



London Waterway Partnership 2014 to 2024

Update - September 2016
Clarity, confidence and consolidation



Canal &
River Trust

Welcome

In writing the introduction to the first London Waterway Partnership strategic plan 2014, I commented that our strategy was not set in stone and that it was designed to develop over time with the continuing input from those supporting our waterways. This update does just that.

It draws on the ongoing discussions in the Partnership meetings plus the input from our Annual Meetings and from forums. Our agenda going forward has been shaped by the business plans submitted annually to our national Canal & River Trust teams.

There are three developments which colour the present update.

- The first is the way the Canal & River Trust responded to its new responsibilities to promote and expand the opportunities provided by our waterways and their immediate environment.

It is clear that the millions of visitors to our waterways have responded well to this positive, indeed enthusiastic approach to our inheritance handed to us from British Waterways in July 2012. It is reflected in the increased visitor and ever-growing volunteer numbers. In London we see an abundance of opportunities to build on this favourable climate for what we have earlier termed "London's Greatest Park".

- Secondly the main thrust of our strategic objectives remains the same but now with even greater emphasis on the role that waterways can play in regeneration.

Canals reflecting their historic origins, go through some of the poorer parts of London – however the scope for the canals to act as a catalyst for imaginative developments to enhance the lives of those living and working locally is significant. Recalling the King's Cross of 10 years ago and then look today at visitors to Granary Square enjoying the amphitheatre terrace to the canal. Consider the way in which the investment in the waterways has enhanced the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and the whole destination experience, then visit Tottenham Hale village to see a development inspired by its proximity to the canal and River Lee Navigation. Our waterways are magical.

- The third development is to find new ways of giving our waterway visitors and local communities a sense of ownership.

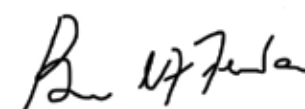
We want individuals, charities and commercial companies equally to feel a sense of responsibility and pride in their waterway spaces. To help this, we are building up our local knowledge in eight "character areas" and will draw up strategic objectives for each of these stretches of waterway to further deliver the Trust's vision that **"Living waterways transform places and enrich lives"**.

It follows that "adoptions" of lengths of waterway by local groups and organisations promotes this aim and volunteering in a variety of different ways is crucial to that sense of ownership.

The London Waterway Partnership itself has changed in the last two years!

We are excited by participating in project teams which realise the strategic objectives we plan. This involves a greater commitment from the Partnership members than originally envisaged but I am very appreciative of their support.

The whole Partnership is very grateful to Jon Guest (London Waterway Manager) and his team for their constructive and integrated approach to working with the Partnership. That applies equally to their Canal & River Trust national team colleagues who continually provide advice and expertise with such a spirit of collaboration.



Brian Fender
Chair, London Waterway Partnership
August 2016



"Sustained delivery during a period of change... New agendas, opportunities and challenges to rise to... Clarity of our overall strategic direction unchanged!"

London Waterway Partnership, November 2015



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Explaining Waterway Partnerships

We need to manage our canals and rivers as one national network, with effective policies across England and Wales in order to allocate resources where they are most needed and to be most efficient.

Opportunities for joint working, as well as appreciating the obstacles to better use and enjoyment of our canals and rivers, lie in understanding individual stretches of waterway and working locally.

That is why Waterway Partnerships were established across England and Wales, 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 area.



Image: Ware Welcome Station opening July 2016, Cllr Kaye, Mayor of Ware with Sir Brian Fender, London Waterway Partnership Chair

London Waterway Partnership Who, what and how

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. Our backgrounds are in regeneration, wildlife and environmental protection, strategic planning, marketing, community development, heritage, health and wellbeing (for example cycling, angling and boating) and engineering. Find out more about our London Waterway Partnership members at canalrivertrust.org.uk/London/whos-who

What are we for?

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

How we will do that job?

- By liaising closely with like-minded groups and individuals
- By analysing the evidence and 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 be encouraged to do so)
- 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 & 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 with others



“I am really pleased with the progress that the Partnership has made towards delivering projects on the ground so a difference can be seen. The environment is rapidly changing especially in London and the Partnership has responded to these changes with the inclusion of new members who bring new skills and energy leading to new projects.”

