



**Tell Us
What You
Think**

Strategic Waterway Plan

The Next Ten Years first draft

East Midlands Waterway Partnership



**Canal &
River Trust**

Contents

Tell Us What You Think

Please read this document through the lens of your community, organisation or user interests.

*Come back to us by **16 September 2013** (contact details on the back cover) with how its objectives, priorities and actions fit with your aspirations – or how they could fit better!*

Welcome	03
Canal & River Trust:	
Our Role and Objectives	04
Our Strategic Priorities	05
Our Resources	06
Our Governance	07
The East Midlands Waterway Partnership	08
Strategic Waterway Plan	09
East Midlands Waterways:	
Unique and Diverse	10
Coalfield Canals	11
Greater Nottingham	12
Trent and Belvoir	12
Lincs and Fens	13
Regional Context	14
Our Communities	14
Our Economy	15
Our Environment	16
What Next?	
Our Plans for the Future	17
Objectives	17
Next Steps	24
How to get involved	24

Welcome



I am delighted to share our aspirations for the future use, enjoyment and celebration of our wonderful network of urban and rural waterways.

We believe that the true potential of our canals and rivers will only be realised if we fully engage and work with visitors, users, neighbours, business partners and local authorities, including parish, town and community councils.

We're currently working on a strategic plan for the waterways and we're keen to speak to a wide range of community groups, businesses and local authorities to share our early thoughts and to identify ways in which the waterways of the East Midlands can help to meet our shared objectives.

And that's where this document comes in. We want to use it as an opportunity to:

- engage with all the public, private, community and user interests that already enjoy and benefit from our waterways and gather their views on how we can make them better used, enjoyed and valued.
- widen that engagement to new constituencies, new partners and new communities – to include in the debate about the waterways all those who could and should be able to enjoy and benefit from these wonderful community assets.
- identify, with you, what we need to do to connect our canals and rivers as fully as possible with the people, communities and economies that surround them.

By ensuring that the priceless assets our waterways represent feel fully owned and better used by all our communities - for fun and leisure, but also as part of the beating heart of our local villages, towns, cities and communities – the Canal & River Trust can secure the community investment we need to pass these assets on, preserved and improved, to future generations.

Our job, as the Trust's East Midlands Waterway Partnership, is to make that happen on the ground, working with public and private sector partners and local communities and groups.

That's why we've produced an early draft of our plans- to ensure that the final version of our strategic waterway plan for the next decade is a **co-production with our partners, communities and users**. We look forward to hearing from you - and responding to you - as we develop the plans with your help, input and engagement.

Danny Brennan
East Midlands Waterway Partnership, Chair

Canal & River Trust: Our Role and Objectives

The Canal & River Trust was established by Parliament in July 2012. It has responsibility for canals, rivers, docks and reservoirs, along with historic buildings, archives and three waterway museums, including the National Waterways Museum.

These assets are recognised as a national treasure and a local haven for people and wildlife. They are held and managed by the new Trust on behalf of the nation. The principal role of the Trust is to care for this unique legacy, holding it in trust for the nation in perpetuity.

The new Trust acts as guardian for the canals and rivers of England and Wales – ensuring that history, nature and communities are central to everything it does.



“A sustainable and evolving canal and river network that is a national treasure – accessible to and cherished by all.”

Canal & River Trust, 2012

Canal & River Trust: Our Strategic Priorities

Almost 50% of the population of England and Wales lives within five miles of our network of canals, rivers and towpaths. The network is cherished by millions of visitors, neighbours and communities, yet it has been difficult in the past for many people to get involved in shaping their future. We intend to change that.

The true potential of our canals and rivers and their long-term survival will only be secured if the new Trust fully engages and works with visitors, users, neighbours, business partners and local authorities, including parish, town and community councils.

Our priority is to widen the enjoyment of our waterways today whilst protecting them for future generations.

