillingdon.

The Canal and River Trust www.canalrivertrust.org.uk is the charity who looks after and brings to life 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales, The Trust safeguards the waterways now and for the future, and in so doing helps make life better for millions of people across England and Wales.



Narrowboat *Pisces* was built in 1935 to carry cargoes between London and the Midlands. After service in WWII as a floating fire engine she became a passenger vessel and then a camping boat before the London Borough of Hillingdon purchased her in the late 1960s for use as a floating youth club, youth hostel and classroom

The text of this release (Without photos) can be downloaded from <https://www.dropbox.com/s/loak509exv2denm/Pisces%2050%20Press%20Release%20Text%20Only.doc?dl=0>

PHOTOS

Images can be downloaded from the relevant DropBox link

Image 1 – Mavis Waldron (90) puts the finishing touches to *Pisces*' commemorative water can.



Photo Ray Butler / Hillingdon Narrowboats Association

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/twcnpazvg0xsicl/Mavis%20puts%20final%20touches.JPG?dl=0>

Image 2 : Richard Parry (Chief Executive, Canal & River Trust) presents the Mayor of Hillingdon with the commemorative water can.



Photo Robert Pauldon / Hillingdon Narrowboats Association.



HILLINGDON NARROWBOATS
ASSOCIATION
Affordable boating for the community

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/l73f03anlgsh2b1/RP%20presents%20can%20to%20Mayor.JPG?dl=0>

Image 3 : The Mayor of Hillingdon, Cllr David Yarrow presents the water can to Loraine Grainger, Chairman of Hillingdon Narrowboats Association. Photo Robert Pauldon / Hillingdon Narrowboats Association.



<https://www.dropbox.com/s/f2fg28jrkxz0k77/Presenting%20can%201.JPG?dl=0>

Image 4 : (L to R) Richard Parry (Chief Executive, Canal and River Trust, Loraine Grainger (Chairman, Hillingdon Narrowboats Association) and Cllr David Yarrow, Mayor of Hillingdon aboard *Pisces* with the commemorative water can. Photo Robert Pauldon, Hillingdon narrowboats Association.



<https://www.dropbox.com/s/i2woutn959gipjn/Group%20with%20can.JPG?dl=0>