



LONDON QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to the British Waterways London Newsletter, keeping you informed of key waterway issues in the capital and of activities on the 100 miles of canals, rivers and docks in our care.



Artist's impression of a converted hopper



HUW IRRANCA-DAVIES New Waterways Minister

My first role as Waterways Minister was to attend a Parliamentary reception to mark the 40th anniversary of legislation that kick-started the leisure revolution on Britain's canals. I couldn't help but be impressed by both the strength of support that the waterways have among stakeholders and colleagues, and by the transformation of the network in recent years.

Our canals and rivers are used and enjoyed by more people than ever before, bringing benefits to millions across the country. They have enjoyed a decade of record investment from Government, from the private sector and from third parties such as RDAs and the lottery. But clearly funding for the waterways will be challenging in the next few years and I look forward to working with British Waterways to help them establish a sustainable strategy to take the waterways into their next 200 years.

PEOPLE DIG CANALS

British Waterways London has signed up to the Mayor of London's Capital Growth project, identifying suitable pockets of land along London's waterways that British Waterways or others might not be using, and matching them up with community groups and schools looking to grow their own food.

British Waterways is also looking into giving a new lease of life to retired workboats, converting them into floating vegetable gardens that could provide growing opportunities in even the most built-up of areas.

British Waterways' Chairman, Tony Hales, said: "If these schemes are successful then there is no reason why we couldn't repeat them elsewhere along the 2,000 miles of canals and rivers in our care as part of a wider initiative to encourage communities to make greater use of their waterways."



FIRST CUT IS THE DEEPEST

British Waterways, the Environment Agency and the Olympic Delivery Authority have joined forces to tackle the problem of poor water quality on the River Lee Navigation by undertaking a three month programme of dredging works.

Dredging will also open up the waterways which run through the Olympic Park, enabling freight barges to carry construction materials during the build up to the Games, and improving access for leisure boats and waterbuses during and after the 2012.

The c.£5 million programme is being managed by British Waterways and will remove up to 16,000m³ of polluted silt. Further works are required to ensure the water quality of the river continues to improve, including long-term improvements at Deephams Sewage Treatment Works to reduce sewage and silt discharges.

GREEN TRANSPORT



British Waterways and Transport for London have teamed up to take forward opportunities for more sustainable transport on the capital's waterways, with a towpath ranger appointed to improve shared use of the towpaths and the creation of a new post of sustainable transport manager to develop commercial freight and passenger boating opportunities.

"We have built a great working relationship with TfL over the last few years," says BW London's Simon Bamford, "And we have shared objectives for finding green solutions to using our waterways. These new appointments will help us improve the safe use of our towpaths as well as turning some good ideas for green boating into practical action."

YEAR OF THE BEE



This year British Waterways' wildlife survey has a special focus on endangered native bumblebees, with support from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust.

Three of Britain's 25 native species of bumblebee are now nationally extinct and a further six species have been identified by the Government as being at crisis point. With the rapid destruction of bee-friendly habitats, canals and river banks have become an important home to a variety of wild flowers and native plants which bumblebees rely on to survive.

British Waterways' ecologists and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust will use the records of sightings to build up a comprehensive picture of which species are doing well and which ones need more support.

To download a wildlife survey guide, visit waterscape.com/wildlife

COOL CANALS

British Waterways and GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) have unveiled an innovative energy saving scheme at the pharmaceutical giant's canal-side global headquarters in West London. The new green initiative uses canal water and heat exchange technology to provide a more sustainable alternative to traditional air conditioning - with a target of reducing GSK's head office carbon dioxide emissions by 920 tonnes per annum and lowering its energy bills.

British Waterways estimates that a further 1,000 waterside businesses nationwide could follow the company's lead by using canal water for heating or cooling. This would result in annual energy savings of £100m and reductions in carbon dioxide emissions of approximately one million tonnes - the equivalent to some 400,000 family sized cars being taken off the roads. The income generated from the initiative will be reinvested into looking after the nation's canal network.

YOURS TO ENJOY

Following the success of last year's consumer marketing campaign, 'Yours to enjoy', British Waterways London is expanding the campaign, targeting three locations across the capital.

Activity will be focussed on the East London 'loop' from Mile End to Limehouse and the lower River Lee Navigation, central London from Little Venice/Paddington to Camden and, new for 2009, Brentford to Hanwell on the Grand Union Canal.

Targeted door drops inviting local residents to discover what's in their area, combined with a variety of BW led and third party events along the waterways will aim to increase the number of visitors to London's canals and rivers during summer 2009. For more information visit waterscape.com/yourstoenjoy.

If you have any views on the topics raised in this newsletter, or would like to discuss British Waterways' work in London, then please contact Ed Fox, head of communications, on 020 7985 7226 or edward.fox@britishwaterways.co.uk. You can also visit our website at www.britishwaterways.co.uk.

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