

Appendix 2. Basingstoke Canal Facts and Figures

Each Year :

- An estimated 300,000 regular users contributing to over 1,000,000 visits/year. These figures are derived from data gathered from pedestrian and cycle counters, boat licence data base, user groups such as reported events e.g. cycling and running competitions.
- 7,000 anglers use the canal on a regular basis who are members of the Angling Clubs affiliated to the Basingstoke Canal Angling Association who organise competition matches.
- 17,000 people take a trip on the canal in an average year, this data is derived from boat licence data base, commercial operations on the canal and rallies organised by the boat clubs and the canal society.
- 4,000 canoeists use the canal, three major canoe clubs are in existence, one based at the Canal Centre in Mytchett that organises events throughout the year.
- Three community boats provide facilities for several hundred visitors with special needs and 700 visitors from 'hard to reach' groups. Accessible Boating, Madame Butterfly, Swingbridge (Surrey Care Trust) and the John Pinkerton are all registered charities providing this service.
- £69,330 of volunteer contribution to the canal (2009) as reported by Peter Redway MBE, Chairmen of the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society in his recent report to the JMC.
- Rich wildlife and landscape with a wider variety of aquatic plants than any other water body in Great Britain as recorded by Natural England and designated as a SSSI.
- Major economic benefit of up to £5 million benefit to the local economy using National models (IWA – Harrison 1999) together with data gathered from local authorities whose boroughs and districts the canal runs through and who contribute annual funding. Visitors and Users Spend is derived from the Inland Waterways Association (Restoration Handbook, Harrison. 1999) give the following figures for visitor spend, based on 1996 prices:

Private Boats	£3,100 per boat/ p.a.
Hire Boats	£23,000 pb/p.a.
Trip Boats	£27,500 pb/pa
Anglers	£3.09 per visit
Informal Visitors	£3.53 per visit

Based on the Canal's 5 hire boats and 4 trip boats and approx 100 resident private boats we arrive at a figure of £535,000 plus the spend of the 200 or so visiting boats per annum. The 1million informal visits will generate approximately £3,500,000 . Meanwhile the 7000 regular anglers, assuming just 6 visits per year, plus the 2,500 match visitors will have spent approx £130,000.

Allowing a modest 25% for inflation since 1996, plus unaccounted spend from visiting boats, an estimate of £5,000,000 per year input to the local economy from

the Canal's visitors could be made. However there are many variables and these figures should be used cautiously.

Possession of the Canal under a Compulsory Purchase Order was obtained by Surrey County Council and Hampshire County Council in 1974 and restoration work started using large numbers of volunteers and County staff on clearing the towpath to make it available for walkers and then clearing the channel of fallen trees and most obstructions, ready for dredging to commence. Most of the major engineering works were on the Surrey half of the Canal which included the restoration of twenty-eight locks.