The Trustees have set out in the document entitled ‘Shaping our Future – Strategic Priorities - Keeping People, Nature and History Connected’ (July 2012) six strategic priorities aimed at unlocking this potential:

-  • Ensuring our canals and rivers are open, accessible and safe
-  • Inspiring more people to enjoy the canals and rivers and support our work
-  • Earning financial security for our canals and rivers
-  • Doing everything we can to deliver on our charitable objectives
-  • Minimising the impact we make on scarce resources
-  • Establishing the Trust as a respected and trusted guardian of our canals and rivers

Canal & River Trust: Our Resources

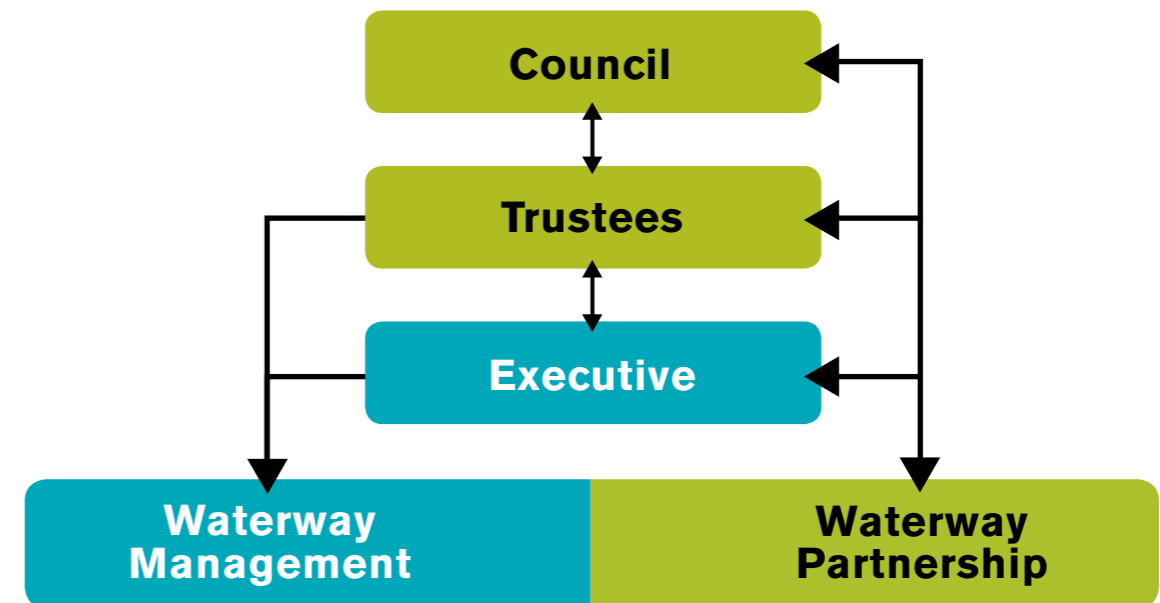
- Nationally, we have an annual income of £120m
- We have 800 operational staff whose role it is to ensure that the physical infrastructure is maintained and developed
- We are the third largest owner of Listed Structures in the UK - 2,727 Listed Buildings
- 2,000 miles of historic urban and rural canals, rivers, reservoirs and docks
- 200 new miles of waterways opened in the last decade
- We have 1,000 wildlife conservation sites and 400 miles of Conservation Area
- There are 35,200 licensed boats on the network- 2010/11 (more than at the height of the Industrial Revolution)

Our income is derived from a wide range of sources:

- individual donors and corporate sponsors;
- commercial income including revenue from the licensing of boats, moorings and angling; and revenue from property and utilities;
- grants from the other organisations; and
- our 15 year contract with government.



Canal & River Trust: Our Governance



We need to manage our canals and rivers as one network, with common policies across England and Wales in order to allocate resources where they are most needed and to be most efficient and effective. However, the opportunities to identify opportunities for joint working, as well as the obstacles to better use and enjoyment of our canals and rivers, lie in understanding individual stretches of waterway, and working with localities and local partners, agencies and companies.

That is why new Waterway Partnerships have been established, across England and Wales, including the East Midlands, to bring together representatives of local communities, businesses and organisations to work closely with the Canal & River Trust to influence and add value to what we do in each local waterway.

Canal & River Trust: The East Midlands Waterway Partnership

Who are we?

We are a group of volunteers from public, private and community organisations with a wide range of professional, community, waterway interests and skills. Among these are regeneration, environmental protection, strategic planning, marketing, physical and community development, heritage and sports such as cycling and angling, as well as boating and engineering. Find out more about our partnership members at canalrivertrust.org.uk/Emidlands/whos-who

What are we for?

- Promoting knowledge and use of the waterways in the region.
- Understanding the issues facing communities in the East Midlands and assessing how the waterways can play a part.
- Shaping future plans of the Canal & River Trust to deliver either on its own or in partnership with others.
- Securing the resources for the East Midlands to deliver those plans.
- Ensuring that the job gets done.