Jon Guest, London Waterway Manager, August 2016

London Waterway Partnership **Our priorities**

In London our plans and projects reflect these eight strategic priorities;

- a.** Maintain and improve the waterways
- b.** Recognise the importance of canals and rivers in education, volunteering and community participation through developing and nurturing conservation and environmental activities
- c.** Increase the number and diversity of visitors to the waterway through deepening and expanding engagement, appreciation and enjoyment of the London Waterway network
- d.** Promote the role of waterways in regeneration
- e.** Be a part of a nationally successful trust which has a strong local presence that generates a sense of community pride and ownership
- f.** Develop policies and practices which are viewed as even-handed by all users
- g.** Generate support from individual charitable donations, responsible corporate sponsorship and volunteer contributions as well as government funding
- h.** Have an enviable record of transparency, governance, management and delivering value for money

London Waterway Partnership

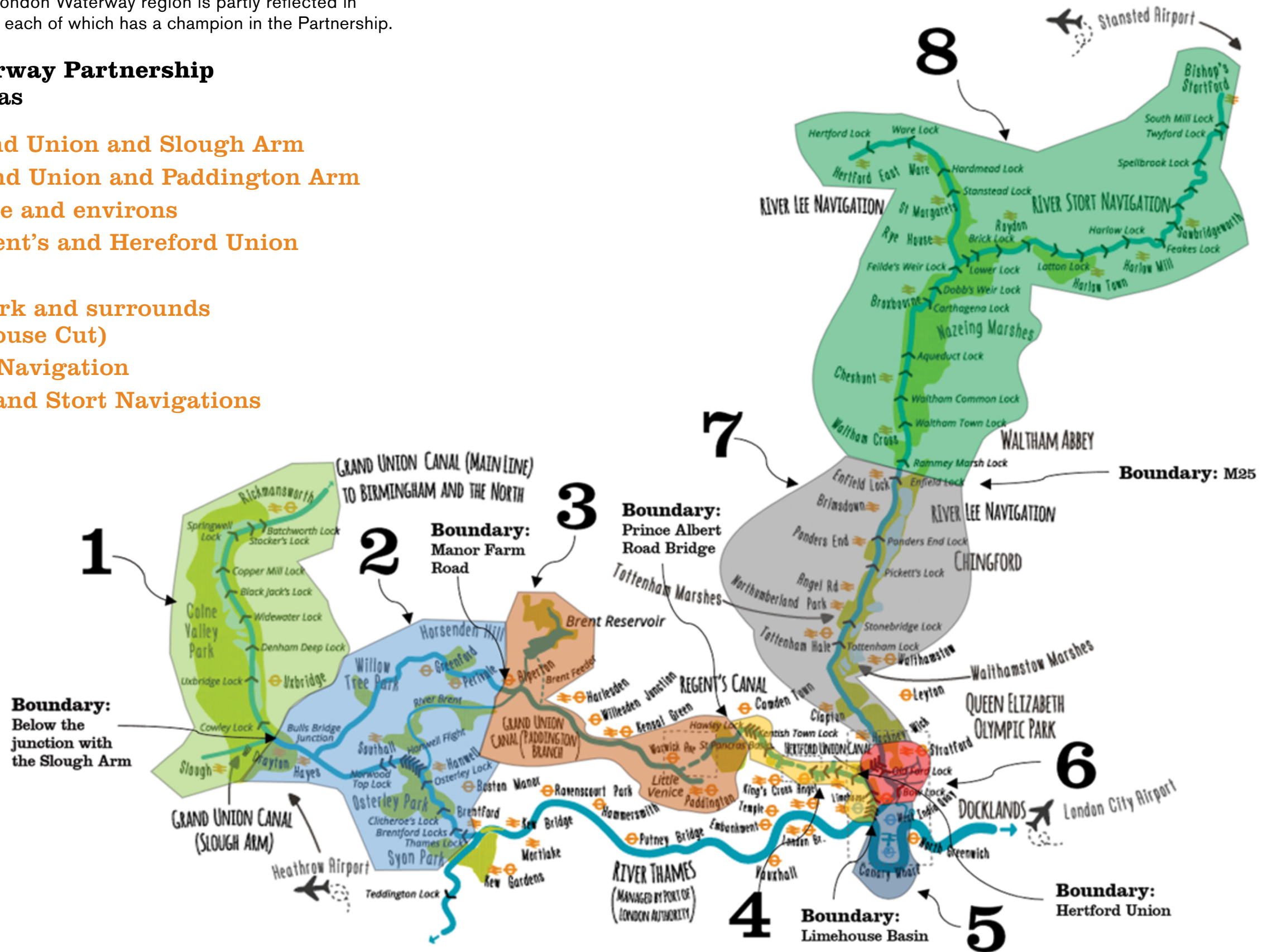
Our network character areas



The diversity of the London Waterway region is partly reflected in eight character areas each of which has a champion in the Partnership.

