



Facing the Water

Promoting well being through
our Waterways

**North Wales & Borders Waterway Partnership
10 Year Strategic Plan**



Canal &
River Trust

Contents

In July 2013 we launched the vision for the waterways titled 'Shaping our Future'. The underlying theme in our vision is to work in partnership with others to realise the potential that our amazing waterways have to enhance lives - bringing people together to create a better environment, develop new skills and enjoy healthy activities on and off the water.

We have listened to your feedback and this document outlines our partnership objectives.

Welcome	03
Canal & River Trust	
Our Role and Objectives	04
Our Strategic Priorities	05
Our Resources	06
Our Governance	07
North Wales & Borders Waterway Partnership:	08
Our Waterways	09
North Wales and Borders Waterway	
Unique and Diverse	10
Character Map	11
Weaver Navigation	12
Chester to Ellesmere Port	13
The Rural Centre	14
The World Heritage site and the Western Llangollen Canal	15
Montgomery Canal	16
Midlands Gateway	17
Achieving Our Objectives	18

Welcome

In July 2012 the Canal & River Trust was established as a charitable body to hold the waterways, docks, museums and waterway archives of England and Wales in trust, in perpetuity, for these two nations. This is a time of exciting developments in the way our canals and rivers are managed, and we hope this document is indicative of the change this means for the waterways.

The North Wales & Borders Partnership is one of thirteen forming an integral part of the Governance of the Trust. We advise and encourage the Trust staff to ensure the local character and diverse needs within our Partnership area are fully seen and understood. As a cross border Partnership, and one with three key attractions located in it, we work closely with the All Wales Partnership and the Museums and Attractions Partnership as well as our neighbouring Waterway Partnerships.

This Plan comes at the end of our first year during which we have spent time talking to those who live, work or relax on the waterways. Through engagement events we have collated priorities suggested by our stakeholders, partners and community members. Our 10 year Strategic Waterway Plan now sets out our objectives, priorities and activities associated with improving waterways for people, prosperity and places.

The Waterways play a unique role in connecting people with each other, with their cultural heritage and with nature and we are committed, with your help, to improving the health and well being of the waterways and the communities they serve.



Jim Forrester
Chair, North Wales & Borders Waterway Partnership



“Living waterways transform places and enrich lives”

Canal & River Trust, 2014



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 principle role of the Trust is to care for this unique legacy, holding it in trust for the nation in perpetuity.

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

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 six strategic goals aimed at unlocking this potential.



People To enrich people's lives.

Waterways To protect and improve the accessibility, usability and resilience of our assets and their heritage, for people to use and enjoy, now and in the future.

Resources To secure sufficient resources, and manage them efficiently, for the long term sustainability of the waterways within the Trust's care.

Influence To be a widely respected partner and trusted guardian with growing influence and responsibility.

Places To provide special places that people value, sustainable environments and routes.

Prosperity To yield economic benefits for local communities and the nation.

Canal & River Trust: Our Resources

Nationally, we have:

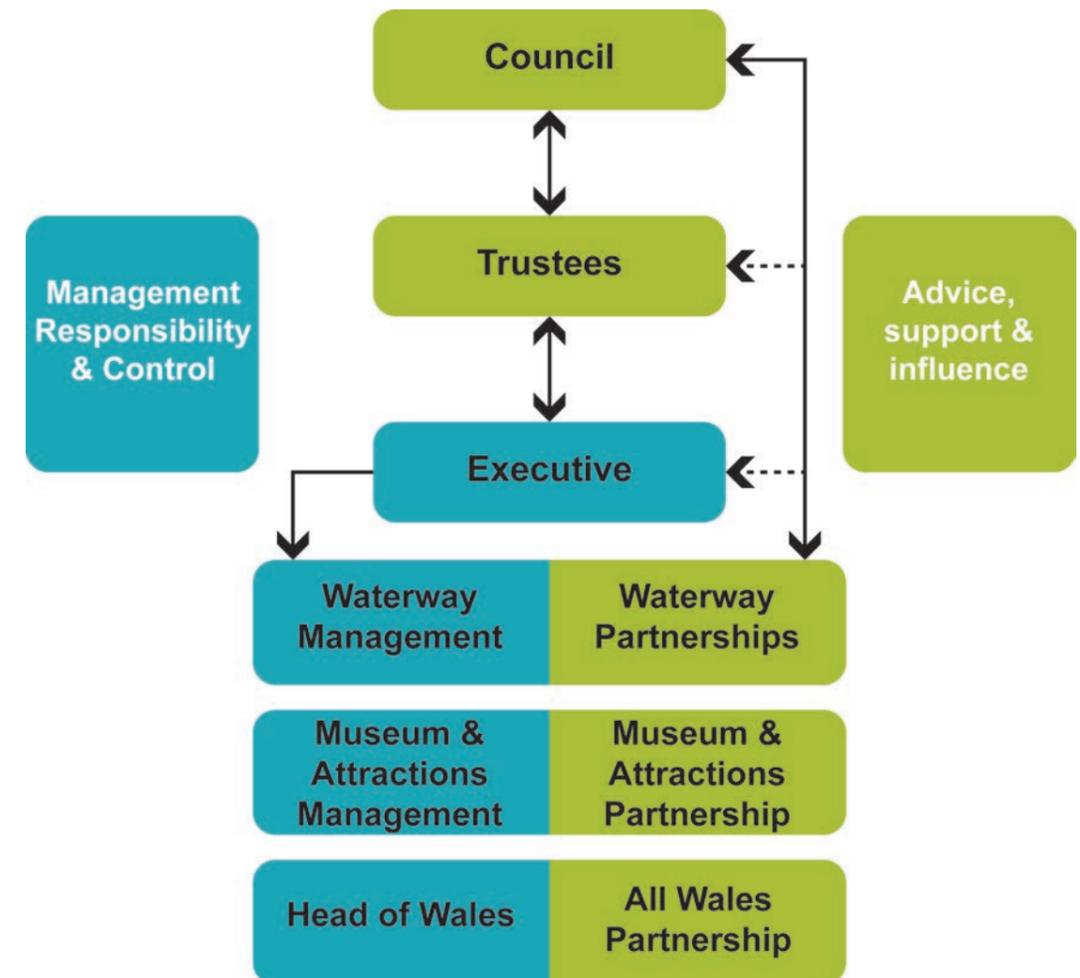
- an annual income of approximately £120m
- 1,600 staff, over half our team are canalside, looking after the physical infrastructure of our canals and rivers every day
- 2,727 Listed Buildings and structures, we are the third largest owner of Listed Structures in the UK
- over 2,000 miles of historic canals, rivers, reservoirs and docks
- an additional 200 miles of waterways restored and re-opened in the last decade
- 1,000 wildlife conservation sites and 400 miles of Conservation Areas
- over 35,000 licensed boats on the network (which is more than at the height of the Industrial Revolution)
- 15,000 heritage objects, 100,000 archive records and images across museums and attractions sites

Our income is derived from a wide range of sources including:

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



Canal & River Trust: Our Governance



We manage our canals and rivers as one network, with common policies across England and Wales, to ensure that we allocate resources where they are most needed and use those resources most efficiently and effectively. However we must also recognise the specific needs, culture and ambition of Wales, the needs of our Museums and Attractions and those of local people, partners, agencies and companies.

The members of the 13 Partnerships across England and Wales are an integral part of this process, working closely with the staff of Canal & River Trust, and Glandwr Cymru in Wales, to shape, influence and add value to what we do.

This Waterway Partnership works closely with its neighbouring Waterway Partnerships, Museums and Attractions Partnership with respect to the World Heritage Site and, to ensure our waterways fulfil their potential to contribute to Welsh life, the All Wales Partnership.



North Wales and Borders 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. Find out more about our partnership members at: <http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/noticeboards/north-wales-and-borders-waterways/whos-who>

What are we for?