How will we do that job?

- By taking a rich picture view of evidence and a data held by the Trust and others.
- By talking to as many people and organisations as possible who might have an interest in working with us (or may need some persuading that they do).
- By analysing the evidence.
- By exploring opportunities for making the best return on investment.
- By capturing this in a long term plan, the Strategic Waterway Plan.
- By channelling the skills, expertise and resources of the Canal and River Trust, its partners, agencies and local communities towards its objectives.
- And, by implementing that plan on the basis of common purpose, shared benefit and mutual interest among partners and communities.

Strategic Waterway Plan

The plan is currently in draft form as set out in the following pages. It is the starting point for a structured conversation with you. It is a genuine conversation. We are looking both to involve you and to take on board your views about how best we can work together on one question: what action would do the job best for the waterways, their many users and supporters, and the communities they enrich and belong to.



The East Midlands Waterways: Unique and Diverse

The East Midlands is home to a diverse range of waterways spanning county borders between Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire, linking several urban centres with the tranquillity of some of the nation's finest countryside.

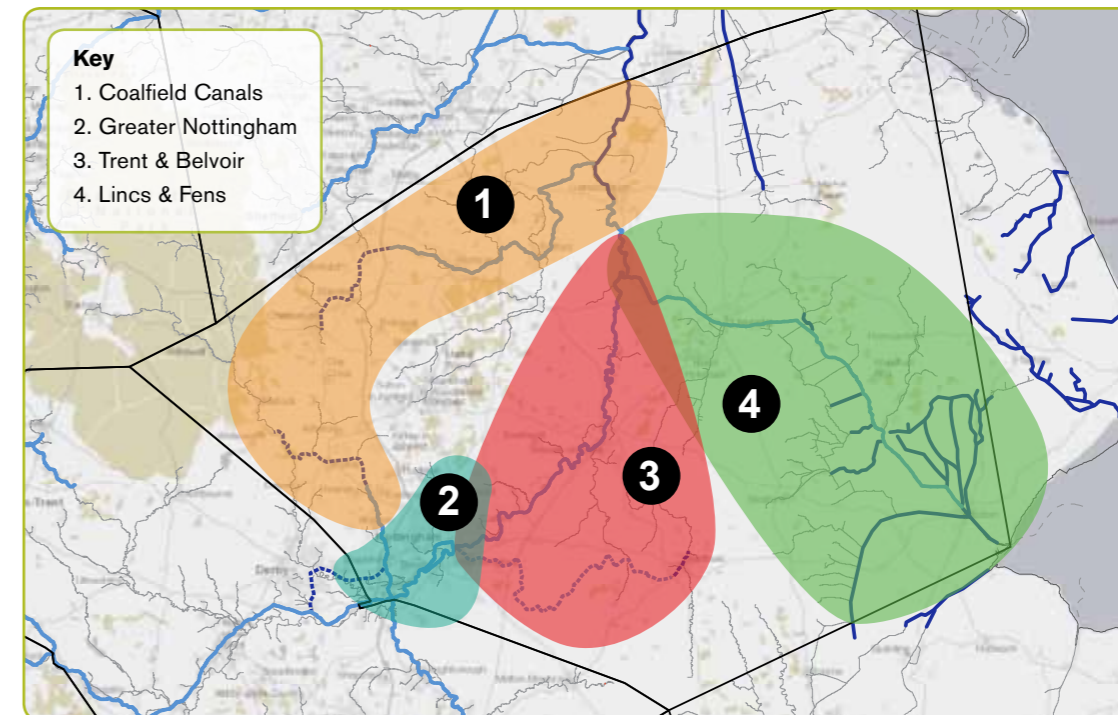
Boasting everything from powerful tidal rivers to sleepy wildlife-rich canals, it's no wonder that the area offers such unique opportunities to waterside communities, businesses and visitors from further afield.

Waterways play an important role in day-to-day life in the East Midlands, attracting on average 30 million visits each year and supporting hundreds of businesses.

We believe that this gives our waterways the potential to make an important contribution to the economy and quality of life here in the East Midlands. They can act as tremendous catalysts for regeneration, helping to tackle social and economic challenges and contributing to vibrant healthy communities.

Our waterways flow through a really wide range of localities; from dense major urban conurbations, regional towns and villages, through to open countryside that varies from tranquil to wild and dramatic. That means the impact they have on the local economy, the landscape, the environment and the quality of life of the people living in the region also varies immensely, in scope and scale, depending on the setting through which the waterways flow.

