

EA Recreation + Navigation
Box 1

Living water

a showcase of waterside



erways

rejuvenation projects



ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY



“Everything has its beauty but not everyone sees it” Confucius



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EA - Recreation - Now

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Introduction

There was a time when rivers were central to many parts of our lives – eating, drinking, travelling, transporting goods, washing. And of course disposal – rivers were one of the easiest ways to get rid of our waste. In many parts of the country they became nothing more than industrial drains. They were eyesores, hazards. We turned away from them, or covered them up.

This is changing. Britain's rivers are the cleanest and healthiest they've been in two centuries. And we're turning back towards them. Increasingly we want to live by them, fish in them, take boats out on them.

The Environment Agency has been helping this rejuvenation. We started by cleaning up inland and coastal waters, and strengthening flood defences. Now we're taking this a step further. Working with communities and dozens of different organisations, we're helping transform waterside environments, for the benefit of all.

Environmental problems can become exciting opportunities for regeneration. A deprived urban area's neglected drainage channel can be turned into a gently meandering stream with landscaped banks. A series of flood defence walls built to protect a town centre can be the catalyst for developing a riverside commercial sector. A new lock can enable boaters to safely navigate stretches of waterway that have never been used before and bring fresh income to local businesses.

This booklet showcases a handful of such waterside rejuvenation projects that the Environment Agency has been, or is currently involved with. All of them have one aim in common – to make waterways central to our lives again.



1. Gainsborough flood defences

Restoring the river to the heart of the community

A multi-million pound flood defence scheme became the perfect opportunity to transform a run-down waterside area





“The waterside area has been given a new lease of life – features include outdoor sculptures and a riverside promenade, already popular with local people”

Gainsborough – the facts and figures

The scheme

Over 800 metres of new flood defences have been built on the River Trent in the centre of Gainsborough. This became the catalyst for transforming a neglected waterside area.

The costs

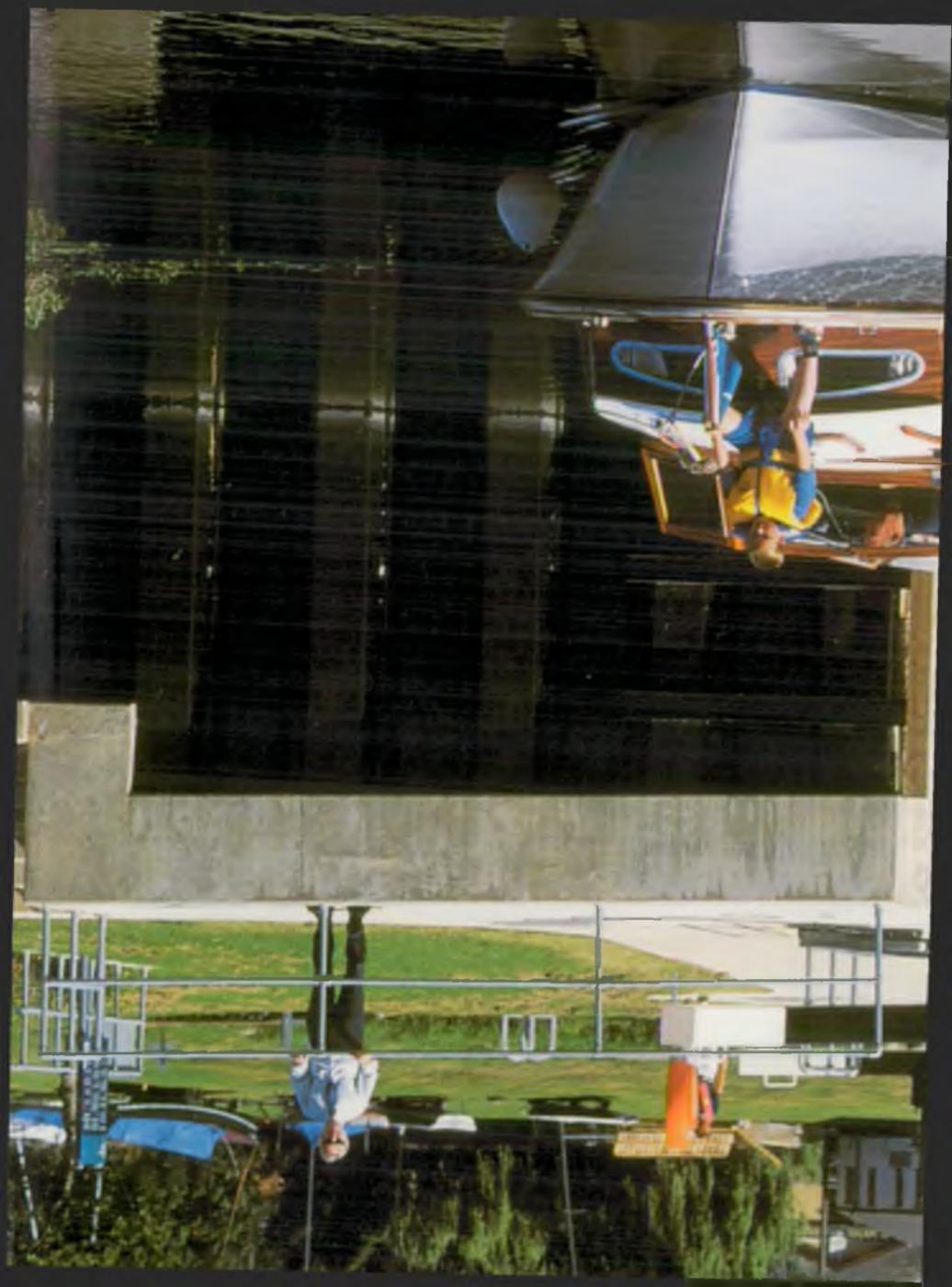
£16 million – the Environment Agency contributed £9 million, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF, now DEFRA) £5 million, and other partners £2 million.

