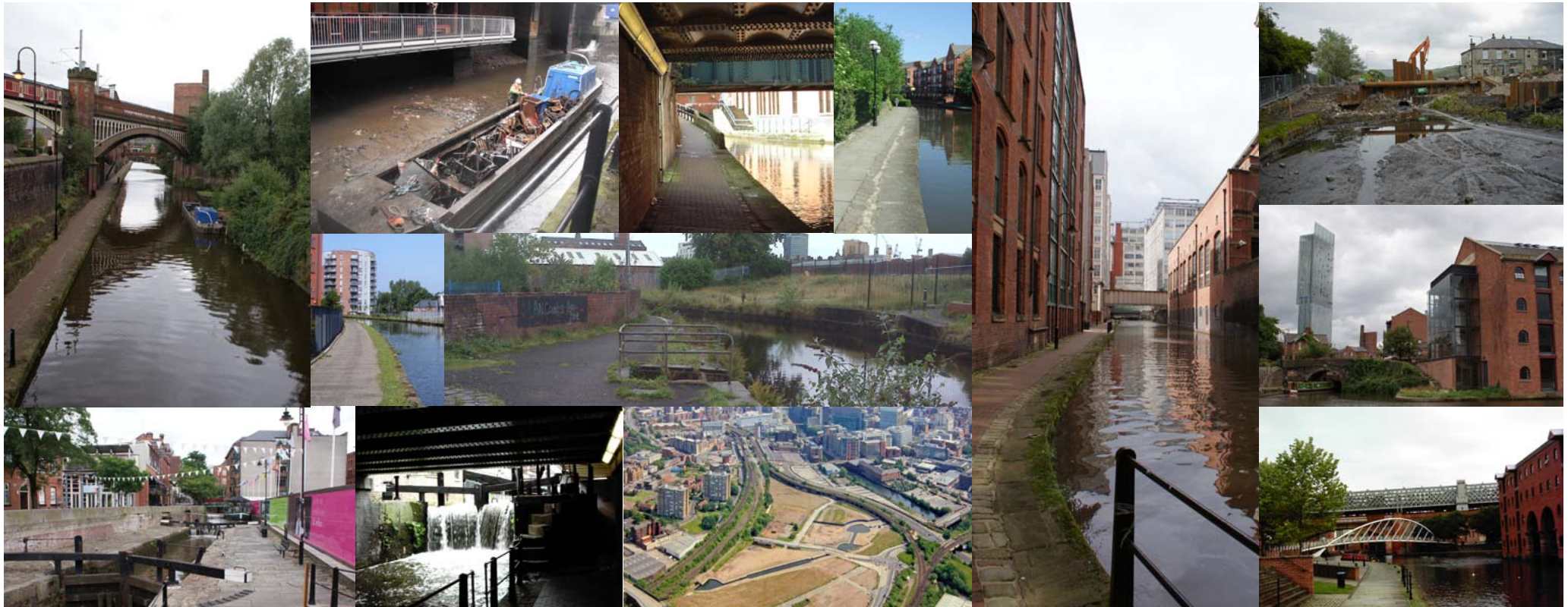


Waterways: Contributing to the vision for a Greater Manchester

November 2011



FINAL DRAFT

Executive Summary

The inland waterways of Greater Manchester have shaped the historical development of the city through their contribution to the industrial revolution which made Manchester the first modern city. Whilst this industrial age has largely passed, Manchester's vision to retain its position as one of Europe's premier destinations will be supported by its waterways into the 21st century. The benefits that waterways can deliver are well understood, and for Greater Manchester the waterways already make a significant contribution to place making, economic regeneration and the low carbon economy.

Waterways are a key driver in the fortunes and success of regional, sub-regional and local economies supporting the visitor and tourism economy and in many places they continue to contribute to the regeneration of deprived areas. It is estimated that around:

- 13.7 million tourism, recreation and functional visits were made to the canals in Greater Manchester in 2009.
- Some £39 million gross direct expenditure was generated in the local economy through these visits, which rises to over £50 million if indirect and induced visitor spend is taken into account,
- The canal corridor supports some 1,300 leisure and tourism related jobs in Greater Manchester.

There is more to be done however to harness the full potential of what this valuable and treasured network can offer to Greater Manchester.