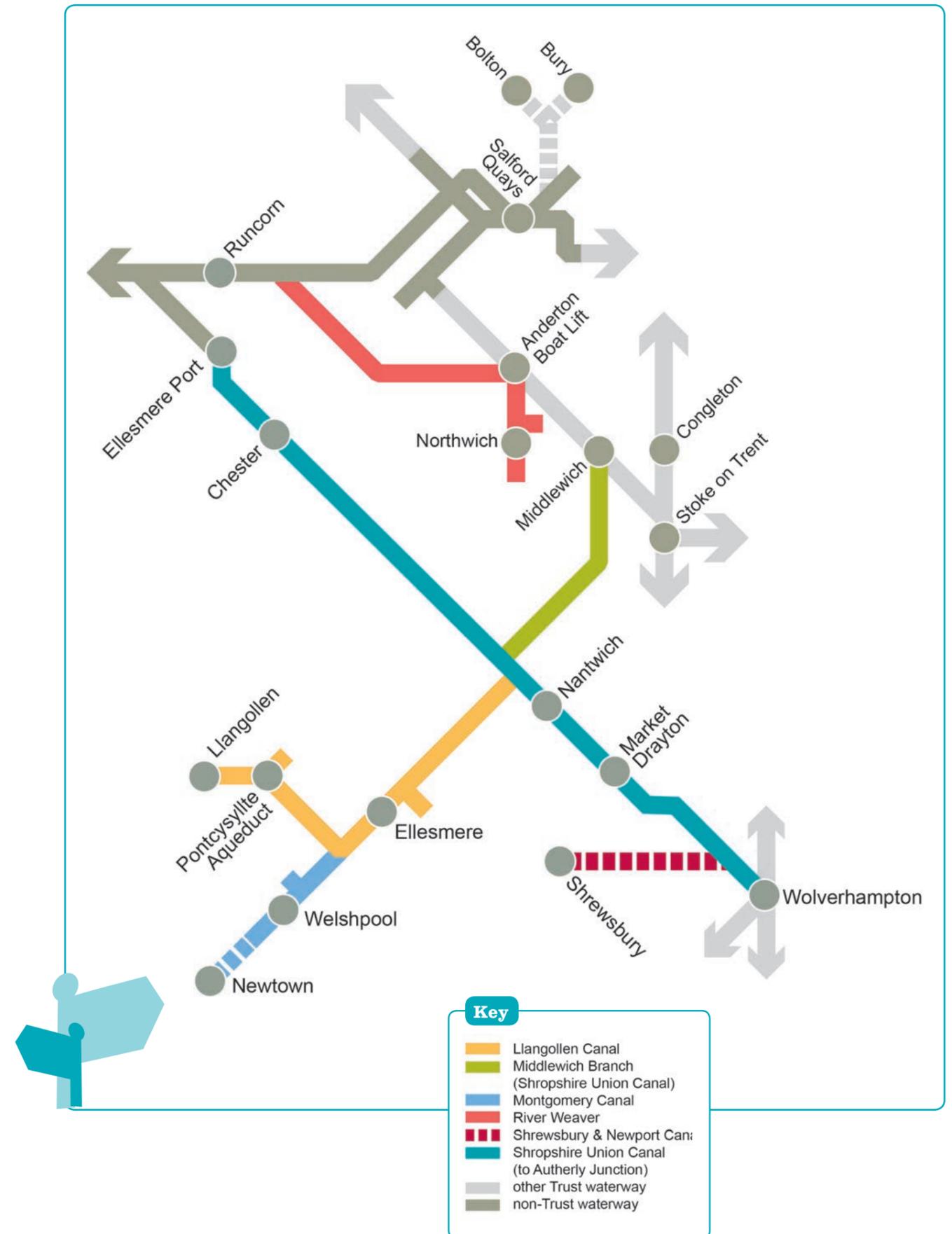
- Promoting knowledge and use of the waterways in the region.
- Understanding the issues facing communities and assessing how the waterways can play a role.
- Shaping future plans of the Canal & River Trust to deliver either on its own or in partnership with others.
- Securing the resources to deliver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

How will we do that job?

Working closely with complementary and neighbouring partnerships including Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships with whom we share partners and stakeholders.

- Analysing the evidence and data held by the Trust and others.
 - 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).
- Exploring opportunities for making the best return on investment.
 - By capturing this in our long term plan, *Facing the Water* and through our delivery action plans.
- Channelling the skills, expertise and resources of the Canal & River Trust, its partners, agencies and local communities towards its objectives.
 - And, implementing that plan on the basis of common purpose, shared benefit and mutual interest among partners and communities.

Our Waterways:



North Wales & Borders Waterway: Unique and Diverse

Our waterways include many of our greatest waterway treasures; the Pontcysyllte and Chirk Aqueducts, Anderton Boat Lift and the historic Ellesmere Yard. They pass through some of the most rural counties in England and Wales. Each area and waterway has its own character and distinctiveness from wide agricultural vistas to rolling hills and valleys punctuated by more industrialised landscapes associated with the legacy of the salt and chemical industries at Ellesmere Port, Northwich and Winsford.

The waterways themselves range from a wide river to narrow picturesque canals passing through thriving market towns, villages and the historic City of Chester. No less varied are the uses and users of the waterways attracted by the mix of wildlife and history: the waterways offer a haven from the hustle and bustle of twenty first century life. 96% of the use of our waterways is on the towpaths but it is the activity on the water that adds the vibrancy people enjoy.

We appreciate and work alongside the different policies and approaches that a national border throws up along with the challenges and opportunities that it offers. However both our cross border waterways, the Llangollen and Montgomery Canals, have an importance that reaches far beyond our two nations; one for its built and social heritage and the other for its rich environment.

