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Sent: 17 March 2022 20:12
To: _WEB_Canals Strategy
Subject: Comments on Canal Strategy

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I find this document impossible to use, the Wallchart uses too small a text and requires lots of zooming. If I try to read what is said about my area I have to zoom in so far that I can no longer see how that relates to other areas, which is presumably the point of trying to put it all on one chart.

There is too much jargon. Terms such as Clustering and Continuity seem to bear little relation to the subject they refer to. Crossings - this just seems to confirm the bridges built with the canal are in the right place.

Why have you chosen to call the Slimbridge / Purton area "Lower Gloucester and Sharpness? It has no connection to Gloucester (~20 miles away) and the road to Sharpness requires a journey well inland. In practice there is little connection between Slimbridge and Purton or Sharpness, although in respect of the Canal Purton shares many features with Slimbridge and it may be convenient to bracket them. "Slimbridge and Purton" would be a much better name - and in keeping with "Saul and Frampton" naming convention.

The document needs to be rewritten in a simpler layout without the jargon and constant need to refer back and forth. A Planning document needs to be crisp and clear setting out what is and is not allowed, what is encouraged and what discouraged.

I have not commented on Documents A and B, they are unintelligible.

SUMMARY OF ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

I looked at this because I had completed the survey but could not understand what some of the questions meant. Looking at the number of "Don't knows" I was not the only one. I will restrict my comments to "Lower Gloucester and Sharpness" - otherwise known as "Slimbridge and Purton". I note there were only 43 responses. Getting rid of the double negatives and taking into account the "Don't Knows" this is how I interpret the results.

CHALLENGE 1: only 22% felt the transport connections in Slimbridge mean the canal is easily accessible. There is no Public Transport. The Canal is only accessible at 2 points, one of these (Cambridge Arm Bridge) is down a very narrow road with no parking and barely enough room to turn at the end. The main route to The Patch and WWT is heavily used by traffic to/from the WWT. The road is only wide enough for one vehicle in places, there is no footpath or cycle path. I consider it too dangerous to walk or cycle so will only go down by car. The recently opened Car Park is probably not big enough. To make the canal accessible would require either a shuttle bus to take WWT visitors and locals or extensive modifications the roads.

CHALLENGE 2: Only 21% think the Slimbridge Area can accommodate multiple users and forms of transport along the towpath. This is essentially the same as Challenge 1, the area is saturated with visitors. Anyone walking along the towpath will quickly realise other users in the form of cyclists pose a physical challenge.

CHALLENGE 3: Only 13% think the buildings and developments in the Slimbridge Area have embraced the canal meaning there is a good connection with it.

Unlike the canals in the Stroud Valley the Sharpness canal was built simply to take large ships from Sharpness to Gloucester. There was no need for other than occasional buildings serving the Canal (e.g. the Patch Hotel and Tudor Arms). In the Slimbridge area the land on the river side (New Grounds) is reclaimed and protected from the River by embankments, the other side is dependent on drains running under the canal. Both sides are in flood risk areas - another reason for relatively little development.

STRENGTH 1: 57% visit the canal either for work or leisure.
For what other reason would they visit?

STRENGTH 2: 21% Agree that to travel from one side of the canal to the other journeys rely on crossings outside the Slimbridge Area.
This question makes no sense for Slimbridge. Since the Wildfowl Trust closed the footpaths the only place to which there is public access is the WWT itself. Even if more crossings were created this would not alter the situation.

STRENGTH 3: 20% (8 or 9 people) agree that Human activity in Slimbridge disturbs the environment.
Good News.