

Stourport Basins: regeneration through heritage



A £4million programme improved access, restored buildings and increased business opportunities

Stourport-on-Severn is a unique and historic canal town in the West Midlands. An inland port was developed at Stourport in the late 18th Century to link the River Severn with the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal. The town grew up around the port, which now consists of 5 inter-connected basins, within a conservation area, providing moorings for over 100 recreational craft.

From 2006-2008 a £4 million programme of work was carried out at the basins to:-

- Improve pedestrian links between the basins and the town.
- Conserve the deteriorating buildings, basins and historic structures. Through the programme, work was undertaken on 22 historic buildings and structures. Restorations work was designed to a high standard, blending with the historic environment and making use of quality materials - cast iron gutters; drain pipes; historic iron work repairs to railings; bespoke carpentry etc. Through the work, training was provided for local people in heritage restoration techniques.
- Increase awareness and involvement of local people in the development of the basin area through, for example, an arts programme, community events, activities involving local schools, volunteering initiatives, guided walks etc.
- Create habitats for rare species such as kingfishers, otters and bats.
- Provide opportunities for local businesses through increased visitor footfall and expenditure.

The project was delivered through a partnership led by British Waterways and included Stourport Forward, Stourport Town Council, Wyre Forest District Council and Worcestershire County Council. Funding support was secured from a number of sources including Heritage Lottery Fund, Advantage West Midlands and the Arts Council.

Since completion, the scheme has won a number of awards, including

- British Urban Regeneration Association (BURA) Waterway Renaissance Awards - 2008 Winners in the Historic Environment category
- National Lottery Awards – 2009 Winner – Best Heritage Project

Further information can be found at:- www.stourporttown.co.uk/stourport_basins.html