

Where does the water come from?

The 16.5 mile Gloucester & Sharpness Canal, constructed from 1794, runs close to the upper tidal reaches of the River Severn. There are two main water sources for the canal; local rivers and streams (called feeders) and Gloucester pumps.

From December to Easter the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal is mainly supplied with water from feeders. The two most significant of these feeders, are the River Frome at Saul Junction and the River Cam near Slimbridge.

Water is pumped up two metres from the River Severn into the canal at Gloucester Docks, especially during summer and autumn. Pumping water is expensive - about £100,00 a year at Gloucester

Historically canals have been used as a water source, as well as for navigation. Water in the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal is used for public water supply by the water treatment works at Purton owned by Bristol Water, and also by The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust at Slimbridge.

The only locks on the canal are at Gloucester and Sharpness. Large ships using Sharpness Docks and tidal basin can significantly reduce the water level in the canal

The Gloucester pumps have an acoustic fish deflector to avoid fish being drawn into the pumps



For other locations go to canalrivertrust.org.uk/water-sources