

AINA CASE STUDY

CLIMATE CHANGE

Freight on the Manchester Ship Canal



Water transport successfully reduces carbon emissions and traffic congestion

The Port of Liverpool and the Manchester Ship Canal are jointly owned and managed by Peel Ports and now handle more than 40 million tonnes of cargo and 15,000 ship movements each year. Initiatives have been taken to combine the port with the bespoke facilities on the canal to create an all-water route for international trade.

A canal barge service linking Liverpool and Manchester serves as a 'green highway' and provides an increasingly popular alternative to the congested motorway network in the North West. Each journey equates to a saving of 180kgs of CO2 emissions, with the potential to save an additional 2,000 tonnes of CO2 per annum, and shows how the inland waterways can make demonstrable contributions to our need to meet the challenges of climate change.

Until recently the service carried only containers, but the carriage of a giant chemical tank to a facility at Runcorn saw the start of non-containerised traffic. The 30 metre high 20 tonne tank arrived at the Port of Liverpool from Holland and, a day later, made the onward three hour journey to Runcorn via the Ship Canal. A spokesman explained: "The sheer size of the chemical tank made road transport problematic and the use of Peel's barge service saved both costs and carbon emissions."

Peel Ports has operated a container barge service on the Ship Canal since 2007 but growing demand from customers such as Kellogg's, Princes Foods and Kingsland Wine led to investment in a substantially larger vessel. This can make up to four sailings each week between the Liverpool container terminal and the Irlam terminal near Trafford Park in Manchester, and en route can also call at Ellesmere Port. The service now moves approximately 20,000 containers per annum, which annually equates to around 1.3 million km of freight being taken off the roads and a reduction of approximately 1000 tonnes of carbon emissions.

Peel Ports are now developing a series of mini-ports with linked logistics at various locations along the canal. Several companies have declared that, having experienced the benefits of waterborne transport, the waterway will remain their long term preference for freight movement.

Further information can be obtained from a Peel Ports website: www.shipcanal.co.uk