London Waterway Partnership Character areas

1. Upper Grand Union and Slough Arm
2. Lower Grand Union and Paddington Arm
3. Little Venice and environs
4. Lower Regent's and Hereford Union
5. Docklands
6. Olympic Park and surrounds (inc Limehouse Cut)
7. Lower Lee Navigation
8. Upper Lee and Stort Navigations





London Waterway Partnership

Our Strategic Objectives

1 Create a Slough Arm link to the Thames

The link will provide new waterway circuits and raises the value of the Slough Arm. This is by a long way the most ambitious element of our strategy. It is not a new proposal and the potential benefits have been considered and progressed for some years. We consider it important now to review earlier discussions and update the plan for implementation.

a) The long-term proposal is to link the Slough Arm to the Thames

b) The medium term plan is to obtain funds to produce a master plan which includes:

- Possible options for the route
- A technical assessment of each route
- A business plan which includes the costs of the preferred route and an assessment of the value enhancement by developments along the waterway

c) In the short term:

- The development of the Slough Basin will give an indication of how property values are enhanced by a canal side location
- Engaging with the friends of Slough Arm and others to define the potential merits of the connection and explore the feasibility
- Increase the use of the Slough Arm through promotion and support of the Slough Canal Festival

2 Promote and assist in the restoration of the House Mill (Bromley-By-Bow) to a thriving heritage site, serving as a Visitor Centre and Venue

This site is not owned by the Canal & River Trust, but by an independent trust (the River Lea Tidal Mill Trust). The House Mill is a unique historical and heritage asset, not least by virtue of its relationship with the waterways and its position as a southern gateway to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. There is much to be gained from a partnership between River Lea Tidal Mill Trust and the Canal & River Trust and there is an agreement to collaborate wherever possible and currently includes advice on building a cofferdam as the first stage in getting the tide mill working again.

There is the potential to provide:

- A highly regarded and popular restored heritage site promoted by the River Lea Tidal Mill Trust and the Canal & River Trust
- The House Mill as a working tidal mill capable of producing saleable flour
- Hydroelectric power from the tides in the lower River Lea on an on-going and (small scale) commercial basis
- A major focus on the river bus route from Limehouse Marina to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and onwards to Tottenham Hale
- A dynamic interpretation of the role of the Mill, its workers and the impact on London
- A stimulating resource for all levels of education and community engagement

3 Support the restoration of Carpenters Road Lock

The Trust, with significant funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and support from London Legacy Development Corporation and the Inland Waterways Association is now restoring the Lock.

The Partnership's role will be to help demonstrate the heritage and amenity benefits arising from the restoration.

The project emphasises people and communities, whilst demonstrating the heritage benefits of restoring the lock. With the legacy of the 2012 Olympic Games being established, we want to ensure that this unique local asset is brought back into prominence from its current hidden state for the benefit of local people and visitors to Stratford and East London waterways.

The project focuses on communities connected with East London waterways, particularly Carpenters Road Lock and the Stratford area and how, by breathing life into a working lock - this heritage can be shared with future generations.

3 Support the restoration of Carpenters Road Lock

The project will;

- Engage young people and schools in local waterways heritage, through research, events, experiences and learning
- Restore and reveal a unique waterway place and way of life
- Explore and bring to life the stories of building Carpenters Road Lock in the '1930s depression' and contemporary employment opportunities of the 2012 Games legacy in the Stratford area
- Showcase the distinct uniqueness of Carpenters Road Lock, designed for flood alleviation in East London for the prosperity of local people

When restored the Lock will deliver its dual functions of flood control and open up additional navigational routes within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and to the Thames.

