

Hundreds enjoy boat trips and raise cash to restore waterway

Canal bid still afloat

HUNDREDS of people sailed along the Wilts and Berks Canal in Calne on Saturday to raise money to conserve historic waterways across North Wiltshire.

The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust offered boat trips along a restored stretch of the former waterway in Calne as part of an Easter event organised by the Castlefields Canal & River Park Association on Saturday.

A steady queue of people formed at Chayneswell Bridge during the afternoon to enjoy short trips to the start of the Bowood estate and back in return for voluntary donations.

More than 200 people took the chance to climb aboard, helping to raise funds for the Melksham, Chippenham and Calne branch of the Trust.

Branch chairman Bob Jones said: "We were delighted to see so many people visit our stand to learn more about our local restoration campaign.

"It was particularly good

By Alana Lewis

alanalewis@thetribune.co.uk

to see so many families waiting at the bridge to enjoy their turn on the trip boat.

"It demonstrates the potential popularity of a fully restored waterway and the benefits it will bring to the local community."

The charity's aim is to link the Kennet and Avon Canal near Melksham to the River Thames near Abingdon and The Thames and Severn Canal near Cricklade, connecting Chippenham, Calne, Westons Bassett and Swindon.

Supporters hope it will provide a multi-million pound boost to the local economy through increased tourism and employment.

There is another opportunity to learn more about the trust's work when it holds its annual sponsored walk from Chippenham to Lacock on Sunday, April 26.

For more information on the trust visit www.wiltsberkswaterway.org.uk



OFF THEY GO: Canal Trust members Bob Jones, stern, and Doug Harris, bow, take families on a trip from Calne