



## Slimbridge Parish Council

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### Canals Strategy Consultation response

Slimbridge Parish Council have responded to the Canal Strategy Consultation below.

Comments with regards to the consultation papers are that the wording in the document is extremely small and cannot be read without having to zoom in, therefore printing out the document is not viable for those with visual issues as it is so tiny on A4.

Whilst we did receive an A3 copy and the wall chart, after requesting one, it was felt the wording is still very small and not suitable to read and discuss at a public meeting.

The wall chart on the website is also unreadable unless zooming in and this then can't be seen on a full screen unless scrolling around lots. It was also noted that the legend for some of the codes is only available on the wall chart, yet the codes are in the document with no legend next to it, so there is no telling what these mean unless you refer to the wall chart – this is not easy to navigate between whether on line or using the hard copies.

The pages in the document are not numbered and there is no contents page, so this makes navigating through the document difficult too when discussing it.

#### **Questions 1: Are these the right Drivers for Change? Have we missed anything you would like to add?**

The Continuity around the Slimbridge area of the Patch does not have any public transport accessing it. The nearest bus stop is on the A38 approx. 3miles from the Patch canal. The majority of visitors reach this area by car. More emphasis on looking at public transport in this area needs to be considered.

Whilst Slimbridge has two crossing points within the parish, it doesn't have sufficient parking or infrastructure to accommodate this due to the tourism activities located within at the Patch. The report states that "crossings in this area can act as conduits of through traffic to WWT Slimbridge" – there is **only one crossing** that accesses WWT across the Patch bridge, and this comes from the only one road in and out of Slimbridge along Kingston Road. This crossing also has numerous other activities – pub, café, cycle route, caravan park, youth hostel, paddleboarding which also adds to the overload of tourism but with limited infrastructure to manage this.

There is much clustering around the canal in Slimbridge, in terms of activities available, however due to no public transport, the majority of visitors are by car, and there is not the infrastructure to accommodate this at busy periods, despite a car park. Double yellow lines are also being waited on to assist in free flowing traffic, this has sat with Gloucestershire County Council now for over two years and is still on going.

Encouraging visitors to the canal in this area has to come with mitigation on how to manage the traffic without having a detrimental impact on the communities living directly next to the canal.

It seems that the impact of promoting the canal, on the local communities has not been identified or addressed, or even recognised.

The uniqueness of Slimbridge has to be recognised. WWT alone is aiming to have 300,000 visitors a year crossing the one canal bridge to access this. This doesn't include those on holiday with their caravans and mobile homes going to the caravan park, those visiting the canal in general and using the Tudor Arms pub (which has holiday accommodation facilities too) and café (whilst these two facilities do have their own car parks, they are also limited), those cycling (Sustrans route 42) and walking. And not forgetting those who live in this area, plus the ever growing number of boaters living and mooring on the canal.

There is very little mention of Canals and Rivers Trust and the role they should be doing within this. There are numerous boating activities and residential moorings that need to be looked at and controlled accordingly.

**Questions 2: Do you agree with the number and boundaries of the 14 canal strategy areas? Do the areas and their profiles reflect your understanding of the different character and functions of places?**

No comments

**Questions 3: Do you agree with the key ways identified on the diagram and in the text in which each canal strategy area could be improved? Do you agree with the carbon reduction opportunities identified?**

Again, nothing of this identifies mitigation for traffic. There is no public transport to WWT, Shepherds Patch or any area of Slimbridge off the A38. For a reduction in carbon and to reduce car usage, public transport needs to be looked at.

Carbon reduction opportunities are one of the key items being looked at in the Slimbridge Neighbourhood Plan and the parish are keen to reduce carbon as much as possible within the scope of the parish.

**Questions 4: Do you agree with the ingredients in general terms? Are there other ingredients you would like to identify? Do you agree with the ingredients identified for each canal strategy areas? Do you agree with the timeframes for delivery? Should some be brought forward, and others pushed back?**

On the page "Implementing the Vision: Ingredients of the future place", there is no key as to what the coloured circles with letters in them mean. However, I have found the key on the wall chart – this is almost impossible to read on line without zooming in and having to scroll all over. Using the wall chart and the hard copy is also not easy to navigate.

It is noted that "Park and Move" is an immediate priority, but no information on how this aimed to be achieved in the immediate future – how long would this take to implement. "Floats my Boat" is the other immediate aim, yet no mention of CaRT who should be fully involved and made to enforce their own rules and regulations. How much are SDC in discussion with CaRT?

Prioritising Active Travel needs to come higher up the urgency criteria for Slimbridge into the NOW section not an aim for 5 – 10years, and certainly much sooner than 20+ years where it is also identified on the chart.

Building for Nature Interventions also needs to be higher up the priority list, for example if Wisloe Green (PS37) remains in the Local Plan, all the development must ensure nature is at the forefront. Slimbridge has protected landscapes around the River, and these must continue to be protected and not damaged against nearby large scale developments. This needs to be brought up to 0 – 5 years not in the 15-20 year timeline

**Questions 5: Do you agree that the canals strategy should be used as design guidance to support the delivery of adopted Local Plan Delivery Policy ES11? Would any changes to the canal strategy help to improve the delivery of Local Plan canal policy?**

It is important that any development that would add to traffic etc in the Slimbridge area and cause potential harm to the area must contribute to mitigations for this.