

AINA CASE STUDY

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

'Share the Space, Drop the Pace'



A campaign in London encourages safe and considerate behaviour on the towpaths

A new campaign by the Canal & River Trust, called 'Share the Space, Drop your Pace', aims to promote considerate use of towpaths in London. It calls upon everyone who uses the towpaths to follow a new Greenways Code to help keep the waterway environment safe and pleasant for everyone to share.

At peak times, more than 500 cyclists per hour use the towpaths along parts of the Regent's Canal and, with dozens of pedestrians, joggers and boaters passing through the same limited space, the watersides often become very busy. 'Share the Space, Drop your Pace' includes a number of key points such as pedestrian priority, courteous behaviour, the need to follow signs and notices, giving way beneath towpath bridges, avoiding the generally use of headphones, keeping dogs on short leads and making sure children are always kept close at hand.

As part of the 2012 International Walk to School Month children in Islington used the new code on a canalside walk to school. Their 'school run' helped highlight the need to share space on towpaths whilst also giving priority to pedestrians. Towpath rangers were on hand to explain the guidelines to passers-by, supported by a traditional lollipop! The rangers are Canal & River Trust volunteers who provide friendly faces, help to organise events and keep the towpaths clean and free from overgrowing greenery.

One ranger explained: "Walking along the Regent's Canal is a great way to get to school. There is plenty wildlife to look out for and there aren't any cars. The towpath can get busy with people getting to work by bike or on foot but we want everybody to remember to share the spaces and remember that pedestrians have priority. The canals are for everyone and we want everybody to enjoy their journey safely."

The campaign messages can be applied across other canals and inland waterways and AINA members are encouraged to ensure that all users are fully aware of the need to behave sensibly on the towpaths.

Further information about the code is available from dick.vincent@canalrivertrust.org.uk