

Canal & River Trust: Worksop towpath Canal & River Trust

The Canal & River Trust is one of the largest charities in the UK, responsible for 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales. They believe that the waterway network is a national treasure and they aim to ensure that it is protected forever.

In addition to maintaining the canals and rivers, the Trust is also responsible for the network of bridges, embankments, towpaths, aqueducts, docks and reservoirs that accompany them, including the Chesterfield Canal towpath.

In January 2011 the Trust applied for ERDF funding to update almost 1.5km of the towpath between The Lock Keeper pub and Worksop town centre, including providing an all weather surface, a shared use path, measures to encourage cycle calming and combat illegal towpath usage, and minor hedgerow repairs.

The charity's first expression of interest for

funding was submitted to ERDF in May 2011, with their application completed in September 2011 and the contract signed off in October 2012. The work on the project began in January 2013 with the redeveloped towpath officially opened on 21 June 2013.

The final cost of the project, which had an ERDF intervention rate of 57.3 percent, was £194,000 with match funding received from the Veolia Environmental Trust, Nottinghamshire County Council and the Trust itself, who underwrote the time and risk of the project.

Lucie Hoelmer, Enterprise Manager at the Trust, advised the following steps to delivering a successful ERDF project:

- Ensure all funding is secure before the project starts;
- Have a budget in place if you overspend or the work takes longer than anticipated;
- Pay attention to the detail at the planning stage; and
- Make sure all of your organisation,



Picture includes Councillor Sybil Fielding, Derek Goodenough and Lizzie Thompson of Veolia Environmental trust, Danny Brennan of Canal & River Trust, John Wilkinson of Nottinghamshire County Council, and Robin Stonebridge of Chesterfield Canal Trust

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including staff, trustees and volunteers are on board.

For organisations that have been successful in obtaining ERDF funding, Lucie recommended that they:

- Maintain a good audit trail;
- Remember to work with what you have;
- Take responsibility to ensure you have met the ERDF requirements as the risk lies with your organisation if something goes wrong; and
- Remember that the ERDF contract officers are on your side and are there at the end of a telephone to help you through the process.

The project has benefited local people of all ages and abilities, as well as the major employers in Worksop town centre and its nearby retail park whose employees and customers have gained easier access to them via the safe and clean alternative route.

The towpath, which is accessible for walker, cyclists and disabled visitors, has also led to reduced car usage in the local area, an increase in exercise, improvement in the look of the area and increased tourism.



Before

“The Chesterfield Canal is a fantastic green corridor running right into the heart of Worksop and this project will help to make life just a little bit easier for those that use it.”

Lucie Hoelmer, Enterprise Manager at the Canal & River Trust

The Trust is now in the process of applying for further ERDF funding to improve the towpath between Worksop and Manton, which has had lots of problems with vandalism. If their bid via the ERDF Challenge Fund in spring 2013 is successful, this work will also complete the last 500 metres of the National Cycle Route from Shireoaks to Manton.

The Trust, who used an external organisation to manage their tender process, will also be looking to apply for ERDF funding during the 2014/20 programme.

For further information on the Canal & River Trust visit <http://canalrivertrust.org.uk>.



After