The benefits

- The new defences protect 400 properties – just weeks after the scheme was completed in autumn 2000, river levels were their highest in 45 years, but no flooding occurred
- The waterside area has been given a new lease of life – features include outdoor sculptures and a riverside promenade, already popular with local people
- The Victorian character of the local architecture has been preserved

The partners

Environment Agency, Gainsborough Regeneration, West Lindsey District Council, Lincolnshire County Council, East Midlands Development Agency, Lincolnshire TEC, HSBC

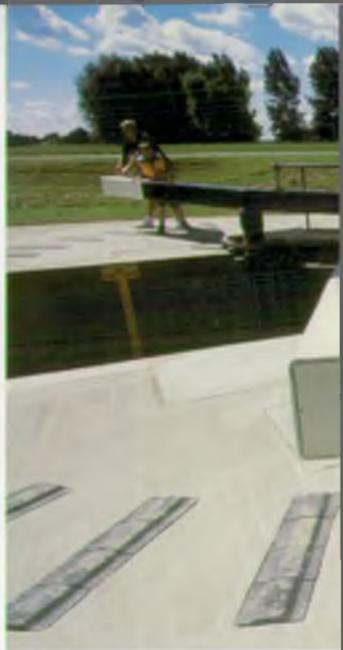




2. Denver Lock

Opening up the Ouse's waterways to new boaters

Denver Lock has opened up the first new navigable waterway in East Anglia for 50 years, enabling boaters much safer access to historic towns and villages in Norfolk





“The new waterway provides safe access to historic towns and villages such as Kings Lynn and Downham Market – strong tides on the river made this very difficult in the past”



The Relief Channel

1 The Relief Channel was built in 1997 to provide a safe and reliable route for boats to Kings Lynn and Downham Market. It was built to bypass the old locks and weirs on the Great Ouse River, which were often closed during low tide.

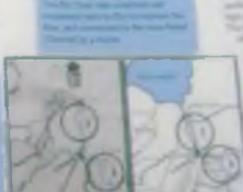
2 The Relief Channel is a 2.5 km long waterway that provides a safe and reliable route for boats to Kings Lynn and Downham Market. It was built to bypass the old locks and weirs on the Great Ouse River, which were often closed during low tide.



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Denver Lock – the facts and figures

The scheme

Completed in July 2001, the new lock has been built to provide access from the Ely Ouse River to the 17km-long Relief Channel. Three new moorings have been provided on this channel, existing moorings on the Ely Ouse have been refurbished, and a bridge has been built to help access to the site.

The costs

£1.25 million – the Environment Agency contributed £680,000 and the Government Office for the Eastern Region (GO-East), administering EU (Objective 5b) funds, contributed £570,000.

