

The Fens
Waterways
Link

- Top-left: A boat on a canal.
- Top-right: A boat on a canal.
- Right: A boat on a canal.
- Bottom-right: A boat on a canal.
- Bottom: A boat on a canal.
- Bottom-left: A swan on a canal.

The Fens Waterways Link promises to be one of the most significant waterway developments in recent years. It will open up 240km of waterway; 80km of new waterway and increased access to 160km.

Founding The Fens Waterway Link

The Link will connect the Cathedral Cities of Lincoln, Peterborough and Ely and also incorporate the market towns of Boston, Spalding, Crowland and Ramsey. In association with other waterway regeneration schemes, the Link will create a new circular waterway for recreation, tourism and the environment, through the Fens.

The new waterway will be sympathetic to the character and history of the Fens, to intricately link with its water environment and promote a better quality of life.

‘Creating a new circular w

Waterways and the way forward

The Link will represent the most significant partnership development of the inland navigation network of the UK in two centuries. This will create the biggest waterway enhancement scheme in Europe. It will compliment other waterway projects in the region, forging new links between the existing stretches of navigable waterway and creating a seamless loop of opportunity. The Link is set to revitalise the region for the good of all and create a leisure and tourism destination of national and even international importance. Based firmly on the twin pillars of economic development and social inclusion, the Link will provide a focus for new investment and provide employment opportunities in an area in need of diversification, both in a rural and urban context.



Courtesy of Fens Tourism

Other regional projects

Lincolnshire Waterways: This is a major project to enhance the Waterways of Lincolnshire. The scheme will bring together economic, community and environmental issues and raises the profile of Lincolnshire Waterways as a tourist destination for a variety of leisure uses.

Nar to Ouse Link: Urban regeneration is currently planned for a large area of land in the south of Kings Lynn, to include the building of a new marina and navigation link. A key component of this scheme is a partnership between the Environment Agency and the Borough Council in Kings Lynn to open the River Nar as a navigable link between the town and the Great Ouse Flood Relief Channel. This link would raise the profile of Kings Lynn, increasing tourism in the area especially



Courtesy of Fens Tourism

around the new marina, which is not only close to the town centre but a gateway to both open seas and inland waterways.

Bedford to Milton Keynes Canal: This scheme will build the first new canal in over a century and provide a navigable route between the River Ouse in Bedford and the Grand Union Canal in Milton Keynes.



Courtesy of Fens Tourism

Waterway through the Fens'



**'Unique heritage,
cultural, educational
landscape and
environmental asset'**

A better quality of life

The Link will:

- Provide an opportunity for investment, leading to long term economic improvements and employment benefits.
- Be an important sport and recreational resource and contribute to the health and well being of local communities.
- Form important cycling, walking, horse riding and public access routes.
- Be a tourism asset in its own right and provide a connection between existing and new attractions. It will support the holiday industry by creating opportunities for water-based activities.
- Form a unique heritage, cultural, educational, landscape and environmental asset.
- Provide access to a wide array of important historic buildings and structures.
- Contribute to the diversity of the natural environment by sustaining habitats and species, especially those under threat.
- Provide opportunities for improving water supplies through storage and transfer and improve land drainage.
- Provide local and regional transport routes and act as a waterborne transport corridor for people and freight.

'Providing an opportunity for investment,



Key features and themes

A network of desirable waterside locations will be created, attractive and suitable for mixed residential development and business alike. The resulting focal points will often be marina orientated and display features such as boat repair yards, shopping opportunities, restaurants and bars, media centres and accommodation. These sites will vary in magnitude and be influenced by their location and proximity to centres of population.

Through combined increases in the number of boating visitors and those attracted to the waterside for activities such as bird watching, jogging, photography, picnicking and general relaxation, £14 million per annum in revenue generation is expected. The Link has the potential to attract as many as one million visitors per annum.

The Link will provide a positive contribution to heritage, culture and nature. The general public will benefit from increased access to green open spaces and a wide array of important historic buildings, structures and monuments. The diversity of the natural environment will be enhanced by sustaining habitats and supporting rare species helping to meet biodiversity targets.