In recognition of these differences we consider the region as four distinct areas each, with their own character, challenges and opportunities.



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1. Coalfield Canals

This area encompasses the Cromford Canal, the Erewash Canal running from Long Eaton to Langley Mill and the Chesterfield Canal which runs from Chesterfield to the River Trent at West Stockwith. The Chesterfield now has less than 8 miles in need of restoration.

All are formerly industrial canals rich in character and boasting peaceful rural sections meaning that today they are popular with walkers, cyclists and anglers. The Cuckoo way long distance footpath runs all the way from Chesterfield to the Trent. All have a long history of community involvement and still benefit from active volunteer groups working to restore, protect and promote them.

The legacy of heavy industrial decline along these canals brought with it major challenges of tackling unemployment, combating low incomes and re-skilling the workforce. Great strides have been made to address these deficits, and we believe that canals can contribute to further advancement of these communities and their local economies.

As with all our waterways, this area presents great opportunities for contributing to the social and economic regeneration of communities and the local economy. By stimulating the waterside economy; by engaging young people in developing team skills and sporting interests, and by encouraging understanding and pride in local heritage through volunteering, skills development and youth and adult activities, the canals can play a part in rebuilding and strengthening communities. By bringing people together, and by widening the sense of community ownership of the waterways, they can address and challenge vandalism and anti social behaviour.

2. Greater Nottingham

The Greater Nottingham area includes the upper reaches of the River Trent and the Nottingham Beeston Canal which flows through the centre of Nottingham.

The city's waterways have experienced major regeneration in recent decades and today sees modern waterside office and residential developments mingling with converted historic warehouses and wharf buildings.

The city's towpaths have also seen major recent investment and now form a 10 mile circular route, called the Big Track, which provides a traffic-free route through the heart of the city. Linking major employers, shopping centres and countless cultural, historic and sporting attractions the route is an important part of the city's sustainable transport plan and a fantastic example to other cities.

The waterways play a prominent role in daily life and future challenges lie in sustainably managing, while continuing to promote, increasing levels of use for activities such as walking, cycling, boating and rowing.

3. Trent & Belvoir

The main waterways in this area are the River Trent and the Grantham Canal.

This area is predominantly rural although it does encompass the historic market towns of Gainsborough, Newark and Grantham.

With scattered, small settlements and few river crossings, the main challenges for the waterways in this area are around connectivity and access.

The broad and fast-flowing River Trent is a clear contrast to the region's canals. One challenge here is to enable local communities to face towards, rather than away from the river. Also, the Trent still has a key role to play in the movement of freight, with studies showing there to be potential for the river to carry more freight.

The Grantham Canal was largely closed to boats in 1929 and has since become a rich wetland habitat. Some of the canal is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, home to a diversity of wildlife including rare bird species such as sedge warbler, reed warbler and reed bunting. This rural idyll means that the canal is popular with walkers and cyclists.

The canal has some boats on a section in water near its terminus and volunteer groups are actively working towards its restoration.

4. Lincs & Fens

This area broadly comprises the Fossdyke Navigation and River Witham which, collectively, run from the River Trent at Torksey out to Boston.

The historic city of Lincoln is one of the main destinations for people in this area – with the Brayford Pool as the big attraction for boaters and for people enjoying one of the many waterside restaurants.

Boston is the gateway to the North Sea but also the South Forty Foot Drain and a proposed link to the River Glen and, ultimately the Fens beyond.

The area is characterised by flat, open landscape with relatively few landmarks as well as sparsely distributed, low density areas of population. We believe the waterways can be a real feature within the area and an important means of connecting communities across the county.



The Regional Context

Our waterways have an important role to play in addressing some of the challenges and opportunities faced within each of the character areas.

They run right into the heart of urban centres such as Nottingham, Lincoln, Boston, Ilkeston, Long Eaton, Worksop, Retford and Grantham. As with many urban settings, the challenges for these areas include unemployment, connection to services, poorer than average health, aging populations, climate change, affordable housing and transport.

We feel our waterways can help communities to meet these challenges head on.

We also believe that our waterways can make an important contribution to rural life by helping to diversify and strengthen local economies, connect communities, enhance and preserve habitat and bring visitors to the region and its local amenities.

Here we look at some of the broad challenges facing the East Midlands and how our waterways can help.