The benefits

- The lock will attract an estimated 2,600 extra boats per annum, and opens up the first new navigable waterway in East Anglia for 50 years
- The new waterway provides safe access to historic towns and villages such as Kings Lynn, Stowbridge and Downham Market – strong tides on the river made this very difficult in the past
- The Chamber of Trade & Commerce in Downham Market is reporting an increase in local trade only a few weeks after the lock opened
- The lock offers parking facilities and a picnic area

The partners

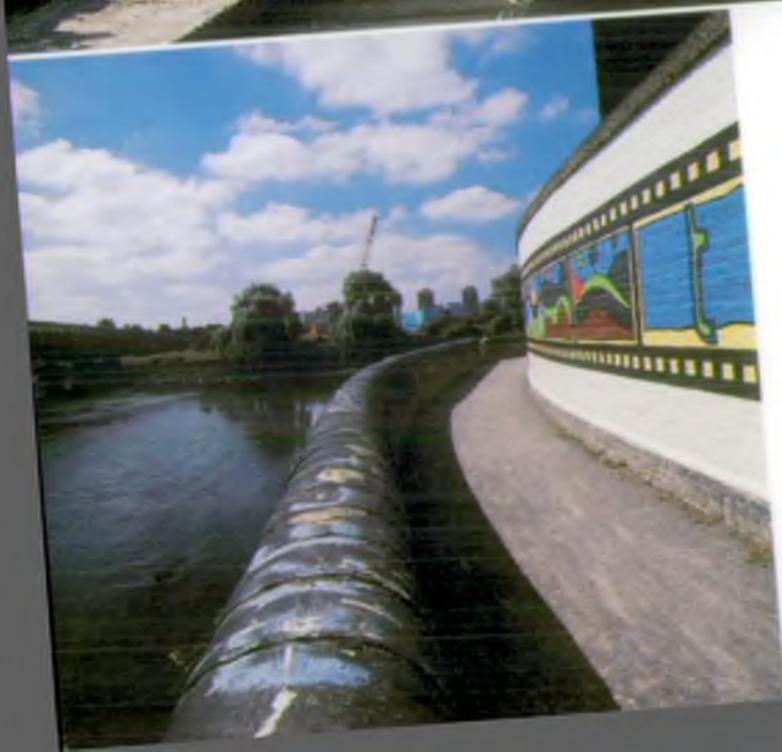
Environment Agency, GO-East and the Fens Waterways Regeneration Project partnership, consisting of the Fens Tourism Group, Environment Agency and Middle Level Commissioners



3. London's Waterway Partnership

Enhancing some of the city's most deprived areas

North London communities who have put up with dirty rivers and derelict land for decades are being closely involved in a host of local environmental improvements





“A healthier environment and the attraction of new investment means an improved quality of life for local communities”



London's waterways – the facts and figures

The schemes

Through London's Waterway Partnership (LWP), rivers and canals are being improved and waterside sites redeveloped throughout London. The Environment Agency has been involved in pollution control, re-modelling river channels, habitat improvement, landscaping and public artwork projects.

The costs

LWP's overall seven-year programme, now in its fifth year, will cost £25 million – the Environment Agency has contributed £500,000 so far, and will continue to make a significant contribution over the coming years.

The benefits

- A healthier environment and the attraction of new investment means an improved quality of life for local communities
- The participation of local schools and organisations such as the Lower Lea Project gives residents a greater sense of involvement in the initiatives
- Reductions in pollution and increases in biodiversity, e.g. aquatic and bird life

The partners

LWP – British Waterways, Environment Agency, Groundwork Foundation, Lea Valley Regional Park Authority, London Tourist Board, Thames Water, 15 London boroughs, and a wide range of other private, voluntary, and public sector organisations.

LWP's vision is that London's waterway network will become a focus for economic and environmental regeneration, linking centres of vibrant commercial activity with areas of urban tranquillity and open space.