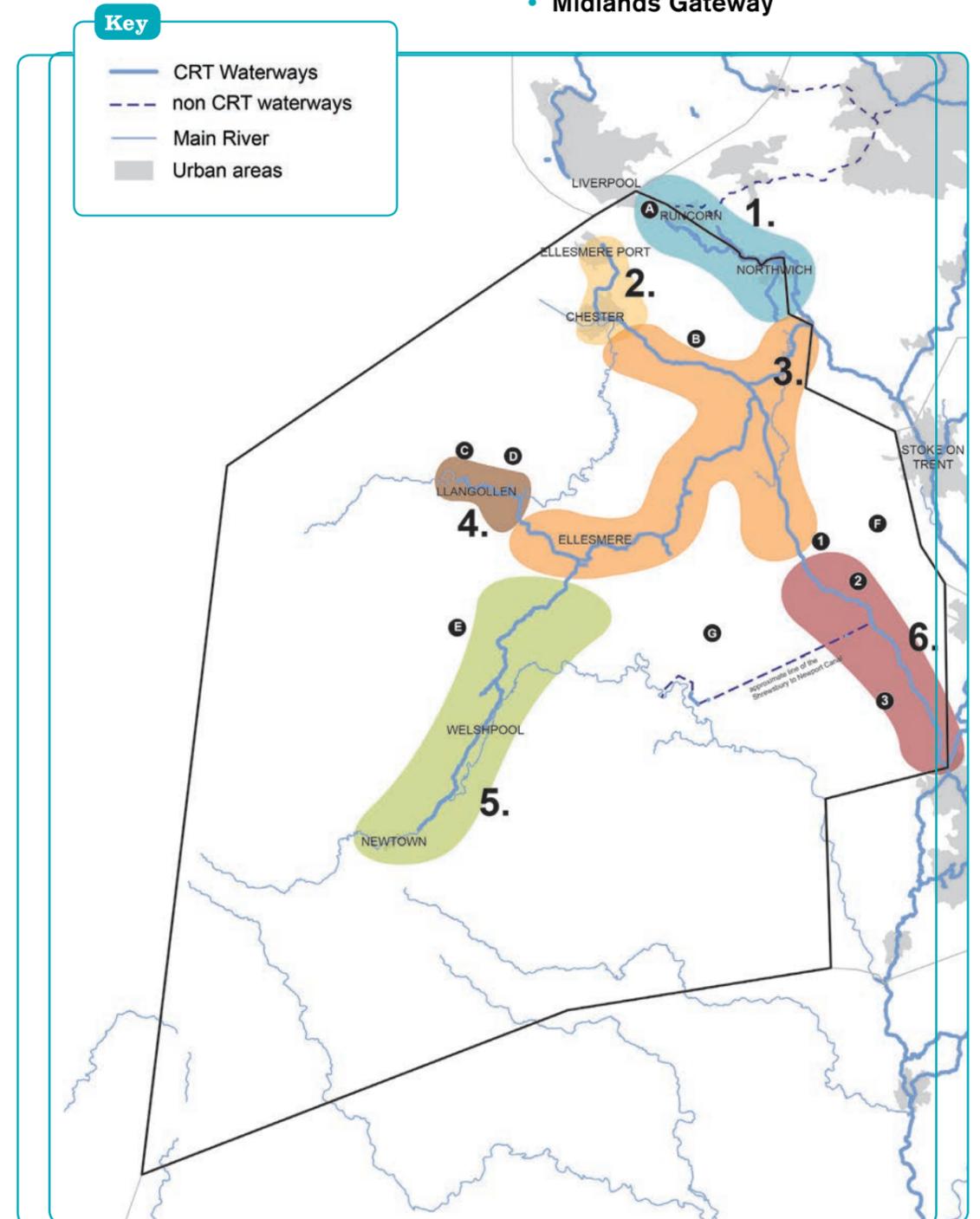
In all our work we are keen to demonstrate and measure the multiple benefits that the waterways offer now and could bring in the future. Our objectives and activities offer a flavour of what is possible and practicable to improve well being and transform lives in our area.



Character Map

The North Wales & Borders Waterway brings together some of the most rural counties in England and Wales. For the purpose of this plan the waterways have been divided into six key character areas:

- Weaver Navigation
- Chester to Ellesmere Port
- The Rural Centre
- The World Heritage site and
- The Western Llangollen Canal
- Montgomery Canal
- Midlands Gateway



© Crown copyright and database rights, 2014, Ordnance Survey 100022432.
 © Next Perspectives, 2014. Contains Royal Mail data, © Royal Mail copyright and database right, 2014. Contains National Statistics data, © Crown copyright and database right, 2014.

1. Weaver Navigation

Characteristics and Features

The Weaver Navigation links the Cheshire towns of Winsford, Northwich and Frodsham and connects with the Trent & Mersey Canal via the iconic Anderton Boat Lift passing through both rural and industrial landscapes.

The navigation is classified as a commercial waterway and was principally used to carry freight including salt from the saltworks at Winsford and chemicals from the Winnington site.

