

Interpretation Plan



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Introduction

"Tell me, I'll forget, show me, I'll remember, let me do it, I'll understand" Chinese proverb

NHB CIO would like to 'help people to learn about their own and other people's heritage'. The Trustees aims to do this by presenting a broad range of interpretation opportunities which will benefit community groups, young people, professional experts, local businesses, schools and colleges.



The Trustees of Newark Heritage
Barge on board

Organisational Context

Interpretation will be coordinated jointly by The Project Leader and the Trustees and members of NHB CIO. The Trustees will ensure that each projects' interpretative output is consistent with the NHB CIO guidelines and objectives.

NHB Interpretation Plan Aims

The Trustees of Newark Heritage Barge CIO, view interpretation as a vital element of a successful project. Through effective and innovative interpretation NHB CIO aims to:

- Establish a comprehensive archive dedicated to River Trent history and heritage
- Encourage visitors to interact with the archive and add their own memories and photographs for future generations
- Show the importance of Newark as the base of operations for The Trent Navigation company and after nationalisation, British Waterways, which gave employment to many local people
- Show how barges were built, repaired how people worked the Trent from the day so sail to the present day and show the skills involved
- Make the Leicester Trader the base for the River Trent Heritage Centre, open to the public and to be used by schools, research students and other interested groups

- Encourage communities to actively participate in identifying and producing interpretation in order to create ownership
- Target groups that traditionally don't engage in heritage such as young people and families

This interpretation plan identifies the types of tools and interpretation methods that will be used across the project. It looks at the existing internal expertise and establishes where there may be any gaps that will need to be bought in. The high quality interpretation intended will ensure the success of each of the projects and contribute to the overall sustainability of the project.

So far NHB CIO have worked with communities in order to utilise their local knowledge, raise the profile of the project, build their confidence and create a sense of ownership in the scheme. A wide range of interpretation methods have been utilised to engage people such as:

- Collection of oral histories from people who used to work on barges;



Les Reid interview Chris Reynolds about life on the River Trent

- A general leaflet about the barge and the project;
- Collection of photographs depicting the industrial heritage of The River Trent
- Archive film show of life on the river to ex barge workers
- NHB open days both at its mooring and in Newark Town
- A survey of potential visitors to Newark Heritage Barge
- A website devoted to NHB see www.newarkheritagebarge.com
- Talks to local groups both on the barge and at their venues
- Renovation of the barge to make it liveable for meetings and working

These examples will provide the foundations for further interpretation as the project moves forward. They have also given us an invaluable insight of what people like, what they relate to, what interests them and what areas they would like to see more of.

In order to ensure that the interpretation plan is fully delivered there are a number of skills that are required – most of which already exist within the group. These are:

- Web design
- Experience of running schools workshops
- Leaflet and interpretation design
- Event organization
- Use of IT / multimedia – e.g. My Space, Trent Vale blog
- Photography and film making
- Collecting oral history, story writing and telling
- Marketing and tourism
- Giving talks

The NHB CIO has already undertaken a skills analysis and advertised through the local Community Volunteer Services office for skilled individuals to fill the gaps.

Objectives of the interpretation plan

The objectives of the interpretation plan are:

- To identify interpretation opportunities for Newark Heritage Barge CIO and assess whether the skills are currently available to fulfil these opportunities;
- To ensure that interpretation methods are provided on varying levels and inclusive of communities and groups who traditionally don't engage;



Young people traditionally don't engage in industrial history of the River Trent. NHB CIO is keen to encourage them to get involved.

- To develop a strategic approach as to how interpretation will be undertaken and funded;
- To create a working partnership between NHB and communities learning from them what they feel is important to interpret.

Market situation and potential audiences

Many consultations have been carried out into the interest of audiences in the area. This has included holding workshops on the river, with five schools in Newark and one in Collingham, interviews with the key stakeholders, holding a stall at Newark Day to canvas interest in the project and raise awareness, visits to the Waterways Museum at Goole, Millgate Museum at Newark, Shardlow Canal Museum and carrying out x50 surveys by the waterfront in Newark, outside the Barge Pub and in the Castle Grounds.