Our communities

Although different in character, there are a number of issues and opportunities that are common to the four character areas, in terms of type if not degree. We strongly believe that our waterways can help to alleviate the effects of some of these issues and contribute significantly, with the right partnership effort and focus, to creating healthy, integrated communities.

A Natural Health Service

- Survey after survey suggests that large sections of the population are suffering the health impacts of poor diet and lack of exercise – the population of the East Midlands has the highest prevalence of obesity among the English regions. Canals offer a wonderful – and free – way of getting more people, more easily out in the fresh air, and on the move.

Sustainable Transport

- Many of our towpaths have been improved to provide freely accessible, well surfaced walking and cycling routes which can be used by local people to keep fit and well.

Community Cohesion

- The East Midlands is made up of diverse, sometimes isolated, communities in terms of social and economic background, age and ethnicity. Our waterways have the potential to reach out to them all and to aid social cohesion by developing a sense of shared identity and encouraging community groups to work together to improve their local environment.

Respect

- Anti-social behaviour is a very real concern for residents in many parts of the East Midlands. Our waterways can help to encourage a greater sense of community identity and shared ownership, giving people of all ages and abilities the opportunity to help care for their local waterways and to provide access to formal and informal sport and recreation activities.

Our economy

It's impossible to talk about our waterways without talking about the economy - the very reason the canals exist was to connect cities, business, goods and markets. Today, our waterways continue to be integral to sustainable growth, even though their original role for trade may have changed.

Tourism

- The East Midlands tourism offer can only be enhanced by adding the strong historic, industrial and ecological character of the region's waterways into the glorious mix of tourism assets around the region. We have, or connect to, the Peak National Park, Chatsworth and the Dukeries, Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood, Hardwick Hall and Cresswell Crags, not to mention Lincoln Cathedral and the Magna Carta links, the Vale of Belvoir and Belvoir Castle.
- On the waterways links themselves, boaters, cyclists, visitors...everyone who visits our waterways contributes to the local economy. The East Midlands waterways are unique, rich in character and history, home to a diverse range of marinas, waterside pubs and attractions and they greatly enhance the region's tourism offer.

Growth

- The East Midlands has witnessed tremendous regeneration and is today home to the national and international headquarters of some leading brands. Similarly, in towns and villages across the region, new forms of employment and economic opportunity are developing. Our waterways offer the potential to form an important part of the region's sustainable growth. Waterside economic growth; sustainable transport plans linking people with schools, shops and workplaces; the use of our rivers for greater transportation of goods, and much more.

Skills development

- The East Midlands has below average levels of qualifications and one of the lowest proportions of 16-year-olds remaining in education. We believe the waterways can help to enhance the region's skills base through training, volunteering and work placement opportunities.

Renewable energy

- Our waterways can also contribute to sustainable growth of the region through the development of innovative renewable energy schemes. Waterborne freight also has the potential to combat the effects of climate change whilst connecting the region directly to Europe and further afield.

Our environment

The East Midlands is a special area with a colourful history, bustling towns and cities and some nationally and internationally significant areas of ecological interest. However it can also be under-appreciated by those living here and overlooked by those in other parts of the country.

Our waterways are an integral part of the East Midlands landscape and we believe they can play a stronger part in raising the profile of the area.

- Our waterways are fantastic examples of green infrastructure, connecting communities and bringing visitors into the area through linkages with wider walking and cycling networks. As such they can act as a gateway to the East Midlands
- The East Midlands waterways can act as catalysts for regeneration, transforming previously disused areas of land into vibrant destinations, giving our towns and cities a greater sense of place, improving their intrinsic value and making them more attractive to tourism and investment.



Objectives

Our plans for the future



We are putting together plans to make sure that our waterways are used and developed in a way that has the maximum benefit for local people, places and local economies. The details below show our outline objectives and some of the ways in which these objectives can be achieved.

We want to:

1 Develop a stronger sense of community ownership and responsibility, changing perceptions of the waterways within the East Midlands.

This means building and broadening community engagement and ownership, improving awareness of the waterways to attract more people to use and enjoy them and encourage positive, responsible, behaviour towards the waterways. We plan to:

a. Set up Volunteer Canal Ranger Schemes and Community adoptions

We have started to recruit volunteer rangers to monitor, improve and work with local communities on the Erewash Canal over 6 zones from Langley Mill to Trent Lock.