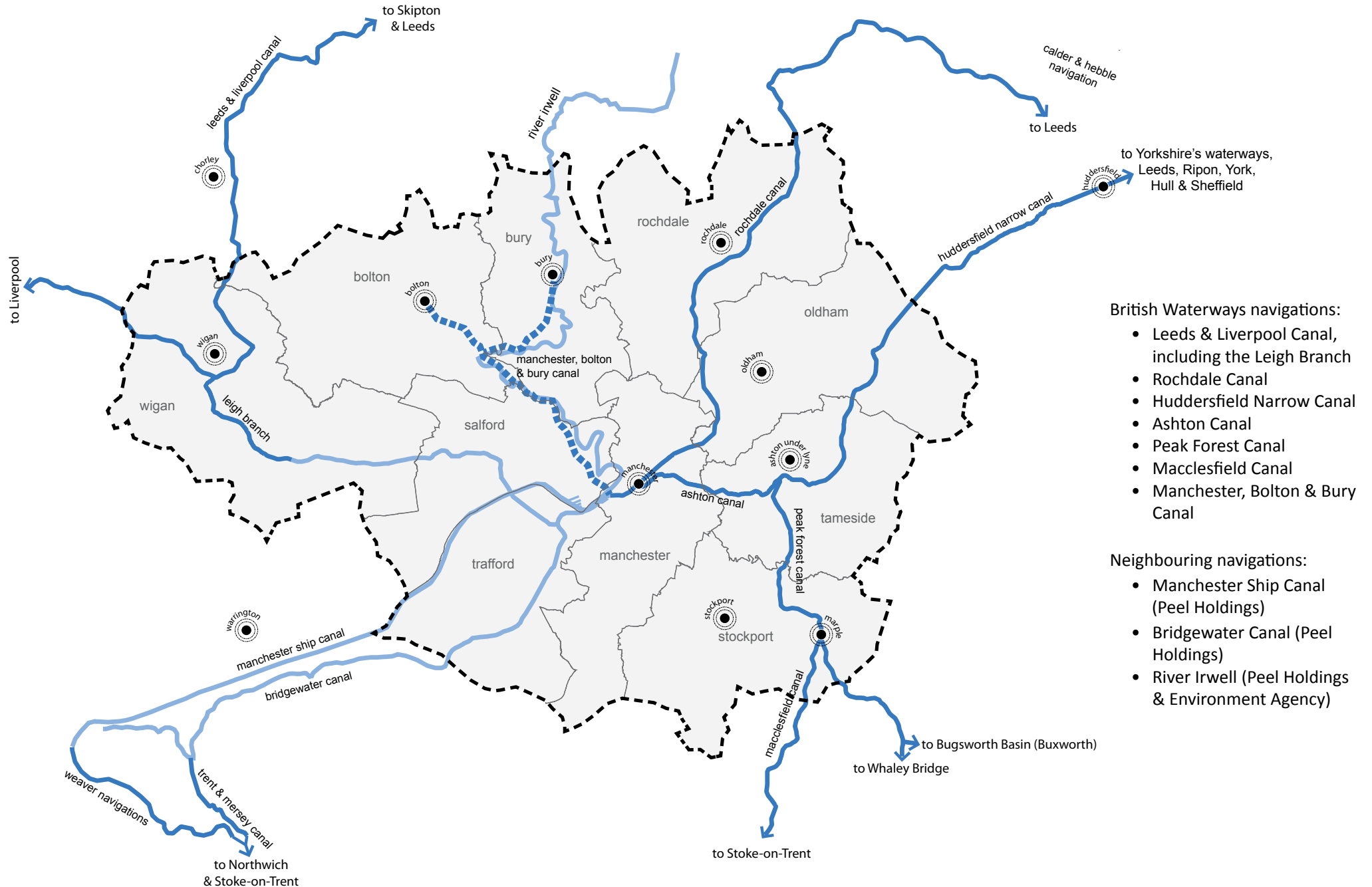
This summary seeks to highlight some of the successes which have been achieved in the regeneration of waterways and points to those opportunities still to come. It sets the context for a more thorough review which will embed a vision for the waterways into the Spatial Framework for Greater Manchester, capitalising on the canal corridor and contribute to the implementation of the Greater Manchester Strategy.

From April 2012 British Waterways will become the **Canal & River Trust**. The Trust will continue to operate the national network of waterways which is currently managed by British Waterways. At this critical juncture therefore, now is the time to establish a constructive and enduring strategic partnership with Greater Manchester's Combined Authority. Through highlighting the potential of our waterways British Waterways wants to engage all partners in the Greater Manchester area with a view to promoting, developing and implementing an integrated Greater Manchester Waterways Strategy which will unlock the potential of our canals and rivers.

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Manchester – The northern capital of Waterways?



