

AINA CASE STUDY

TOURISM AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Mercia Marina: Trent and Mersey Canal



Investment in a high quality waterside environment stimulates boating and tourism

The former Willington Lake trout fishery in South Derbyshire has been successfully redeveloped into Mercia Marina - a major new facility serving the Trent and Mersey Canal at the heart of the Midlands region. The scheme was the result of fruitful long term discussions between the site owners, Madecorn Leisure, British Waterways and South Derbyshire District Council. British Waterways supported the proposal due to its central location close to the main A50 which provides access to both Nottingham and Derby. The marina also brought the potential to stimulate tourism in the South Derbyshire area, including the National Forest.

The marina was designed to provide a quality environment for private boat owners, which would engender a sense of ownership whilst creating demand for moorings in an attractive new setting that could become a destination in its own right. Nine islands or promontories were added to the existing lake to create a series of mini-marinas, and soft banks were planted with reeds beds and native flora.

Work comprised the development of a 585 berth marina, tea room, workshop, convenience store, facilities blocks, boat hire centre and amenity lake. Secure parking, CCTV and disabled friendly access are provided throughout. The whole site covers approximately 30 hectares, of which approximately one quarter is water, and the marina was created by constructing a 400 metre link into the Trent and Mersey Canal. Future plans include proposals for the development of holiday lodges, a pub/restaurant, chandlery and additional retail space.

The total cost of the scheme was £6.6million. Funding was provided by Madecorn Leisure, and the East Midlands Development Agency supported the work with a £500,000 contribution from its 2007 Waterway Regeneration Programme. To date twenty-three full time jobs and four new businesses have also been created on the site. Development Agency funding allowed the marina to be completed to a higher environmental standard than would otherwise have been the case, and it is anticipated this will help to encourage and promote further growth on the site.

