

From Tony Partridge, Cotswolds Canals Trust, phase 1B bid team
To members of South Cotswold Ramblers Group

July 2015

Dear fellow walker,

The recently regenerated canal and its towpath between Stonehouse and Brimscombe, is becoming very popular both for recreational use and for commuting.

And it is about future towpaths that I'm writing to you.

Phase 1b of the canal renovation aims to make the canal navigable between Ocean Bridge, Stonehouse, and the Gloucester Sharpness canal at Saul. This will connect Stroud and Stonehouse to the national inland waterways network. But it will also have wide and well surfaced towpaths and this will provide some exciting walking and rambling opportunities. It is an expensive project and by the end of the year we shall be applying for a Heritage lottery grant of perhaps £15 million. If and when that is approved, the timescale is likely to be five to seven years.

I am working on a specific part of the lottery application which concerns local prosperity and improving quality of life, and in particular with how the canal could be useful for walkers. For example:

- suggesting recreational circular routes which could use the the towpath as part of the route
- suggesting how access routes between the towpath and local points of interest, picnic spots, cafés, restaurants and pubs could be developed
- suggesting possible commuter links between the towpath and places of work.

Even ideas which might need some infrastructure (eg a new footpath, or a bridge) would be useful.

I should really appreciate it if you could contact me with any ideas you have.

Many thanks,

Regards,

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For more information on the project see: www.cotswoldcanals.net/phase_1b.php

Some canal route information, just for interest:

- Network Rail has agreed to install a new bridge at The Ocean, Stonehouse, when it upgrades the Gloucester to Bristol line.
- To get under the M5, the canal will be diverted to run alongside the River Frome, under the existing bridge
- The canal will run under two bridges at the A38/A419 roundabout at Fromebridge