- British Waterways navigations:**
- Leeds & Liverpool Canal, including the Leigh Branch
 - Rochdale Canal
 - Huddersfield Narrow Canal
 - Ashton Canal
 - Peak Forest Canal
 - Macclesfield Canal
 - Manchester, Bolton & Bury Canal

- Neighbouring navigations:**
- Manchester Ship Canal (Peel Holdings)
 - Bridgewater Canal (Peel Holdings)
 - River Irwell (Peel Holdings & Environment Agency)

Manchester – The northern capital of Waterways?

Greater Manchester has nearly 200km of river and canal navigations running across all ten districts, forming an inter-connected series of greenways, public spaces, wildlife habitats and cultural assets. With a total population of over 2.5 million, all residents of Greater Manchester live within twenty minutes of a waterway. Nearly 1 million people live within 1 mile of a canal or river.

A multi-designated historic environment with high value heritage assets, the waterways play a multi-functional role in Greater Manchester's modern day economy and offer social, economic and environmental benefits. Since their restoration in 2001 and 2002 respectively the Rochdale and Huddersfield Narrow Canal are delivering a total annual expenditure of £17.9 million through leisure and tourism visitors, supporting approximately 495 FTE jobs.

Manchester's strength on the waterway network lies in its rich and diverse mix of urban and rural settings, from the wild open moorland of the Pennines in Rochdale to the contemporary urban backdrop of Deansgate Locks in Manchester City Centre. The waterways run close to, and in some cases through, many district centres across Greater Manchester, but are often lost within urban landscapes. Their potential remains unrealised.

An indication of the health of our waterways is the amount of usage either through boating, cycling or walking. The summary below shows the amount of boat movements recorded in Greater Manchester over the past 3-5 years compared to other major cities across the north and the midlands.

How do we compare?

Nottingham 6000 – 8000

Chester 6000 – 8000

Birmingham 5500 - 7000

Stoke on Trent 3500 - 6000

Leicester 2000 - 3000

Leeds 2000 – 3000

Manchester 1000 – 2000

Often seen as an exemplar of waterway regeneration, the canals in Birmingham have undergone a remarkable transformation over the last 20 years and they are now the focal point of the urban district (see case study on pages 9 and 10 for more detail).

The canal and river network in the north

Offering a combination of narrow and wide navigations the waterways sit at the heart of two very popular cruising rings on the northern waterways - the Cheshire Ring and the South Pennine Ring. At 97 miles long with a total of 92 locks the Cheshire Ring passes through Stretford, Manchester, Ashton Under Lyne, Marple then on through Macclesfield, Sandbach, Middlewich and Northwich. At 70 miles and 198 locks the South Pennine Ring passes through Uppermill, Stalybridge, Ashton Under Lyne, Manchester, Failsworth, Littleborough then on through Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Sowerby Bridge and Huddersfield.



Rochdale Canal, Central Manchester

Economic Investment

The waterways of Greater Manchester generate a number of economic benefits to the sub region, particularly in terms of tourism and leisure activity. This activity generates an economic return through increased expenditure by visitors, which in turn leads to money being retained locally within the economy, supporting jobs in local businesses. Our evidence shows that:

- 13.7 million tourism, recreation and functional visits were made to the canals in Greater Manchester in 2009.
- Some £39 million gross direct expenditure was generated in the local economy through these visits, which rises to over £50 million if indirect and induced visitor spend is taken into account,
- The canal corridor supports some 1,300 leisure and tourism related jobs in Greater Manchester.

We know that the canals can also act as a catalyst for the development of property alongside them and this works in a number of ways:

- Canals help to establish developer and investor confidence, particularly in disadvantaged areas.
- Improvements to canal environments have been shown to bring forward the development of previously vacant or underused sites. Their linear form means that canals can also help integrate discrete development schemes.
- Attractive development can enhance the vibrancy and vitality of an area.
- Evidence suggests that property developments at waterside locations command a premium value of between 15-25% when compared to schemes based elsewhere and are also easier to sell/ let.

Two of the key waterway achievements for Greater Manchester in the past ten years have been the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and Rochdale Canal in 2001 and 2002 respectively. This cost a total of approximately £56 million and was funded through a range of sources, particularly the National Lottery Millennium Fund. Since then further resources have been invested in the canal infrastructure by both British Waterways and the local authorities through which they pass. This has resulted in the growth of some 500 jobs in the local recreation and tourism economy, supported by around 2 million additional visits to the canals and towpaths each year.

A masterplan for the Bridgewater Canal in Salford was agreed in March 2011. Through a combination of public and private investment it is expected to attract investment of over £67 million bringing a new country park, 250 berth marina, access to Worsley Delph and an upgraded towpath.