4 Promotion of waterways in regeneration

People are attracted to water. Properties with a canal or river view attract a premium price. The numerous leisure opportunities also make a waterway location desirable; together we have a raison d'être for making the most of London's waterways in regeneration.

Implementation of this strategy objective will involve promoting the amenity value of canals and rivers to local authorities, planners and developers.

The Canal & River Trust is preparing a document which promotes the role it has in regeneration activities alongside our waterways and this is strongly welcomed by the London Waterway Partnership. Our contribution will be to highlight London examples to reinforce the regional case.

There are number of developments across the London Waterway where canals and rivers can have a significant impact on the quality and potential of the development.

There is a large planned development in Enfield identified as Meridian Water where the Partnership, through its members with expert and local knowledge, will argue for a full involvement of the Canal & River Trust as the plan develops.

In the longer term there is the potential for a considerably greater impact on waterways running north all the way from the Thames to the M25.

There are similar developments elsewhere where the engagement of the Canal & River Trust can provide significant enhancements. These include interaction with the new Development Corporation for Old Oak Common, centred on the Grand Union Canal's Paddington Arm.

5 Support work that helps to meet the challenges and opportunities of boating in London

There are formidable challenges to boating, particularly in central London where the waterways are overcrowded and in the Lee Valley. There are sections of the canal network where there is insufficient capacity to give adequate freedom of choice for continuous cruising boats. Also there is a growing use of residential boats as an alternative to the increasingly expensive land-based accommodation in London. These issues are not unique to London but they are already particularly acute for our waterways and there is an increase in licenced boats year on year.

We welcome therefore the creation of a raft of policies at the national level which cover all aspects of boating. The London Waterway Partnership is supporting the development of these policies which should include the marketing of less popular sites. Implementing this strategy will require good working relationships with local planning authorities, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and the different boating organisations involved with London's canals.

Work on the national mooring strategy began in April and is expected to deliver:

- An increased number mooring spaces
- Improved canal side facilities
- Better communications with boaters
- Policies which promote improved collaborative behaviour
- Transparent management practices including enforcement
- Policies relating to residential boats

Attention will be given to extending mooring opportunities to waterways which have the potential for increased use without damaging the environment. These could in particular be seeking mooring sites as part of appropriate re-development schemes.



Image: King's Cross, Regent's Canal



Image: Brentford mural, Brentford Lock, Grand Union Canal



6 Plan and complete a pipeline of projects which bring improvements to the diverse areas of London Waterways

This strategy element deliberately requires a project based discipline to sharpen the focus on priorities and to achieve the maximum value of internal resources, as well as providing a platform for volunteering and fundraising. Proposals for projects may come from a variety of sources, including London Waterway Partnership members, Canal & River Trust staff, external organisations and individuals. It is the vehicle by which objectives identified under the national themes of **people, places and prosperity** can be addressed. The target is to provide a range of projects across the eight character areas and illustrating different strengths of the waterway system in London.

- **Better Towpaths for Everyone** (national policy now available)

This document acknowledges the greater use of towpaths and gives guidance on shared use and increased investment needed by Transport for London and boroughs to encourage the safe enjoyment of towpaths. The document now forms the basis of national guidance on sharing towpath space.

- **Quietways**

The Trust is working with Transport for London to introduce cycle Quietways along its towpaths. The first of these will be part of Quietway 2 from Bloomsbury to Walthamstow which will cross the River Lee Navigation near Walthamstow Marsh. Following this, a much longer stretch of canal towpath will be introduced as a Quietway along the Grand Union Canal

(and Paddington Arm) between Paddington and West Drayton. The London Waterway Partnership would like to see this route extended over time beyond West Drayton to Uxbridge. We would also like to explore the opportunities for a Quietway along the River Lee Navigation.

- **Exploring, securing and maintaining Green Flag status**

Following the successful award of Green Flag environmental status to the Macclesfield Canal we are developing plans for accreditation for at least two stretches of water with potential partners including the Lee Valley Park, London Wildlife Trust and Thames Water.

- **Eco system mapping**

With techniques developed by Queen Mary University for studying the rivers and their immediate environment there is a project to adopt a similar approach for canals. The advantage is not just to provide a picture of a stretch of canal but to lay the basis for a longitudinal study about the care and development of our waterways. The methodology will allow an extension to other stretches of water in London and beyond.

