

bedford-milton keynes waterway park

The Bedford – Milton Keynes Waterway Park is an ambitious project to link the Grand Union Canal in Milton Keynes with the River Great Ouse in Bedford. Just 16 miles in length it will have a huge regional impact creating a waterway park and establishing a green corridor right at the heart of future developments on the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, a legacy for future generations. The key benefits include:

- Contributing to local economic growth
- Providing for healthy living
- Contributing to flood management
- Enhancing and adding to natural capital

“there is compelling evidence that people who live near water or green space, or have regular access to it, are happier, healthier and more productive. Investment in a new wetland, a cleaned up river or a tree plantation is not just a good thing because it creates beauty and habitat. It is also a removal of cost from the NHS”

Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive of the EA

Environmental Benefits:

The waterway park will be **The Flagship** blue/green infrastructure project within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc. The Chancellors Spring statement set out the Government’s aim:

“to embed ‘natural capital’ thinking throughout our approach to the Arc, so that we create sustainable places for people and wildlife, and ensure that we leave the environment in a better state for future generations.”

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government: -
The Oxford-Cambridge Arc

The delivery of the Waterway Park will be key to achieving this aim.

Economic Benefits:

The delivery of the Waterway Park will have significant benefits to the local economy derived from tourism, regeneration and new development.



790,000 additional visits
£7m extra spend



£385m additional local
spend over next 20 years



1,418 temporary
construction jobs



£64m extra Council Tax
revenue

Health Benefits:

The waterway park will provide new recreational and leisure opportunities both on and off the water. The waterway will be accompanied by accessible footpaths, cycle paths and a green corridor through the heart of new developments perfect for boating, canoeing, fishing, cycling, walking or just relaxing.

Flood & Water Management Benefits:

A joint study with the EA is currently underway to quantify the waterways contribution to:

- Flood management and water transfer across the Great Ouse catchment and beyond.
- Collection & disposal of surface run off from new developments along the A421 corridor.