

B&MK Waterway Trust: Business Plan 2007-2009

March 2007

Long term vision and strategy

The Trust is a charity and company limited by guarantee, designed to “ promote and assist in the provision and maintenance of a new waterway and associated facilities and structures connecting the Grand Union Canal at Milton Keynes to the River Great Ouse at Bedford, for the benefit of local inhabitants and visitors.”

The Waterway will deliver recreational, leisure, economic, environmental and ‘quality of life’ benefits to inhabitants and visitors.

The Trust sees its prime role as an *enabler*, maximising partner, volunteer and community involvement in the development of a Waterway for All that is a source of pride now and for generations to come.

The Trust’s overall goals are to

- establish a line for the Waterway in all relevant local, regional and national plans
- create agreed design standards
- develop a sustainable plan for the long term future of the Waterway
- work with partners to construct the Waterway small sections over an extended timescale, as opportunities and funding become available
- pass the maintenance of the Waterway to partner/s with relevant expertise
- promote public and volunteer involvement in planning, design, construction, maintenance and long term development of the Waterway.

Our 2 year plan: where we want to be by March 2009

Our Quarterly Activity Plan (see separate table) for the two years April 2007-9 is designed to put the Waterway project on a sound footing for a likely 20-year development period.

Our seven key targets to achieve by March 2009 are set out below.

1 Fundraise to complete a professional Core Project Office, so that we have a core team (Project Manager, Project Officer, with Fundraising and Development consultants) to manage the day to day work of the Trust.

2 Strengthen Business Planning & Review, so that we have the best possible leadership from our Board, recognising the role of Trust Director as honorary and primarily non-executive. We need to ensure that Directors, Core Project Office, Partners, and Volunteers, are all focused on the same key goals and risks, to maximise chances of success.

3 Get the line of the Waterway in all relevant plans with support at local, regional and national levels, so that it is taken into account in all future green infrastructure decision-making in both Western and Eastern areas.

4 Prevent hindrances/maximise opportunities on an ongoing basis by close monitoring and liaison with all landowners and bodies involved in development along the whole route, and engaging in carefully managed 'blue skies' consultancy to help create opportunity.

5 Complete the MK Waterway Park bid (7km), working with partners in MK; and with what funding is available, start the design phase of this project.

6 Plan the 'Forest Centre to Bedford' (5.5km) section of the Waterway as part of the County 'green corridor' working with partners in the East; and design a first section linking the Centre to Berry Farm,.

7 Improve ongoing communications with partners, members and the public at large. This continues to be a key responsibility for our volunteers, who raise the funds required for it with the assistance of our Core Office.

Fundraising to achieve these targets

There are four key areas of initial fundraising to be addressed by the Trust and its Partners:

£60K pa minimum urgently to be found to support the Core Office to March 2009 and thereafter 125K pa (target 1)

Up to £350K in cash/kind to support preliminary studies for the Waterway as part of the green corridor, and the demonstration section (target 6)

Up to £40m to be found from BIG, enabling development, fundraising by Partners and public sponsorship organised by the Trust, for the Milton Keynes Waterway Park (target 5).

Up to £3m to be found through major bids to fund the first Eastern project and pay for Eastern works now to avoid hindrances later (targets 4 and 6).

Plus additional fundraising for the MK Waterway Park may be required, depending on the outcome of the current BIG Lottery bid.

Managing risk

These targets have been chosen to mitigate the major risks to the project, which can be summarised as

- not having appropriate resource within the Trust and its Partners to maintain and increase project momentum (targets 1 & 2)
- not being not taken into consideration in local development, so that hindrances occur and enabling development opportunities are lost (3 & 4)
- losing credibility with the public/partners because we plan but don't build (5 & 6)
- failing to maintain our distinctive community-driven impetus for the project (7)
- failing to raise sufficient funds to make a start (all targets).