During the schools workshops, children drew pictures of what they like to do down by the river, rein acted all the stages and people involved in building a boat and wrote a message in a bottle about what they would like money to be spent on. The highest number of messages in one topic were to give the money to a charity, a number of children wanted money to be spent on a museum about the history of the area and boat trips. In a DVD produced by Trent Vale Landscape Partnership, a number of the children and adults interviewed expressed an interest in a 'museum' about the river, as well as a boat for river trips or for crossing the river. This is a particular interest for people as there are very few crossings, particularly on the stretch of Trent between Newark and Gainsborough.

Data was collected about the current number of tourists and footfalls in the surrounding area, to gage the potential number of visitors.

The Castle – Newark 141,000 footfalls per year

Millgate Museum – 20,000 visitors per year

Yorkshire Waterways Museum at Goole 20,000-25,000/year

BW footfall counter Town Lock 2008 - 350,000

BW Nether Lock 2008 - 2,734 boats

The River Trent is used by boaters, The Sea Cadets, and canoeists for leisure. In addition it transports 250,000 tonnes of freight like gravel, waste and components each year.

The Friends of NHB carried out a survey in Newark during May 2009. This included carrying out structured interviews during the day, evening, weekdays and weekends. A range of age groups and people were targeted, including older people, young couples, families and groups of friends. The aim was to gather views from the broadest range of people possible, to understand what

people's interest in the project was. Of the 45 people surveyed – 49% were men and 51% were women,

87% of people said they would visit a 'centre' about the River Trent. The 13% who said they would not visit the centre were made up of 5, 22-30 year olds and 1, 17-21 year old. These people said they did not normally visit any museum.

The majority of people who responded said they would like to visit the museum in the afternoon and slightly more (20 as opposed to 17) would like to visit on a weekend.

11% of people said their favourite museum was Millgate because they were interested in the local history of the area. 'I like the range and variety of artefacts, it is light and airy, the staff are helpful and I like the historic setting on the river – it's atmospheric.' The next most popular museum with 9% was the Victoria and Albert in London.

During the survey the Friends of NHB found that 31% came from outside Newark, even during a time when there was no large fair. This included visitors from Warwickshire, Northumberland, Derbyshire, Scunthorpe, Shipley, Essex, Lincoln and even Barbados.

Of the 87% of people who would be prepared to visit the museum – the majority, 36% said they would be happy to pay £2.00, 28% would be prepared to pay up to £3.00. Only 4 people (10%) said they were not prepared to pay anything.

The survey has given NHB CIO a number of recommendations. The public recommended that the barge is interactive to attract people and children in, that it depicts the industrial heritage of the area, frequently changes to retain their interest and encourage them to visit more often. Some other suggestions included, 'I'd like to know about the river itself, to see how the course of the River Trent has changed over time.' Another said, 'I'd love to see it on the move, could it be pulled by horse?' 'Cracking idea.' 'Personal histories.' 'Would like to see the connection to Europe and transport industry.' 'It would bring more people to the riverside, that's a good thing.'

Based on the consultations and surveys carried out, NHB CIO would like to work with the following groups of people:

- 1 Local People – Linking with projects from Sconce Hills and Devon Park
- 2 Tourists – Visiting boaters, people visiting or exhibiting at the International Antiques fair, students at the violin school
- 3 Schools – Primary, Secondary and special needs
- 4 Local History Societies and University of the Third Age

Theory to interpretation

Different people learn in different ways. These can be categorised as visual, audio, and kinaesthetic/tactile. The percentages of the population and the way in which they learn are shown in the table below.