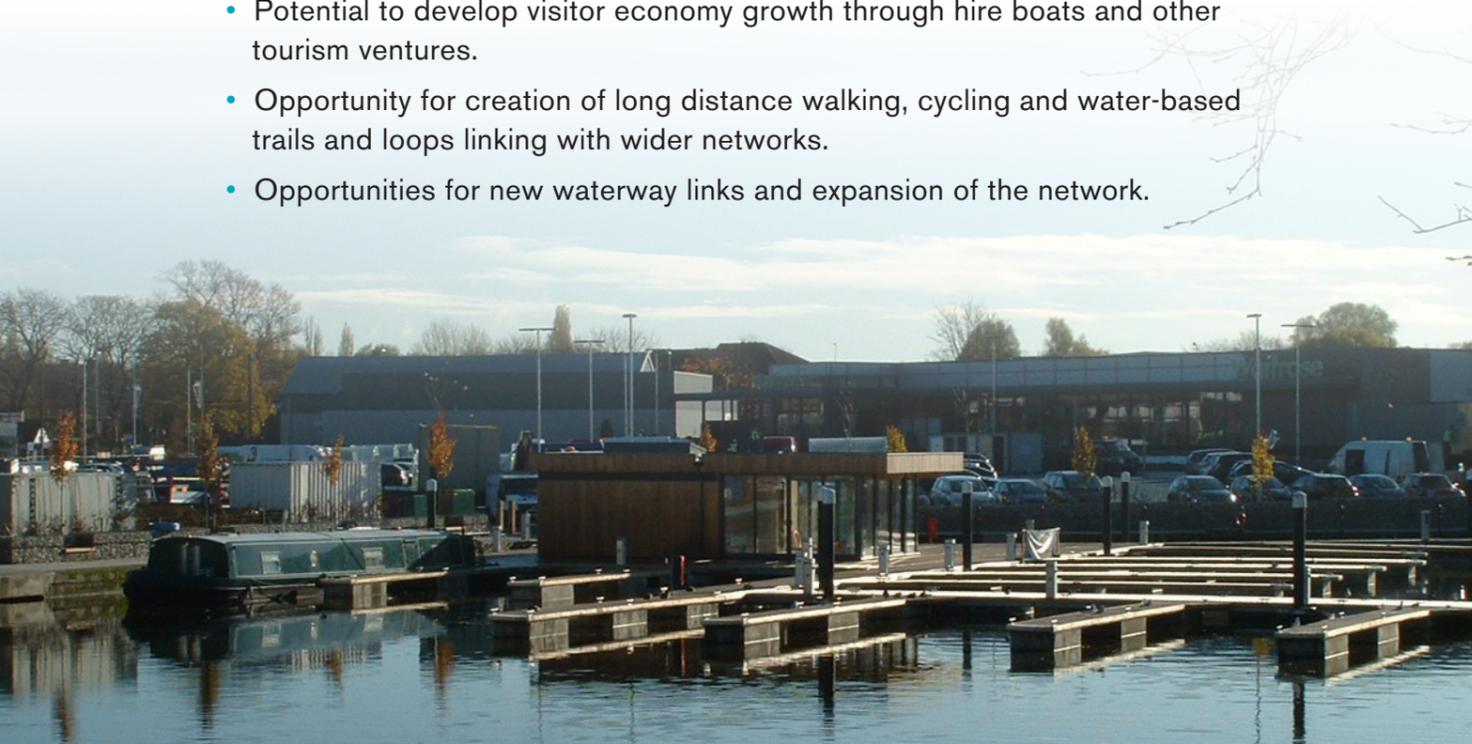
The history of the navigation stretches back to the 16th Century and much of the story is told at the visitor centre at Anderton Boat Lift, sometimes called the Cathedral of the Canals, a working boat lift and scheduled ancient monument. The river connects with both the Trent & Mersey Canal and the Mersey estuary via the Manchester Ship Canal.

A legacy of the salt and chemical industry is the diversity of wildlife and habitats found today along the navigation on former industrial sites.

The future for the navigation as a leisure waterway is bright with new developments in Northwich and Winsford focussing on the benefits of the water frontages.

Strengths, Opportunities and Big Ideas

- Anderton Boat Lift attracts over 100,000 visitors per annum.
- Enhanced development of waterside frontage at Northwich.
- Working with partners to deliver the Saltscape Landscape Partnership project. To enhance the unique collection of industrial heritage and wildlife habitats.
- Potential for more boat traffic through improved facilities and moorings e.g. Winsford Flashes.
- Potential to develop visitor economy growth through hire boats and other tourism ventures.
- Opportunity for creation of long distance walking, cycling and water-based trails and loops linking with wider networks.
- Opportunities for new waterway links and expansion of the network.