The above architectural drawings give an impression of what the proposed aqueduct landmark structure at Denver Sluice is envisaged to look like.

leading to long term economic improvements'

Out and about on The Fens Waterway Link

Lincoln is a beautiful and historical city with around 2000 years of history. Lincoln Cathedral, construction of which started in 1072, was once the tallest building in the world and is one of England's largest and finest original works. In the centre of Lincoln is Brayford Pool, which was once a thriving inland Roman port, connected to the River Trent by the Fossdyke Canal.

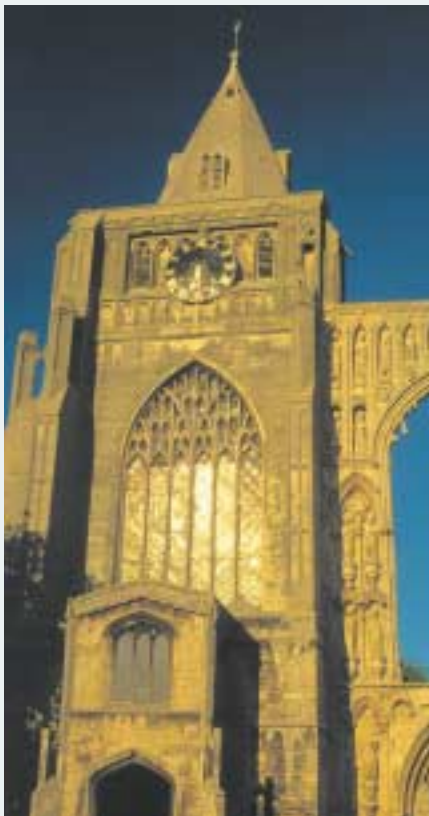
Boston is a bustling historical town with many attractions including 'The Stump' and the tallest working windmill in the country. The Scheme will link the River Witham with the South Forty-Foot Drain making this a key destination for boaters and tourists alike.



The **Spalding** Flower Parade and Flower Festival is held every year, in early May. Up to 200,000 tourists congregate on this small market town to watch the famous tulip parade. The Link here entails a non-tidal connection between the River Glen and River Welland. This takes the route within walking distance of the Springfields Gardens Outlet Shopping Village and Gardens attraction development.

Courtesy of Fens Tourism

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St Guthlac, a Benedictine monk, founded **Crowland**. Guthlac died in 714 and Ethelbald built the historic Crowland Abbey in his memory. The Link passes close by to the Abbey and will involve making a new navigation, connecting the River Welland to the River Nene.



Peterborough lies just west of the Fens and is a city of contrasts blending old with new. You can take a journey through time here, from the Bronze Age excavations at Flag Fen, to the magnificent Norman Cathedral situated in Peterborough city centre among the modern shopping centre. Within the vicinity there are family attractions such as steam train rides on the Nene Valley Railway or cycling and walking at Ferry Meadows or around the Green Wheel providing a natural, ecological attraction. A project is currently being developed to provide a steamboat attraction at Yarwell.

Peterborough will form a major attraction of the Link, incorporating the development of a marina area. New locks and improvements to existing structures will provide access between the Nene and the Middle Level System.

‘Peterborough will form a major attraction of the Link’

Courtesy of Fens Tourism

Denver is home to one of the most famous land drainage structures in Britain, a complex array of sluices and weirs for managing water levels throughout the adjacent fenland. The Denver Complex is an integral part of the Link. Proposals include a new landmark structure in the form of an aqueduct and lock system creating a link between the Middle Level System and the Ouse.



Courtesy of Fens Tourism



Ely, an ancient city, sited on the largest island in the Fens has often been referred to as the 'Ship of the Fens'. This is because of its domination of the flat fen landscape. The city has developed around a complex of medieval monastic buildings, the largest collection of medieval buildings still in daily use in the country. Ely Cathedral lies at the centre of a once thriving monastic community founded in 673 by St Etheldreda. The Cathedral is renowned for its famous Octagonal Lantern Tower and houses the unique Stained Glass Museum.

This project is being part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, East Midlands Development Agency, Lincolnshire County Council and the Environment Agency. Other Funding Partners include Boston Borough Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, East Anglian Waterways Association, Fenland District Council, The Inland Waterways Association and South Holland District Council, with significant support from Fens Tourism.

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