The Commonwealth Games in 2002 brought huge investment to the Ashton Canal when the City of Manchester Stadium and its associated facilities were constructed. Towpaths were improved enabling access to the stadium from the city centre and the growth of the area continues to this day.

A major restoration scheme to bring the Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal back into use has started with the construction of Middlewood Locks, connecting into the River Irwell. This scheme was brought forward in partnership with the NWDA at a cost of £5.5 million and there is further investment by Salford Council to improve the towpath along the waterway.

At New Islington connections have been made into the Ashton Canal and the Rochdale Canal and the waterways are a key feature in the identity of the regeneration scheme. New bridges and waterside promenades are facilitating access across the site and the mooring of boats will add colour and vibrancy.

In addition to these economic investment benefits, it is also recognised that inland waterways make a vital contribution to people's quality of life. They provide a recreation, transport and land drainage function, and provide an important environmental, landscape and heritage resource. Across Greater Manchester such ecosystem services are estimated to have a value of £17 million to the communities they touch.

Actions

- ***The regeneration of the waterways of Greater Manchester to be fully integrated within strategic planning across the Combined Authority.***
- ***New canalside developments and regeneration projects to maximise the interaction with waterways and an improved canal corridor environment.***
- ***Policy makers to use Policy Advice Note: Inland Waterways for guidance on how waterways contribute to the economic, social and environmental agendas. (<http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/inland-waterways.html>)***

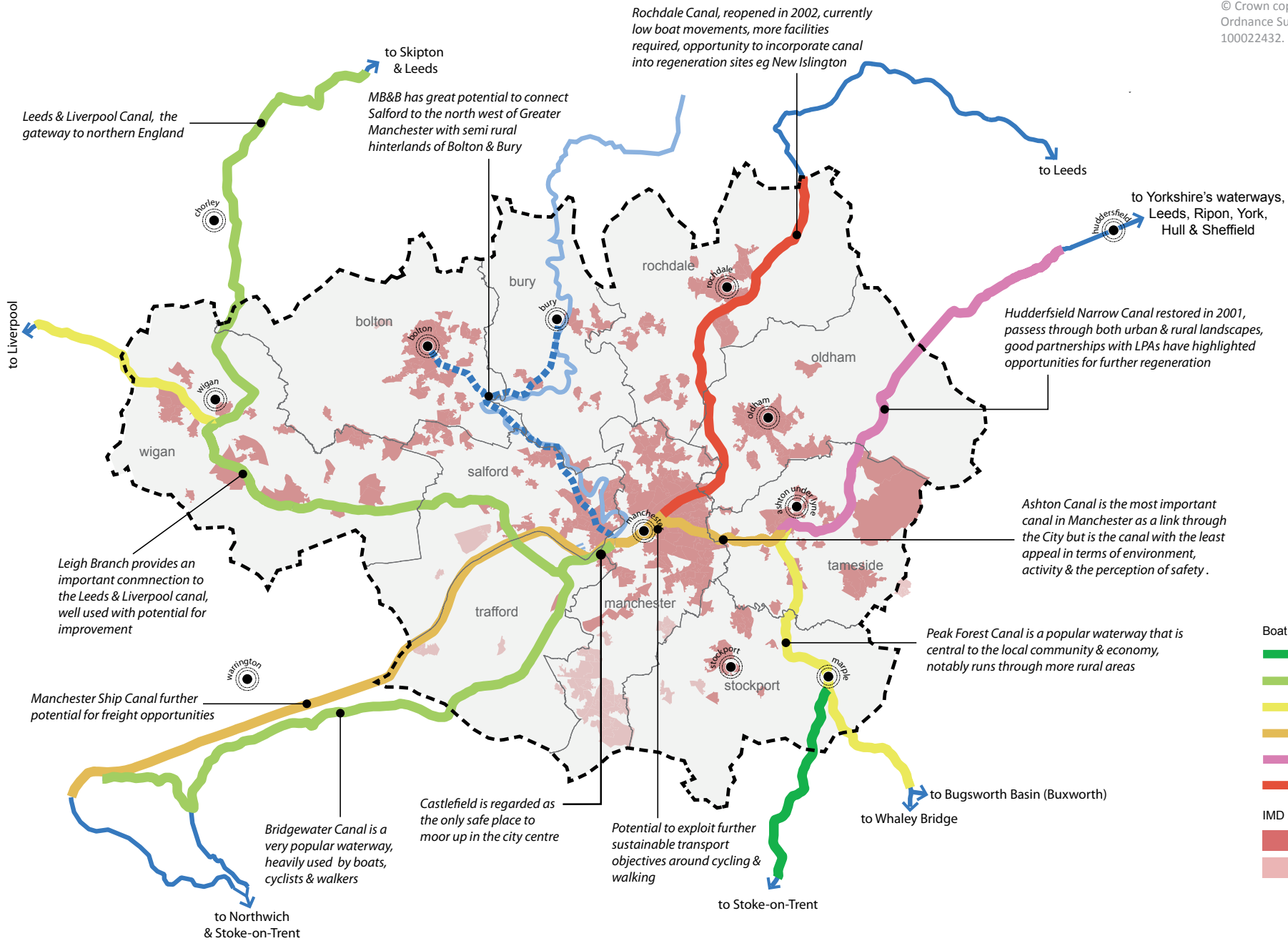
1. Stalybridge during restoration of Huddersfield Narrow Canal
2. Uppermill towpath enhancement, Saddleworth
3. Portland Basin Museum, Ashton Under Lyne
4. Media City, Salford
5. Chips at New Islington, Manchester
6. Wigan Greenheart