- b. Work with communities to make the most of their setting alongside our waterways
- c. Hold regular fun days along the canals and encouraging others to do the same
- d. Promote the waterways through the media
- e. Work with schools to encourage positive interactions from children

Objectives

2 Make the waterways accessible and relevant to all communities so that they become highly valued forms of green infrastructure.

This means encouraging and facilitating greater use of the canals and rivers by people from all socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, age groups and abilities. We plan to:

- a. Develop our understanding of, and address, barriers to new audiences

We are working with Radcliffe on Trent Parish Council on ways to enable the community to face towards, rather than away from the River Trent, creating new amenity and better access.

- b. Promote Boating Taster days by Hire companies
- c. Develop Trip Boat opportunities in underrepresented areas
- d. Develop a training programme for river and tidal navigation

3 Improve the health and wellbeing of the local communities.

This means encouraging participation in recreation, sport and learning activities on and by the water, encouraging the use of towpaths as routes to workplaces, homes and schools, utilising canals and rivers as part of the 'natural health service' and developing provision for open-air learning activities. We plan to:

- a. Develop more opportunities for angling on the waterways
- b. Improve access for canoes
- c. Improve more towpaths to a multi-use standard
- d. Develop guides to raise awareness on the potential for using towpaths
- e. Identify issues and improve access to our towpaths

We are in discussion with Nottingham City Council about how best to address the issue of speeding cyclists through the city centre access, to ensure the towpath is safe for all to use.

- f. Encourage responsible shared use of towpaths
- g. Develop disused buildings to meet local needs (e.g. volunteer training centres)
- h. Establish the Trust as a delivery partner for Health and Wellbeing Strategies

4 Make the canals and rivers more sustainable and accessible to support greater economic growth and innovation in the East Midlands.

This means maintaining and improving the condition of the waterways, facilities and environs, encouraging greater activity in terms of sustainable transport along the waterways and supporting the growth of waterway tourism to increase visitor numbers and spend. We plan to:

- a. Create and develop apprenticeships within our operational teams

Two apprentices joined our construction teams in 2012, the first for many years and we are keen to bring more apprentices through the ranks.

- b. Work with agencies to develop a long term weed management strategy
- c. Improve infrastructure to allow more passage where practical
- d. Create additional visitor moorings around the network
- e. Improve facilities
- f. Develop sites for amenity use
- g. Work with planners and developers to regenerate sites at Langley Mill and Kiveton to create destinations.

5 Work with others to realise the full regeneration potential that the canals and rivers can bring to local communities and businesses.

This means using the waterways as a focus for development to help diversify rural economies and to develop the skills base of local communities, supporting restorations where they would make the network more sustainable and growing waterway related tourism, waterborne transport and renewable energy sources. We plan to:

- a. Develop former operational sites for leisure opportunities
- b. Review options for a water bus in Nottingham
- c. Develop training programmes for volunteers

As the number of our volunteers growth we need facilities to ensure they have the right training and support; on this, we are seeking to develop a former operational depot on the Grantham Canal into a volunteer training centre.

- d. Support restorations such as the Chesterfield Canal, Grantham Canal and Derby & Sandiacre Canal
- e. Work with the Trust's National Freight Group to facilitate waterborne freight
- f. Work with the Trust's Utilities team to facilitate Hydro Power projects

Objectives

6 Attract investment into the waterway corridors and instil a strong sense of ownership and responsibility by riparian landowners, waterside businesses and potential investors.

This means encouraging waterside businesses and landowners to benefit from their location and in turn make a positive contribution to waterway environment and visitor experience, and encouraging investment into waterways through corporate and business engagement and enterprise. We plan to:

- a. Protect and develop facilities to construct and maintain boats on our waterways
- b. Encourage boundary improvements to enhance the environmental quality of the waterway corridors
- c. Ensure that new businesses have appropriate designs for sites alongside waterways
- d. Implement a programme of corporate engagement with companies, agencies and education to encourage volunteering, sponsorship and adoptions.

The East Midlands Waterway Partnership is currently identifying and contacting businesses and major organisations in the East Midlands to explore ways in which they can become more engaged in supporting their waterways.

7 Make the canals and rivers in the East Midlands welcoming and interesting places to visit, live, work, use and enjoy.

This means increasing use and activity on underutilised waterways, developing the potential of key towns as waterside destinations, improving places of interest along the waterways, improving the visibility of the physical presence of the waterways and improving environmental quality and image caused by poor waterside industrial and agricultural boundaries and the presence of derelict land. We plan to:

- a. Study public perception of waterways and the barriers to their use

We are developing locality studies to identify, stretch by stretch, the opportunities for, and barriers to, better use and enjoyment of particular waterways. On the basis of this work, we will develop projects with local communities and partners.