Learning Style	Characteristic	Learn by	Usually enjoy
Visual (about 65% of the population)	Visual learners need to see what they are learning	Watching	Reading
Auditory (about 30% of the population)	Auditory learners need to hear when they are learning	Listening	Discussing
Kinaesthetic (about 5% of the population)	Kinaesthetic learners need to move around while learning	Doing	Being physically involved

http://vudat.msu.edu/learning_styles/

Most of us are some combination of all of these learning styles. Therefore interpretation methods that incorporate visual, auditory and kinaesthetic styles are more likely to ensure people have a memorable lasting experience.

In the development of this interpretation plan, the Trustees have considered the ways in which people learn and interpret, and tried to develop interpretation methods that appeal to each of the groups above. The Environmental Trainers Network provided theories on how age influences the range of activities people like to get involved in. For example, in general, young children like toys, animals and food, teenagers like mobile phones, computers and social networking sites, older people like talks and guided walks. In this plan we have considered the type of interpretation that appeals to each age group, as well as how we are best placed to reach each audience. Cross cutting themes such as disabled people and minority ethnic communities will be addressed within their corresponding age group.

Barriers to Interpretation

- Consultations with the NHB community over the summer of 2008 revealed a number of barriers to interpretation in the area. These were:

- There are few public boat trips, only The Sonning and St John's Ambulance Boat at Newark, and these only provide limited opportunities for particular groups and individuals
- There are few signs indicating where the river is and what its name and significance is;
- There are few interpretation materials at lower levels for children and wheel chair users

The NHB Trustees are committed to addressing these barriers, through developing interpretation methods using a participative approach with communities. In doing so, we will make the area more accessible to users and attract new users, such as families and young people.



Children from Bowbridge Primary School in Newark visit The Leicester Trader. September 2012

Themes and topics

In order to identify our themes and topics for interpretation we used the 'Theme Generator' approach developed by Sam Ham (as abridged and shown in Carter in 1987).

Generally we think Newark Heritage Barge is about, *'preserving and conserving our history for future generations to enjoy and understand.'*

Specifically we want to tell people, *'what it was like to live and work on The River Trent.'*

After visiting NHB people will understand, *'the vital role that the River Trent played in building our communities.'*

Broadly speaking NHB CIO will develop, in conjunction with communities, the following types of interpretation methods:

Educational Workshops: These include workshops that can take place both on the barge and in the classroom – particularly in Primary schools:

- What's what – identifying parts of the barge
- Life on board – dressing up and finding out what it was like to live on a barge



This is a picture of Les when he was 14. Life of barges was difficult then, even children were expected to work.

- Know the ropes – leading how to tie traditional knots
- Loading the Barge – learning about the physics of floating and sinking
- Pull your weight – learning about pulleys and weights and how they help us
- How locks work – learning how locks lift and lower boats on the river
- Loans boats – a small boat of interpretation materials and workshop guide that can be leant to schools

Fitting out the Cabin

- A real sized replica of the cabin of a barge where the family used to live, sleep and eat with interpretation



This picture from The Barge Pub in Newark on Trent shows an example of how the cabin would have looked.

Guided walks

- Around the barge with an ex barge worker
- Along the Riverside Trail with Newark Civic Trust

Drama about life on The Trent

- A recorded drama about a family living on a barge produced by Media students from Lincoln University and working with our local youth theatre group – ‘Nearly Instant Theatre.’



Trent Navigation Barge 1890

Mobile Interpretation panels on the following themes

- The History of the Trent between Burton and Trent Falls
- The Trent in prehistoric and Roman times
- The Trent between 5th and 11th centuries
- The Trent in Middle Ages
- The Growth of River Trade 1500-1750
- The River in the Industrial Revolution 1750 – 1850
- The River in the Railway age 1850 – 1914
- The River in Modern Times from 1948
- The Leicester Trader and barges generally
- Owners and master
- Barge building on The Trent

Improved signage

- A brown sign to NHB when it is installed in its final resting place

Open Days

- Intergenerational open days to bring together families to enjoy the NHB
- Participation in the Annual Nottinghamshire Heritage Open Days
- Annual AGM with special event for visitors

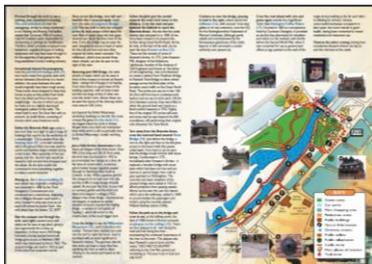
Leaflets and maps

- NHB general leaflet



This leaflet is the general one about the Friends of Group and their aims

- Maps of the key locations along the route of The River Trent
- Riverside walk leaflet



The Riverside walk leaflet has been produced by Newark Civic Trust. It details much of the industrial heritage of the River Trent in Newark.