Economic Investment



Regeneration Value & Supporting Change

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Regeneration Value & Supporting Change

There is a strong correlation between underperforming waterways and some of the most deprived districts in the country and this can be clearly demonstrated in Greater Manchester when index of multiple deprivation data is mapped against our waterways. Further interrogation at a neighbourhood level would highlight specific hotspots along the Ashton Canal and Rochdale Canal, sections of which are perceived to be no-go areas. When successfully used as the centrepiece of area-based regeneration schemes however, waterways can exert a positive impact on their surroundings and they have acted as a catalyst for wider redevelopment beyond their immediate setting.

The high quality environment that a canal location can provide, coupled with the animation associated with increased numbers of visitors and boats, has been used across the country as a way of turning run-down or underused areas into positive and vibrant communities. A conservative estimate of the social return on investment resulting from the Rochdale Canal and Huddersfield Narrow Canal (taking into account such considerations as health, culture, education, heritage and the environment) is estimated to be at least £5.4 million per year.

Waterways can also deliver job creation opportunities primarily in the leisure and tourism sector. A range of a marine businesses depend upon the waterway infrastructure to flourish. These can include boat trip and hire companies, marinas, boat yards, component manufacturers, waterside pubs, bars and restaurants. Waterways have also been successfully used as vehicles to deliver Welfare to Work schemes and heritage skills development programmes.

The Rochdale Canal was recently used by Oldham Council as the driver for a very successful Future Jobs Fund programme and it is intended that the wider network across Greater Manchester will be used as an asset for delivering the national Community Payback scheme through local partner providers. Engagement with such programmes results in highly valued and highly visible work which would otherwise be impossible to resource due to competing priorities.

In April 2012 British Waterways will move from its current position as a public corporation to become the Canal & River Trust in England and Wales. Within the Manchester and Pennine Waterway, which encompasses the Greater Manchester area, there will be a Waterway Partnership formed which will be part of the governance structure of the new charity. This change represents an opportunity for the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to secure a strategic relationship with the Canal & River Trust to ensure that the benefits which waterways bring to local communities can be maximised through tourism, economic development and regeneration. It is essential that Greater Manchester's waterways are seen as integral to the Greater Manchester Strategy and other strategic policy documents.