EVENTUS.
RYE

RX 30

RX 380

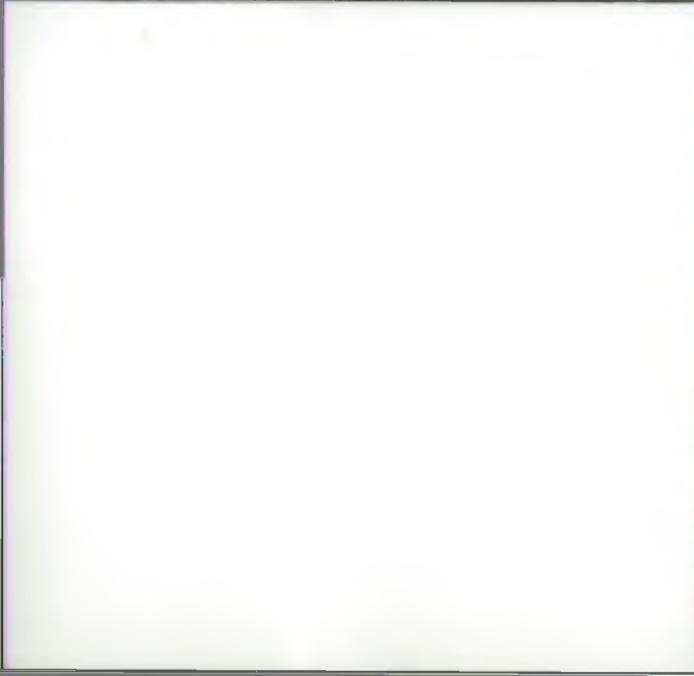
RX 46



4. Harbour of Rye

Revitalising a busy port's local economy

Renovations of the fishing quay, fish market and mooring facilities in the busy port of Rye will secure the future of the South's largest fishing fleet





“Significant boosts to the local economy are expected, particularly through the fishing and tourism industries”

Harbour of Rye – the facts and figures

The schemes

Refurbishment of the harbour's Laundry Frontage, home to local businesses and mooring facilities, is now being followed up by extensive work on the Admiralty Jetty, which includes safer mooring, walkways and a floating pontoon. The fishing quay and fish market will also be completely redeveloped, and are due to be finished in Spring 2003.

The costs

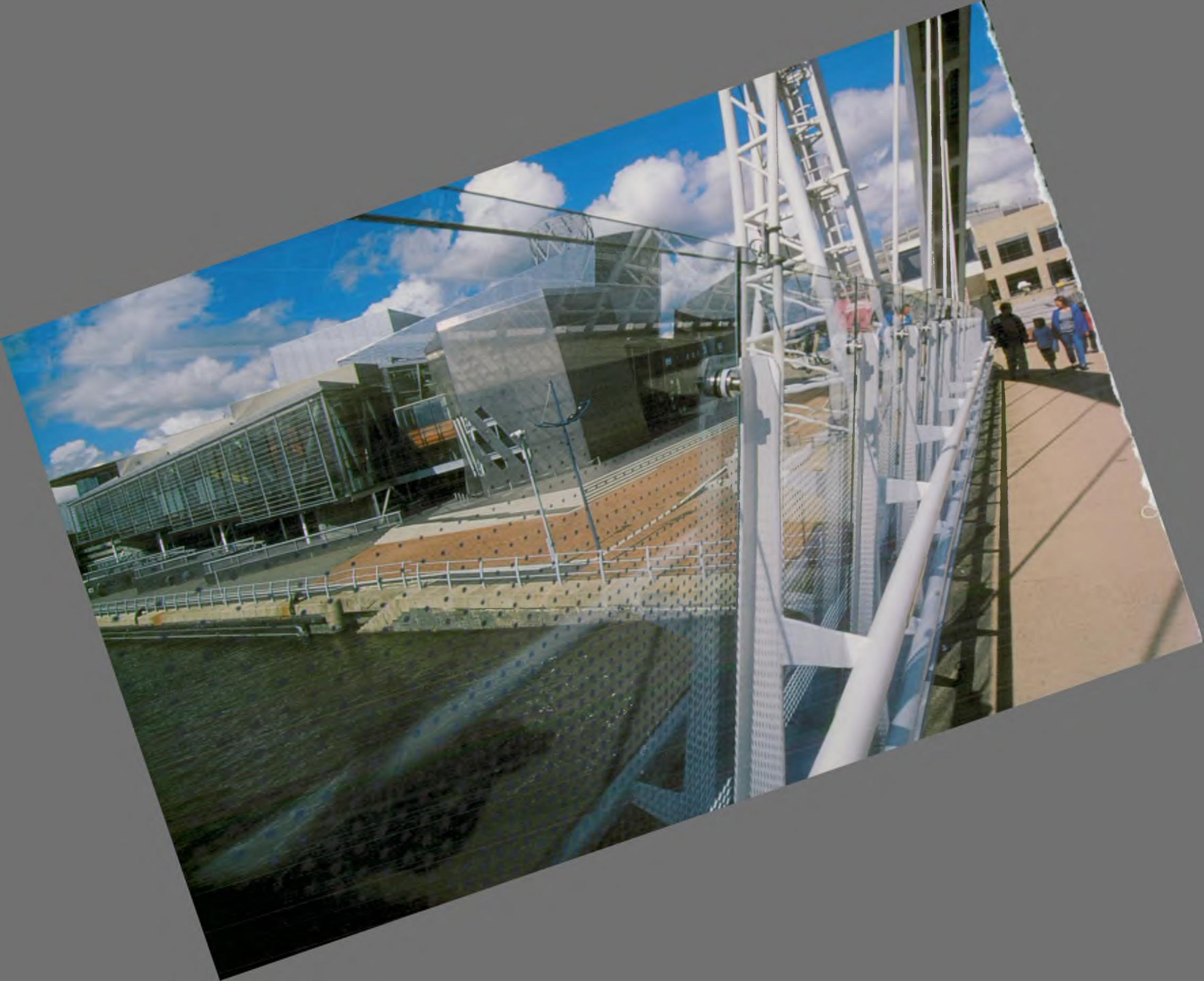
£3.8 million – contributions include £1 million from the Environment Agency, £175,000 from Rye Town Partnership and, potentially, a £700,000 Harbour Grant from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.