2. Chester to Ellesmere Port

Characteristics and Features

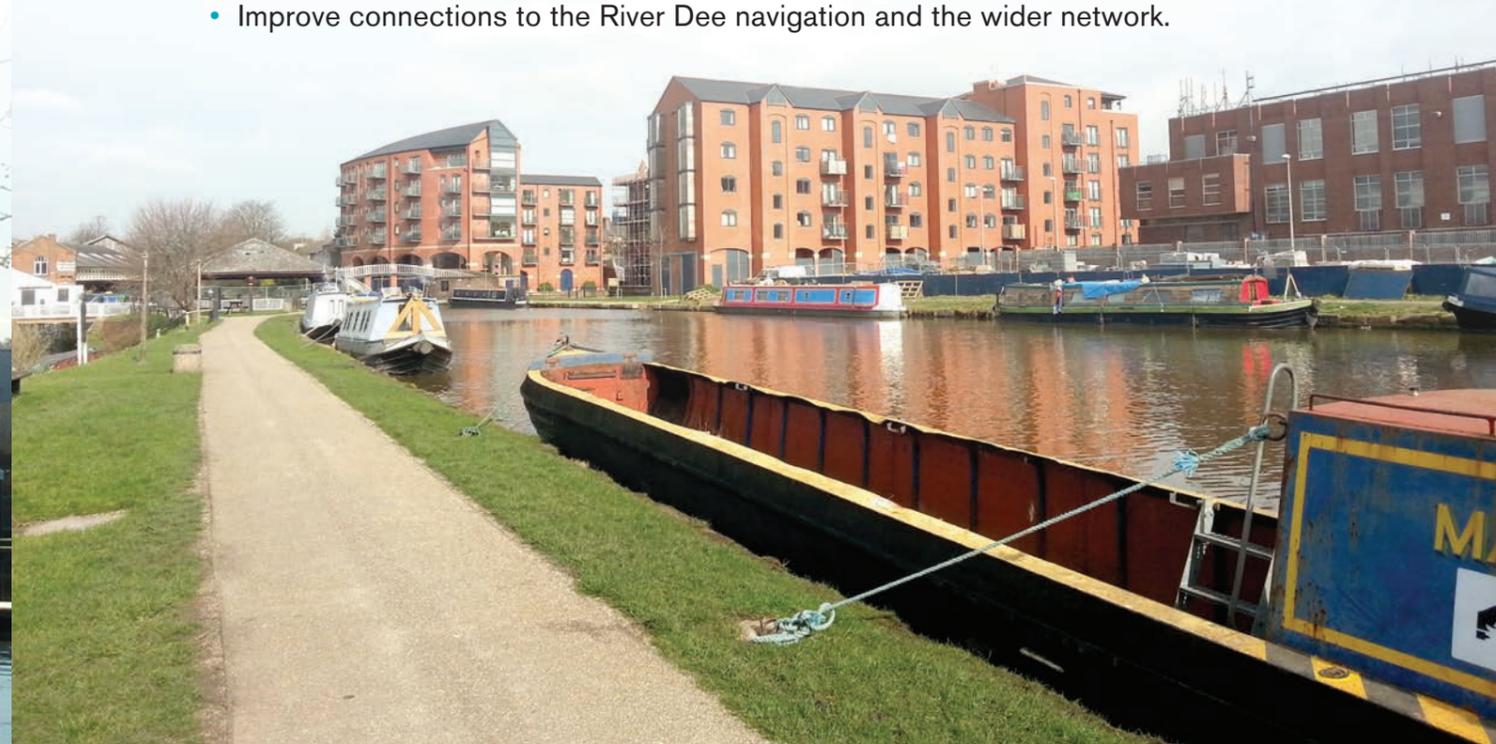
One of the early canals which was completed in the 1790s, the most northerly eight miles of the Shropshire Union Canal connects the historic city of Chester with Ellesmere Port, and the Manchester Ship Canal. The Dee Branch, in Chester, was originally constructed from this main line and connects the canal with the navigable River Dee.

This northern end of the canal currently has low boating numbers and has the potential for more boating traffic. The towpath is a popular pedestrian and commuter route both within Chester and between the two urban centres and links to key local attractions including the National Waterways Museum and Chester Zoo.

Tower Wharf, in Chester, now the focus of waterside regeneration, was also an important boat building centre. Taylors Boat Yard still operates and is perhaps the finest example of a traditional boatyard remaining on the canal system.

Strengths, Opportunities and Big Ideas

- Further promotion and development of links with key local attractions.
- Opportunity to engage communities in the corridor including canal adoptions.
- Development opportunity with Ellesmere Port waterfront to improve the corridor.
- Improve signage and interpretation with an overall strategy and promotion of key sites along the corridor to increase navigation and towpath use.
- Opportunity to integrate the waterways in Chester in partnership with Chester Renaissance through the 'Chester Waterways Strategy' for the city.
- Improve connections to the River Dee navigation and the wider network.





4. The World Heritage Site and the Western Llangollen Canal

Characteristics and Features

The World Heritage Site (WHS) is of regional, national and international importance and attracts visitors both from the UK and overseas. Over 200,000 visits are made each year to the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct itself. The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument by Cadw and English Heritage and the 11 mile corridor around it was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2009.

As well as its important designation this part of the network is also beautiful with stunning scenery and is exceptionally popular for boating, angling, cycling and walking. The Llangollen Canal built between 1795 and 1808 by Thomas Telford and William Jessop connects three counties and is an outstanding piece of industrial and engineering heritage.

The landscape value of the site is recognised in the extension of the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to include the Dee Valley as far as Chirk.