Actions

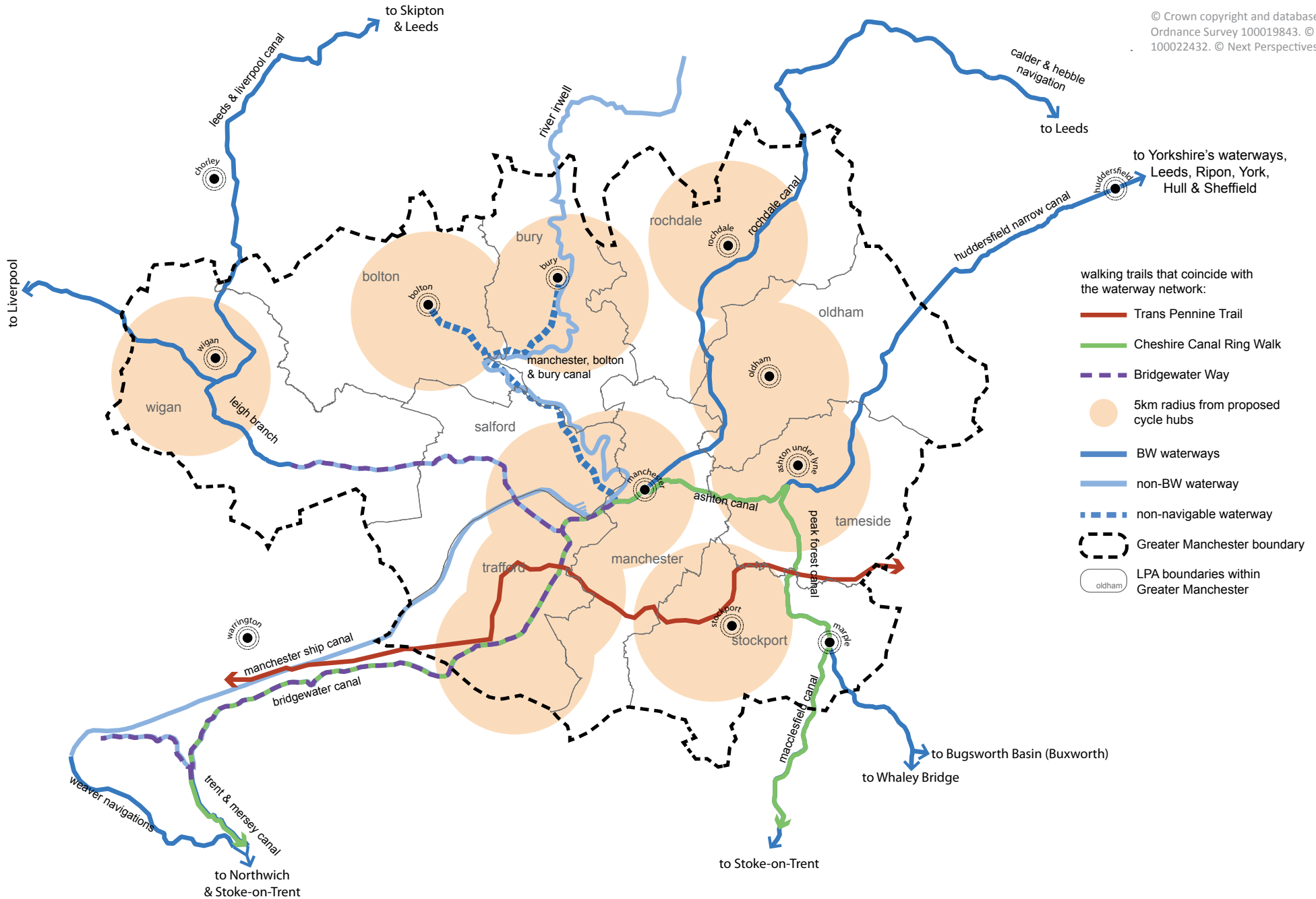
- ***Integrate the potential of waterways into the strategic planning for Greater Manchester.***
- ***Assess the socio-economic potential and benefits of waterways to inform delivery of regeneration programmes across Greater Manchester.***
- ***Establish strong partnership working between navigation authorities, including the future Canal and River Trust, and strategic leaders to ensure a sustainable future for the waterways of Greater Manchester.***



1. Newton Heath, Manchester
2. Openshaw, Ashton Canal
3. Castleton, Rochdale Canal

Waterways as part of a sustainable city

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Waterways as part of a sustainable city

A Low Carbon Economy

Greater Manchester is committed to sustainable economic growth which touches the lives of all its residents and provides a setting in which communities can prosper. As an recognised and integral part of Greater Manchester's Green Infrastructure, waterways can support this vision and also contribute to the transition to a low carbon economy.

Often forming trunk routes in and out of towns and cities, the availability of high quality waterway infrastructure can encourage people to get out of their cars for both commuting and recreational purposes. Given that transport accounts for 30% of direct emissions across Greater Manchester, waterways can play a role in reducing carbon dioxide levels and also assist in reducing congestion on roads. Resources from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund will help to enhance the waterway network from April 2012 in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester and further opportunities for joint working to unlock investment should be explored.

The potential for inland waterways to contribute to the low carbon economy could consider biomass capacity, district cooling and identification of waste streams from the operation and maintenance of waterway management for recycling, reuse and energy from waste markets.

Tourism and recreation

Canals have successfully formed the basis for leisure and recreation-driven regeneration right across the country. In 2009 tourism and leisure expenditure relating to the Rochdale Canal, including boating, angling, cycling and informal visits to the towpath totalled £10.8 million. It was a desire to create a high quality tourism and leisure area within the city

centre was one of the key drivers behind the initial regeneration of the canal network in Birmingham which began over 20 years ago and has since seen investment of over £1 billion. Restaurants, bars and pubs value the unique and distinctive environment that a canal brings to their 'offer' in what is a fiercely competitive leisure market.

