

QR Codes

Many people, though not everyone, owns a smartphone, so using digital media can be an innovative and creative way to enhance your interpretation offer. QR codes (quick response) work best when they are integrated with other forms of interpretation.

Strengths

- The freedom of exploration with the opportunity to stop on route.
- New technology is more reliable and flexible.
- Accessible to people with visual impairment.
- Allows visitors to pick and choose the information they want.

Weaknesses

- Large capital outlay.
- May exclude a small number of people.
- QR codes can be temperamental, and do require network coverage.

Audience

- Special needs visitors- especially visually impaired and the less mobile.
- Younger audiences can be aimed at through including interactive features like games .
- Local people through oral history input.

Costings

- Please see page 11 of the HLF Interpretation Guidelines [Click here](#).

Planning

- Decide on your target audience and the purpose of the interpretation [Click here](#) to find out more.
- Consider how a QR code trail will enhance your other forms of interpretation.
- Consider hiring a professional company to produce the trail - is this in your budget? You will also need to allow for updating and maintaining the media, webpages or waymarkers.
- Carry out research on digital media.

Research

- Even if you hire a company: you will still need to research the content.
- Consider the information you gathered while creating other interpretation: you may be able to incorporate this into your QR trail.



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Content

- Your digital media needs to be linked to points on site where you have other interpretation (panel or trail leaflets). Visitors can then choose to access more information through digital media.
- What can you include in your digital media to make the experience really fun and interesting? Consider including: audio memoirs, video animation, photographs, maps, games or augmented reality to enliven your interpretation.
- This is an opportunity to build in more detail, but you still need to make your content user friendly. [Click here](#) to find out more.
- QR codes work best when they are integrated with other interpretation.



Maximising use

- So that visitors can access the trail beforehand create a section on your website from which visitors can download the trail.
- If QR codes are used then visitors need to know they have the option to do a QR trail before they arrive at your waterway, as they need to have a QR reader already installed on their phones.
- Let the visitor know what they can expect from the trail and make the benefits clear: fascinating facts, games.
- Make sure they know when they reach a point for more information - e.g. QR code on each panel.
- If your QR codes have been redeveloped after the other interpretation then launch it as you would a trail: posters, press, word of mouth.

Evaluate and Celebrate

- You need to think carefully about how you evaluate your digital media. It may be used less than your other forms of interpretation - so numbers alone may not be the best method.
- You need to think about who have downloaded the QR codes and what they have learnt.
- For more information on evaluation, visit the evaluation section [here](#).





Lagan Valley Regional Park Heritage Audio Trail using QR codes

The beautiful Lagan Valley Regional Park in Northern Ireland is home to the now derelict Lagan Navigation which used to run for 27 miles between Belfast to Lough Neagh.

The navigation has been brought to life with an audio trail which takes you on a journey into the heyday of the Lagan Navigation. Listeners are transported back in time through a humorous and engaging narration which is full of local tales. In 2009 the audio trail was made available with the aim to make the history of the valley more accessible to a wide audience.

The audio trail can be accessed through downloading an audio script from the website which you can then listen to on site, or alternatively through using the accompanying QR codes which are on site. At Lagan the QR codes are incorporated into existing signage to keep the towpath clutter free.

There are a total of 35 stops, but the audio trail is organised in a way in which you can join the trail at different points. There is also an accompanying map available on the website to make the process even easier for visitors who may wish to explore a section of the trail. A leaflet of the trail and how to use it is also available locally or in PDF format on the website.

<http://www.laganvalley.co.uk/audiotrails.html>

‘We have had good feedback from visitors who enjoy the usability of the audio trail’.

Andy Bridge (Manager)