The benefits

- Significant boosts to the local economy are expected, particularly through the fishing and tourism industries
- Integrated management of the harbour's three rivers (Rother, Tillingham and Brede) to alleviate flooding and improve water resources
- Widespread community support secured through the Agency-led Harbour Management Plan
- Access for disabled people
- Health and safety issues (e.g. food hygiene in the fish market) will be resolved

The partners

Environment Agency and Rye Town Partnership – which includes Rother District Council, Rye Council and local business representatives.



5. Salford Quays

Breathing life back into the Manchester Ship Canal

Special units are pumping up to 30 tonnes of oxygen a day into a 3km stretch of canal at the Salford Quays, allowing aquatic life to return, and helping spur waterfront development projects





“The site now has major leisure and recreation potential – Manchester is intending to use it for the triathlon event at next year’s Commonwealth Games”



Salford Quays – the facts and figures

The scheme

Special units are pumping up to 30 tonnes of oxygen a day into a 3km stretch of the Manchester Ship Canal around the Salford Quays. This was the stimulus for a regeneration scheme, launched in 1998 and completed last year, that has helped transform the huge inland harbour into a thriving waterfront complex. The scheme won a UK Institute of Environmental Health 2000 Award.

The costs

£4 million – £3.5 million contributed by United Utilities and directed by the Environment Agency, £0.5 million contributed by English Partnerships

The benefits

- Breathing new life into the water has helped resuscitate the whole waterside area, which has become a magnet for local businesses and cultural attractions such as the Lowry Centre and the Imperial War Museum
- Aquatic life, particularly coarse fish, is returning to the canal, which used to be one of the most polluted waterways in the UK
- The site now has major leisure and recreation potential – Manchester is intending to use it for the triathlon event at next year's Commonwealth Games

The partners

Environment Agency, United Utilities, Salford City Council, the Lowry Centre, English Partnerships, Manchester Ship Canal, Mersey Basin Campaign



6. Lydney Docks

Bringing an historic harbour back to life

Flood defence work on the River
Severn will open the way for
restoration of Lydney's historic
docks and development of a
new marina



"The restored harbour will boost tourism and the new marina will attract more boating activity"

Lydney Docks – the facts and figures

The schemes

While flood defences are upgraded over the next three years in Lydney's docks area, restoration work will take place on the harbour's historic buildings and lock gates. The project will include a marina development, with mooring facilities for around 50 boats.

The costs

£1.9 million for restoration and development of the docks – the Heritage Lottery Fund will contribute £870,000 and the Environment Agency £250,000. Other contributors will include the Regional Development Agency, the Countryside Agency and English Heritage.