Strengths, Opportunities and Big Ideas

- Managing and enhancing the welcome and quality of experience for the number of visitors arriving by either boat, on foot or by bike.
- Improving awareness and access to the WHS as a whole with the development of a cohesive offer including signage and improved visitor facilities.
- Opportunity to create a visitor destination around Llangollen, Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Chirk with the development of a Visitor Centre with links to other museums and attractions.
- With partners develop a gateway to North Wales and maximise on the impressive landscape and heritage of the area.



3. The Rural Centre

Characteristics and Features

The popular and well used canals of rural Cheshire and Shropshire connect many rural communities and play a vital role in supporting local economies to become more vibrant. Amongst the features are the attractive market towns and villages including Ellesmere, Whitchurch, Audlem and Market Drayton and larger towns of Middlewich and Nantwich.

The Waterway operational Yard at Ellesmere (a grade II listed site) with its recently refurbished forge is a great example of industrial heritage whilst still performing a vital function in the operation of the canal network today it is a rare example of an unspoilt canal scene.

The main line Shropshire Union Canal was built as the Chester Canal to Nantwich in the 1770s. The subsequent southern section to Wolverhampton was the last narrow trunk canal to be built in England and was completed in 1835.

Strengths, Opportunities and Big Ideas

- Enthusiastic groups of local canal volunteers – a strong foundation on which to grow community pride in their canals.
- A green corridor connecting communities with places of interest and linking many long distance routes including Shropshire Way.
- Supporting local economies through tourism. In conjunction with town and parish councils to create focal points and develop heritage opportunities.
- Linking the canal with the rich landscape of the (Nature Improvement Area) of the Meres and Mosses of the Marches.



5. Montgomery Canal

Characteristics and Features

The beautiful Montgomery Canal, is a 56km long rural canal, only partly navigable, with a high quality natural and built heritage in both Wales and England. It is important for its aquatic plants, and it is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in England and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) in Wales.

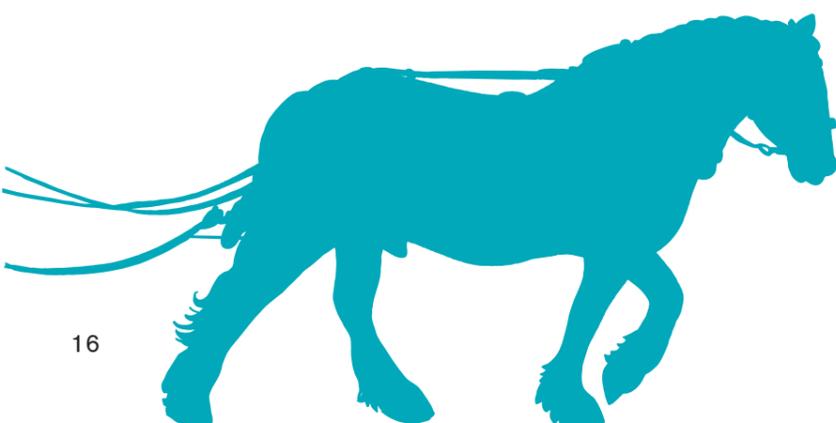
The canal stretches from its junction with the Llangollen Canal at Lower Frankton, near Ellesmere in Shropshire to Freestone Lock near Newtown its original terminus. And was developed in the early 19th century primarily to supply the areas agricultural land with lime and general materials. Today it is home to the largest UK population of floating water plantain a rare aquatic plant and grass wrack pondweed.

Over the last 40 years more than half of the Montgomery Canal has been partly restored to navigation and there is on-going support in England and Wales amongst canal societies, public bodies and trusts to complete this work.

The Montgomery Canal Partnership members have signed up to a Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) – a framework for taking forward the restoration of the canal, whilst balancing it with the requirements specific to the habitat designations.

Strengths, Opportunities and Big Ideas

- Continue strong partnerships with other agencies and active volunteer and community groups to secure the future maintenance required to protect the navigation and SSSI and SAC.
- Continue the phased restoration of the canal, including the creation of new nature reserves. The total which has been estimated at £40 million.
- Continue towpath improvements building on the £1M investment from Welsh Government in recent years, linking the canal to many long distance and short walking and cycling routes.
- Work with partners to realise the potential for the canal to become Wales premier flat water paddling location.
- Encourage appropriate commercial development along the canal in line with the CMS.



6. Midlands Gateway

Characteristics and Features

This predominantly rural section of the Shropshire Union Canal connects the rural counties of Shropshire and Staffordshire with the canal network of the West Midlands at Autherley Junction, Wolverhampton on the Staffordshire and Worcester Canal.

The canal passes through some very attractive and peaceful countryside and links together the many historic villages and hamlets found along its length. The deep cuttings and embankments provide a contrasting experience to that found on the remainder of the network and are havens for wildlife.

The southern section of the main line was the last trunk narrow canal route to be built in England. It was not completed until 1835 and it was the last civil engineering achievement of Thomas Telford who did not live to see its completion.