The provision of good quality, safe and secure mooring bases are also vital to the animation of a waterway corridor. Failure to provide attractive moorings can reduce boat movement along a waterway and lead to boats simply passing through an area in order to reach other better equipped destinations. This subsequently leads to a missed opportunity to capture economic benefits that boaters can bring, as well as a loss of colour and animation on the waterspace.

Whilst it can be challenging to create viable new waterspace as a stand-alone project, within a comprehensive regeneration masterplan, where the water helps to create a focus and identity to a place being created, there may be opportunities for new long term moorings, including residential opportunities. These then need to be backed up by a string of good quality visitor moorings along the network.

Manchester's Waterways form part of two very popular cruising rings – the Cheshire Ring and the South Pennine Ring – with the Ashton Canal being a key link common to both. These cruising rings are attractions in their own right, and are popular with those wishing to hire and experience a boating holiday. Destinations on these routes offer the opportunity for people to explore the canal network itself and also the adjacent areas through which they run. It is important therefore that there are engaging places of high quality for all visitors inviting them to spend time in the local area.

Actions

- **Identify priority stretches of waterway where investment will support economic growth and Greater Manchester's transition to a low carbon economy.**
- **Explore low carbon opportunities for waterways including the commercial value of these opportunities.**
- **Continue to work in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester and demonstrate the value of waterways to Local Transport Plan and Local Sustainable Transport Fund priorities.**
- **Market the waterways of Greater Manchester to maximise visitor potential, including currently underused and unmanaged waterspace.**



Birmingham's Waterways – A Story of Success

Birmingham is England's second largest city and lies at the heart of the national canal network. In the 1980s, Birmingham City Council developed a clear vision for the canals as an opportunity to extend the city's central core out across the constraining barrier of the inner ring road as part of the city's transformation from a manufacturing to a service economy.

On the back of the initial Improvement Programme, around £40 million commercial investment took place in the Gas Street area post-1983 on hotel, pub, restaurant and residential developments, supported by further public sector grant funding. The succeeding major waterside developments of the ICC and NIA were delivered through major public sector investment from Birmingham City Council between 1988 – 1991, in association with further access and environmental improvements on the canal.

From 1993 – 2001 the comprehensive mixed use regeneration of Brindleyplace / the Water's Edge took place. This involved £169 million investment by the private sector in offices, retail, leisure and residential developments. Brindleyplace consists of a National Sea Life Centre, 11,000m2 of bars and restaurants, 100,000m2 of office space, 178 apartments, a gym/leisure club, two art galleries, a theatre and two hotels.

Since 1998 development has moved out along the canal corridors radiating from the core area. By 2005, some £541 million private sector investment had been made or was under way in a range of schemes along these corridors, including the mixed use Mailbox development and mainly residential schemes in the Sherborne wharf area.



The Birmingham Canal Improvements Programme involved work on canals throughout the city to enhance the quality of the waterways and public realm and also to improve access for the public. In addition an environmental dredging programme was undertaken to improve the water quality of the canal. The programme was implemented by Birmingham City Council and British Waterways, supported by grants from EU and UK sources. This investment in the waterway fabric helped overcome initial hesitation and uncertainty amongst private sector developers and demonstrated the advantages of building alongside improved canals.

Before & after photos of the Birmingham Canal Navigation at: Gas Street Basin (1a & 1b) and Brindley Place (2a & 2b)