- Regular newsletter posted to members and put on the website

Sea Shanty and song nights

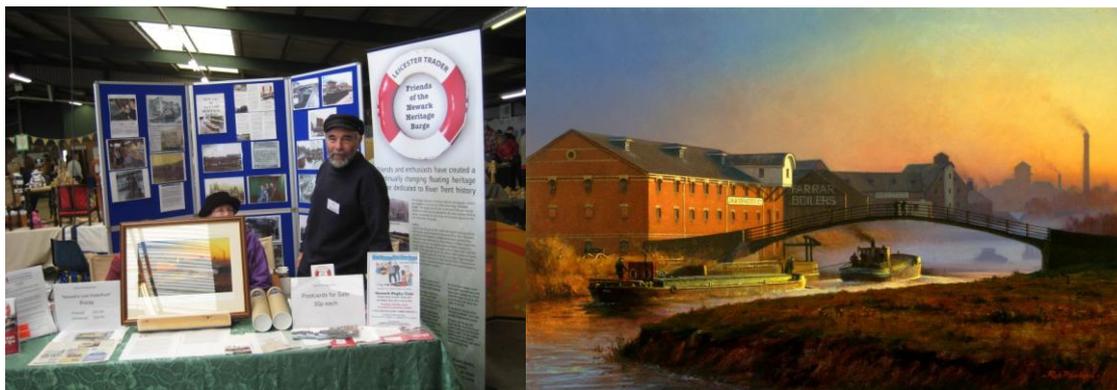
- Fun nights of singing and drinking to raise funds for NHBCIO both on and off the barge – coupled with a Newark Heritage Barge beer brewed especially for the project.



The Sea Shanty night in July 2012 was almost sold out and raised more than £900 for the Friends of Group

Displays and stalls

- Mobile display and stall for visiting other events



The Friends of Newark Heritage Barge at the Newark County Show. On sale were the original prints of Newark's Lost Waterfront

Multimedia

- Archive film shows from the British Waterways collection and modern day films of local events on the river
- NHB CIO website development
- QR code for NHB CIO
- downloadable MP3 guided walk of The Riverside
- NHB DVD about life on The River
- Archived photos online for visitors to look at



The NHB CIO website is updated regularly to keep visitors and members informed of the latest developments.

Oral history recordings

- Continuing the collection of oral histories of ex barge workers which are then edited and saved on the website for others to listen to.

Specific detailed designs are not provided at this point as it is essential to develop interpretation with the input of the local groups, communities, businesses, schools and colleges. Interpretation is not something that is 'given' to be received, but an interactive process that involves the users at each stage. It is also our ambition to inspire and assist communities to seek other funding opportunities in order to further develop their ideas.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The success of the interpretation plan will be closely monitored as part of the project-wide monitoring and evaluation. Some of the key outputs, which particularly also relate to interpretation include:

- Increases in the footfalls at Newark Town Lock
- Number of participants in the guided visits
- Number of volunteers involved in NHB CIO activities
- Level of understanding of visitors and children after NHB CIO workshops
- Increased levels of recognition of NHB and its importance to Newark Town

This monitoring will be done using the following methods:

- running competitions and events to gather the views and expressions of local people
- conducting focus group meetings on topics related to NHB
- recording media outputs relating to NHB.

This implementation plan will be reviewed annually, following monitoring results, to identify any new interpretation needs that may develop and ensure that current needs are being met.