

AINA CASE STUDY

HEALTH, WELLBEING, RECREATION AND SPORT

High tech tourism at Bingley Five Rise



A QR code helps visitors access a range of information, video footage and audio clips at Bingley Five Rise

Apps and QR codes help bring heritage to life

The staircase locks on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal known as the Bingley Five Rise are one of the undoubted wonders of the waterway system, raising the canal 18 metres as it moves east towards the open Pennine countryside. They have changed little since their construction in the 1770s and today they are a popular canalside day out. A Bingley Heritage Awareness Project was established and supported by the EU Interreg 4B programme, and this has enabled 21st century technology to support new ways of attracting and communicating with visitors.

High tech information has been provided which allows users to look at aerial photos and video footage, listen to memories and view historic images from the archives. QR (Quick Recognition) codes located on marker posts can be scanned to provide simple access to the digital information and NFC (Near Field Communication) tags are also provided which can be tapped to access data with a compatible smartphone.

Both methods provide easy ways to reach specific content on a mobile optimised website. The QR codes can also be used within the specially created Bingley Five Rise app, which means a mobile signal is not necessary to access the videos, images and audio. The app, developed by the Canal and River Trust, is free to download and was released in October 2012 with an operating size of 73.4 MB.

A couple of recent quotes suggest that the canalside app has been a success:

“We've been down the canal and often wondered what some of the buildings were. It was great to finally find out what they were used for. I could spend hours looking through all the content and I like the fact that I can use it at home as well.”

“What a great little app! So much information and the QR code trail is a great idea. Was walking from Saltaire to Bingley along canal only last Saturday and I will have to go again to try it out. Lovely to see such a well made app celebrating local attractions and I hope all the businesses along the trail thrive as a result!”

Traditional information is also available, with leaflets for a family trail and a children's wildlife explorer trail complemented by a colourful brochure which interprets all aspects of the lock flight. The work at Bingley shows how a range of techniques can now be used to help inform visitors to the waterways.