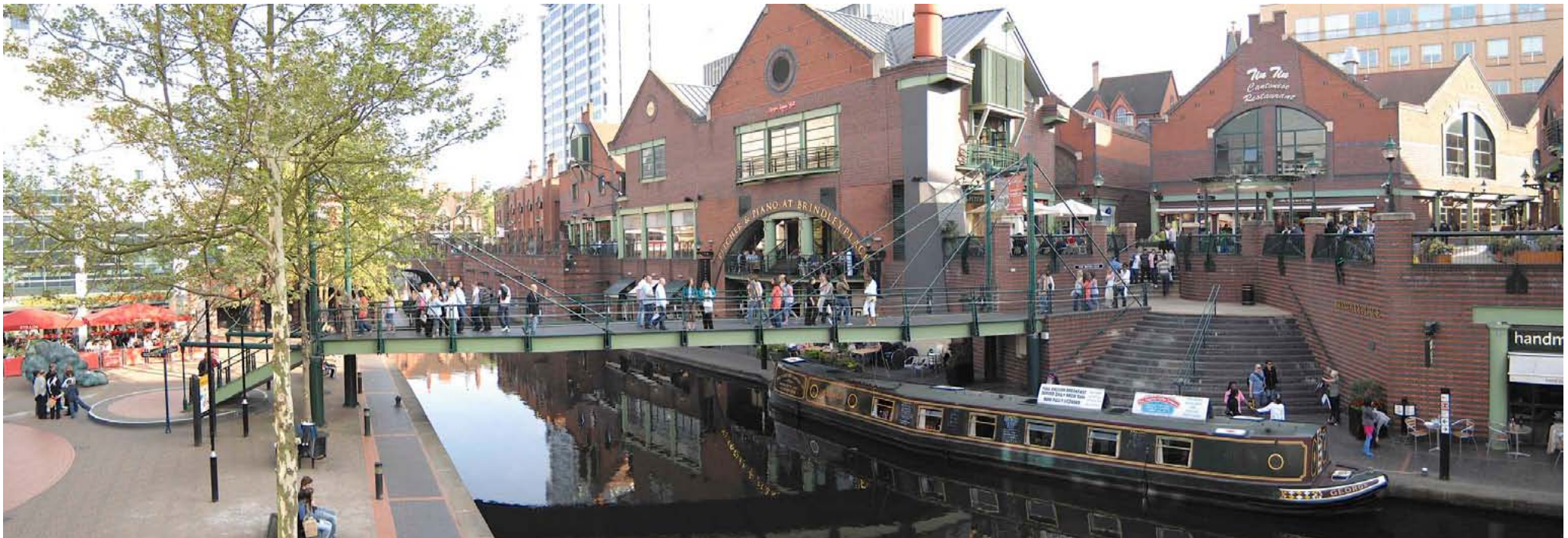


Birmingham's Waterways – A Story of Success

The Mailbox was developed on the site of Birmingham's main mail sorting office and consists of 204 apartments, two hotels, 28,000m² of office space, 40 designer stores, 16 canalside restaurants and bars and a 900 space car park. It is also the home of BBC Birmingham. The final phase of the Mailbox development was the Cube, completed in 2010. This is a landmark building which houses apartments, office and retail space, together with restaurants and a boutique hotel and spa.

In summary the city's redeveloped canals constitute the key marketing image and a unique selling point for Birmingham, benefiting the tourism and leisure industry and the wider competitiveness of the city from a quality of life perspective.

It is estimated that over £1 billion has been invested in canalside developments – office, residential, retail and leisure - since the mid-1980s, with most of the funding coming from the private sector. The canal in central Birmingham receives around 3 million visits per year, while 2,200 – 2,600 net additional full-time equivalent jobs have been created in waterside developments. Associated public realm improvements have created an attractive canalside environment, which encourages and facilitates pedestrian flow into and around the city centre and links the various waterside developments.



Summary of recommended actions

No overarching strategy for the inland waterways of Greater Manchester currently exists. As a result, the opportunities that this valuable and treasured network presents remain unrecognised and untapped and it will continue to under-perform.

Over the coming months British Waterways intend to engage all existing and potential partners with a view to integrating the canals and rivers within the strategic planning for Greater Manchester to ensure they maximise their contribution to its future growth.

Economic Investment:

- *The regeneration of the waterways of Greater Manchester to be fully integrated within strategic planning across the Combined Authority.*
- *New canalside developments and regeneration projects to maximise the interaction with waterways and an improved canal corridor environment.*
- *Policy makers to use Policy Advice Note: Inland Waterways for guidance on how waterways contribute to the economic, social and environmental agendas. (<http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/inland-waterways.html>)*

Regeneration Value and Supporting Change:

- *Integrate the potential of waterways into the strategic planning for Greater Manchester.*
- *Assess the socio-economic potential and benefits of waterways to inform delivery of regeneration programmes across Greater Manchester.*
- *Establish strong partnership working between navigation authorities, including the future Canal and River Trust, and strategic leaders to ensure a sustainable future for the waterways of Greater Manchester.*

Sustainable Transport and Tourism:

- *Identify priority stretches of waterway where investment will support economic growth and Greater Manchester's transition to a low carbon economy.*
- *Explore low carbon opportunities for waterways including the commercial value of these opportunities.*
- *Continue to work in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester and demonstrate the value of waterways to Local Transport Plan and Local Sustainable Transport Fund priorities.*
- *Market the waterways of Greater Manchester to maximise visitor potential, including currently underused and unmanaged waterspace.*