- **Super Adoption of the Limehouse Cut**

This project led by the Poplar HARCA, an East London housing and community association aims to demonstrate how a stretch of waterway can be comprehensively integrated into community activities with benefits to the local community and to the Canal & River Trust.

- **The support and promotion of waterside events**

The Partnership sees events of all kinds as a way of introducing new visitors to the enjoyment of our waterways. Events also reinforce the pleasure and satisfaction of existing participants of which the Inland Waterways Association annual Cavalcade in Little Venice is a prime example. Other events warrant additional support and we have successfully fundraised for the Hayes Canal Festival 2016 and will look to promote an arts event in 2017.

There are a number of other existing canal festivals across the London Waterway region and the Trust will seek a higher profile at these events by taking its recently restored floating Welcome Station boat - Jena to them.

- **Closer links with Thames organisations**

The Thames and the London waterways of the Canal & River Trust are complimentary with the scale and visibility of the Thames being matched by the Trust waterways with their intimacy and accessibility. There is much common ground. Both waterways have an interest in encouraging leisure pursuits on water and their towpaths; both contribute to transport policies in London and both have the potential to encourage healthy lifestyles.

They share similar aspects of the environment including wildlife. This project aims to promote all the waterways of London and create mutually beneficial partnerships between the bodies supporting public engagement with the Thames and the London waterways of the Canal & River Trust.

7 Develop educational and volunteering opportunities inspired by the London Waterway network

The varied interests of waterways from engineering to ecology from heritage to tourism releases opportunities for waterways to contribute both to formal education and training, and to personal development through volunteering.

Our target in the short and medium term was to develop curriculum models for both highly urban and rural stretches of London waterways and to link these models with practice in other parts of England and Wales. Our approach now is to examine each project that is proposed by the London Waterway Partnership for its potential to offer an educational or volunteering opportunity.

We currently value volunteers in a variety of roles, but we will put particular emphasis on describing and developing the personal development that flows through volunteering. In particular we will work to:

- Provide high quality volunteering opportunities, including planning and support, recognition and reward, and training and development
- Ensure that there is a variety of opportunities to suit the different skills needs and interests of a wide range of people
- Consult target groups and involve them in the development of volunteering opportunities
- Explore new methods and forums for promoting volunteer opportunities
- Address social exclusion through volunteering, for example, with programmes aimed at specific groups of people such as unemployed people and families
- Partner with volunteering organisations and the broader voluntary sector

Most volunteering is a group activity but we also consider there is scope for volunteers to undertake individual tasks and responsibilities and we will advertise such opportunities in 2016-17.

8 To promote a sense of local ownership of London Waterways through events, imaginative use of the web and social media

Much information and many initiatives originate nationally from the Canal & River Trust; however there is scope for London based knowledge to enhance the sense of local responsibility within the Trust and in our communities.

The London Waterway Partnership contributes to this as follows:

Partnership working

- To arrange working partnerships with key organisations and individuals to promote London waterways

- To work with national team staff to recruit Friends and to enhance the information and services for Friends based in London
- To increase the diversity and range of expertise of Partnership members

To have face to face meetings;

- To hold an Annual Meeting to report progress on the strategy and consult with stakeholders more generally. Promote and publicise major projects initiated in London
- To raise the profile of the work of the London Waterway Partnership through attendance by Partnership members attending relevant events

Sharing Information; use of the web and social media;

- Improve digital access to information on London waterways; build information associated with the eight character areas. Ensure reliable and timely information is available for boaters and other users
- Secure and tailor information for London which is available nationally
- Provide information on activities such as events, open days, environmental interests et cetera

9 To incorporate, wherever practicable, national initiatives and campaigns, or from other regions, which have the capacity to benefit the London Waterway region

The intention is always to be open to good practice and new ideas and to review and adapt our strategy on a regular basis.



Why not get involved with the London Waterway Partnership?



We need offers of help with all levels of our work, and we need ideas for the continuing development of our work.

Get in touch with us at:

enquiries.london@canalrivertrust.org.uk

- How can we work together on community, economic or environmental projects?
- Would your local school, organisation or community like to get more involved in your local waterway's future?



Ways to contact the London Waterways Partnership:

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