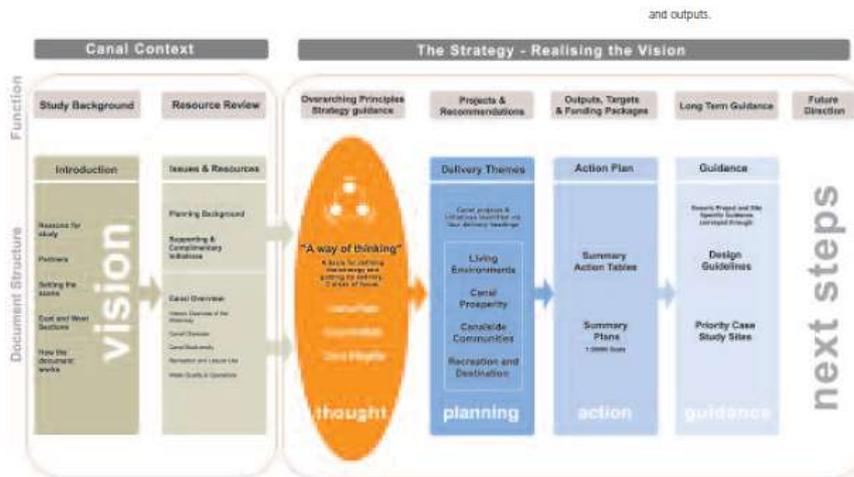


AINA CASE STUDY

THE WAY FORWARD

Leeds and Liverpool Canal: East Lancashire Corridor Study



This diagram shows the steps taken to prepare the East Lancashire Corridor Study, and the way its content linked to actions and outputs

A twelve month study prepared a long term vision to guide future waterside regeneration

The East Lancashire Canal Corridor Study was commissioned and prepared in 2002 to help guide future canalside regeneration and change alongside the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in the districts of Blackburn, Hyndburn, Nelson and Burnley. The study was carried out by British Waterways, supported by the North West Development Agency and English Heritage. The brief was jointly developed following a series of boat trips and meetings, which helped participants to recognise the regional importance of the canal.

The canal, once a catalyst for economic growth, now passes through many areas of urban decline and the East Lancashire valley now has high levels of deprivation. The purpose of the study was therefore to examine opportunities, attract external funding, prepare a five year action plan and deliver a lasting vision for guiding waterside regeneration through to 2015.

The study also aimed to redefine the canal corridor as a key destination for leisure and recreation, employment and reinvestment. A range of professionals helped to prepare the study, including landscape architects, heritage experts, ecologists, engineers and local recreation and tourism staff. They shared survey work and ideas with other organisations working to progress the regeneration of East Lancashire.

A strategic look was also necessary, and various plans were prepared to show how the local surroundings relate to the waterway. The action plan contained a full list of projects closely linked to key aspects in the study, including the need for additional feasibility studies, local actions and smaller scale environmental improvements. Five important themes emerged to guide future progress: the wider corridor, living environments, canal prosperity, canalside communities and recreation activity.

The final report described the importance and potential of the corridor and included attractive plans, illustrations, and aerial photographs. Several case studies demonstrated the type and extent of development that could be encouraged, and generic design guidance was prepared to cover aspects such as planting, public art, access and safety.

This comprehensive study took twelve months to complete and the funding provided by the partners enabled British Waterways to employ a full-time project officer to help guide the work. The key to a successful long term outcome will be the continued involvement of policy and decision makers along with local businesses and other stakeholders.