The benefits

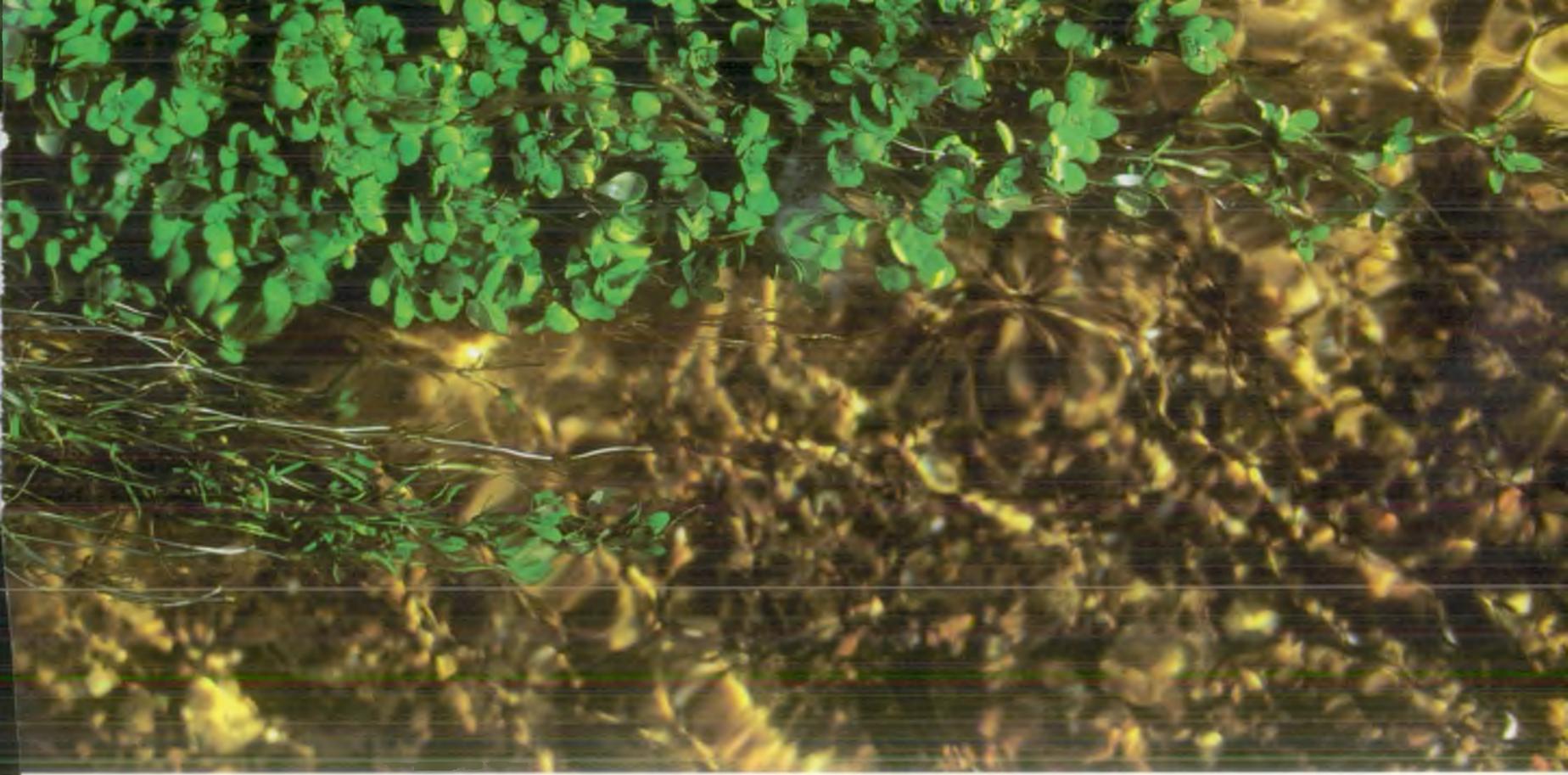
- Increased flood protection
- The restored harbour will boost tourism and the marina will attract more boating activity
- Better navigation for boats on the Severn Estuary and River Lyd – the current flood gate will be replaced by modern lock gates
- Increased public access – foot and cycle paths will be upgraded
- Improved tourist facilities, including an observation tower with educational resources and information panels around the docks area

The partners

Lydney Docks Partnership – Environment Agency, Forest of Dean District Council, Lydney Town Council, Gloucestershire County Council, English Heritage, British Waterways, Waterways Trust, Gloucestershire Harbours Trustees, Gloucestershire Development Agency



Imperial War Museum - North



“The river is within us, the sea is all
about us” T S Eliot

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