- b. Work with the Brayford Trust and the City of Lincoln Council to enhance Lincoln centre and so encourage active participation
- c. Work with Boston Town Council to enhance the public facilities around the waterfront
- d. Meet with partner organisations in Newark to develop the waterfront locations at the scrap yard and workshop
- e. Install signs at bridge crossing points to make people aware of the waterways
- f. Install interpretation and signage for visitors and users

**“Visit,
live, work,
use &
enjoy”**



“Accessible, safe, clean & well-connected”

Objectives

8 Make the canals and rivers in the East Midlands accessible, safe, clean and well-connected places for all visitors, users and local communities.

This means connecting communities and places along and across the River Trent, improving access to, from and along the canals and rivers, increasing the use of the waterways and their paths as sustainable transport and recreational routes and connecting the waterways to other routes and other modes of public transport and facilities.

We plan to:

- a. Work with local authorities to develop car parks adjacent to our waterways using Trust land or land owned by third parties.
- b. Develop walking and cycling opportunities to enhance use and activity.

We have already worked well with several local authorities to improve towpaths and connect walking, cycling and access routes on the Chesterfield, Erewash and Grantham canals.

- c. Improve access around reservoirs and establish links to other rights of way
- d. Work with projects linked to improving connections to existing bus routes, train stations and car parking provision

9 Conserve and enhance the heritage and environmental qualities and landscape character of the canal and river network.

This means conserving, promoting and interpreting the industrial and cultural heritage value of the canals and rivers, improving the ecological value, landscape and biodiversity of the canal and river corridors, mitigating impacts and exploiting opportunities arising from High Speed Two Phase 2 and promoting appropriate and innovative new urban and rural developments which respect and enhance the canal and river corridors. We plan to:

- a. Develop heritage trails to include interpretation / geo-tagging and talking posts.
- b. Develop the condition of heritage assets to ensure they are used, appreciated and maintained.
- c. Work with partner organisations to help improve water quality by the management of pollution hot spots and enforcement against unauthorised discharges.
- d. Encourage environmental enhancements in our work and the work of third parties.
- e. Work with the HS2 team to minimise or remove impacts whilst developing opportunities for improvements.

Although the HS2 route through the East Midlands is many years away from completion, we are already assessing the planned crossing points to ensure the canal environment is protected and to identify opportunities for improvements as part of the work.

Next steps

Now, we want to find out if we've got it right in our first run at our plans for the future.

And, as we do so, we want to develop a platform of common purpose, based on shared benefit and mutual interest, with local communities, local authorities and agencies, NGOs and local societies and user groups. We will do these things by:

- Disseminating this consultation draft to all interested parties and agencies early July, seeking views by 16 September 2013 (by all means of response, including direct written submissions, Survey Monkey, etc.).
- Meeting with strategic public sector bodies in July and September 2013.
- Inviting interested parties and agencies to workshops in mid September 2013.
- Further developing our objectives and actions to reflect the consultation and engagement contributions received by end September/early October 2013.
- Followed by a review of our consolidated draft strategy at our first Annual Public Meeting, on 16 October 2013.
- Finalisation of the Ten Year Strategic Waterway Plan by December 2013.

How to get involved

What do you think about the broad strategy?

What would you want to see prioritised in the strategy?

What do you think about the proposed objectives 1 - 9 Are there others we should be including?

How could we complement or enhance your plans and policies?

How can we work together on community, economy or environmental projects?

Would your local school, organisation or community like to get more involved in your local waterway's future?

Write to us, by 16 September 2013, at:

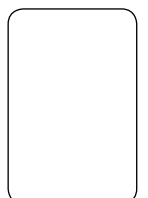
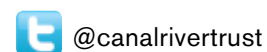
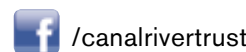
Email: enquiries.emidlands@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Address: Strategic Waterway Plan Feedback, East Midlands Waterway Partnership, Canal & River Trust, Waterway Office, The Kiln, Mather Road, Newark NG24 1FB

Survey Monkey: Complete our online survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/3RFJL95

Check our noticeboard for updates

canalrivertrust.org.uk/Emidlandsboard



Get involved

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