The extensive engineering works on this canal allowed the canal to traverse two watersheds without summit levels which would have been difficult to supply the canal with water. Consequently, fewer locks were required and there is only one lock in the 25 mile stretch from Tyrley to Autherley Junction.

The Shrewsbury & Newport Canal starting at Norbury Junction is the focus of an active restoration initiative by local groups.

Strengths, Opportunities and Big Ideas

- Opportunity to connect and engage with adjoining communities to encourage adoption and improve the facilities.
- Improve towpath condition throughout this section to enable links into local footpaths and trails.
- Opportunity to develop educational links based on the exceptional engineering and natural features.
- Support restoration initiatives with canal expertise and sharing best practice.



Achieving our objectives



We have produced a plan to make sure that our waterways are used and developed in a way that has maximum benefit for our local people, places and local economies.

The following show our key themes and a small selection of the ways in which our objectives can be achieved.



For People

- we want to improve social and community well being by making waterways welcoming and accessible to all.

We aim to encourage a strong physical and emotional connection leading to a sense of pride and ownership.

We want to make visits to our museums and attractions interesting, exciting, educational, informative and entertaining. We intend to generate new income streams through diversification and enterprise, and by enhancing existing revenue streams through a much-improved retail and catering offer, better marketing and closer cost control. It's also very important to us that we engage with supporters, friends, volunteers and colleagues of the Trust, and promote the museums as a 'front door' to recruit Friends for the Trust.

We'll also increase partnership work and engagement with various policy and decision makers, funding bodies and education providers to access potential funding and other forms of investment and support. Throughout, we want to work very closely with our volunteers, who are so important to us, to enhance the visitor experience.

- Building, strengthening and broadening community engagement and partnership working.
- Growing and widening volunteering.
- Encouraging positive and responsible behaviour towards the waterways.
- Demonstrating the relevance and value of the waterways.
- Encouraging people to use the waterways as a 'natural health' service.

Example Activity

We will continue to build on the success of our community adoptions. We will promote and establish a greater sense of local ownership by enabling community and voluntary groups to work with us in caring for their local waterway and for all involved to have some fun.



For Prosperity

– we want to improve the economic well being of local communities on or beside their local waterways.

- Improve the waterways and their environs.
- Encourage regeneration along the waterways.
- Raise aspirations and the skills of the local people to improve employability.
- Ensure effective management of water resources.
- Support sustainable restoration to expand the network.
- Contribute to the prosperity and diversity of waterway businesses.

Example Activity

Develop Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site as a gateway to North Wales by working with partners to develop and implement a plan to realise its potential as a key visitor destination, increase visitor numbers, improve the visitor experience and develop new tourism businesses.

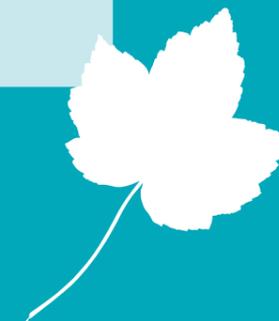
For Places

– we want to improve, conserve and enhance the distinctive heritage and environmental qualities of waterways so that they become welcoming and interesting places for all to enjoy.

- Maintaining and enhancing the waterways as safe, good quality and a lively place for all.
- Conserving, promoting and interpreting the industrial landscape and cultural heritage.
- Improving the natural environment and biodiversity on and around the waterways.
- Promoting innovative developments which respect and enhance the waterway corridors.

Example Activity

Support the Trust's national priorities including hedgerow restoration and linking of riparian habitats. the hedgerows found along the nation's canal are vital refuges for many species as they provide shelter, food and connections to other canal-side habitats.



The North Wales and Borders Partnership has developed an action plan for this area in consultation with our interest groups, partners and stakeholders. We have ambition and enthusiasm to make a positive difference and we are keen to work with you or your organisation to make improvements to our network.

Why not get involved with the North Wales and Borders Waterway Partnership?



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

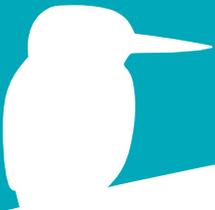
Get in touch with us at:

enquiries.northwalesborders@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Get involved Become a friend

There are many ways you can make a difference to your local canal or river.

You could join our Friendship scheme by giving a monthly donation. Or you could simply make a one-off donation and help ensure that our inland waterways remain a valued part of our local landscapes now and forever.



Get in Touch

North Wales & Borders Waterway Partnership

Canal & River Trust
Navigation Road
Northwich CW8 1BH

National Office

Canal & River Trust
First Floor North
Station House
500 Elder Gate
Milton Keynes MK9 1BB

Glandŵr Cymru

The Canal & River Trust in Wales
The Wharf
Govilon
Abergavenny
Monmouthshire NP7 9NY

Check our noticeboard for updates:

canalrivertrust.org.uk/north-wales-and-bordersboard
Please advise for N. Wales & Borders



/canalrivertrust



@canalrivertrust

**FSC
LOGO
GOES
HERE**



**Canal &
River Trust**