



# The Restoration of The Grantham Canal: Benefits to Local Authorities, Local Business, Communities, and Wellbeing, Mental Health and Leisure.

## Exploring Economic, Social, and Health Impacts of Canal Restoration

### Introduction

The restoration of The Grantham Canal which winds its way through the counties of Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as a major trading link from the River Trent to Grantham presents a unique opportunity for local and county councils, businesses, and communities. Beyond the obvious heritage and environmental value, the canal's revival offers tangible economic benefits and contributes to the wellbeing of residents by enhancing leisure opportunities and supporting mental health.

### Economic Benefits for Local Authorities and Local Businesses

Active involvement and investment by local authorities are crucial for the successful restoration and ongoing support of the Grantham Canal. When councils commit resources and leadership to such projects, they help ensure that restoration efforts are well-coordinated, sustainable, and aligned with broader community goals. Local authority support can unlock additional funding streams, facilitate partnerships with businesses and community groups, and streamline regulatory approvals, all of which are essential for maintaining momentum and achieving long-term success.

Moreover, visible council engagement demonstrates a commitment to improving the local environment and enhancing residents' quality of life. This not only fosters public trust but also encourages wider community participation, making the canal's restoration a shared endeavour that delivers lasting benefits across economic, social, and wellbeing dimensions.

Additionally, councils may see increased business rates and taxes due to expanded commerce, as well as new job creation in hospitality, maintenance, and canal-related activities. The restoration project itself can provide short-term employment opportunities in construction and landscaping, further contributing to the local economy.

Restoring the Grantham Canal can generate significant revenue for both local district, borough and county councils. Increased tourism and visitor numbers lead to higher spending in the area, which in turn boosts local business incomes.

Collaboration with partners such as Local Authorities, Canal & River Trust, Grantham Canal Society, and the Inland Waterways Association is central to the Grantham Canal's restoration. These organisations contribute invaluable expertise, volunteer effort, and advocacy, carrying out essential restoration and maintenance activities along the waterway. Their continued success, however, relies on adequate financial support from local authorities, government, grant funders, and community backers, ensuring that restoration work remains sustainable and effective in the long term.

As a non-political organisation, we rely on the backing of our local Members of Parliament to advocate on our behalf. Their support is vital in lobbying National Highways and relevant government departments for significant infrastructure investment and Levelling Up funding. By working together with parliamentary representatives, we can help ensure that the Grantham Canal restoration secures the national attention and resources it deserves, unlocking transformational benefits for the region.

For parish councils with the Grantham Canal running through their parishes, the restoration represents a true jewel in their crown. Not only does it elevate the prestige of the area, but it also provides unique opportunities for local initiatives, heritage promotion, and tourism. Parish councils can leverage the canal's presence to foster closer community ties, encourage environmental stewardship, and develop bespoke events that celebrate local history and culture.

Cafés, pubs, shops, and accommodation providers stand to benefit from the influx of walkers, cyclists, boaters, and wildlife enthusiasts drawn to the canal's scenic routes.

### Community Benefits

The restoration fosters a sense of pride and ownership among local residents. Revitalised canal areas often become focal points for community events, educational programmes, and volunteering opportunities, strengthening social cohesion. Improved public spaces encourage families and individuals to spend time outdoors, supporting healthier lifestyles and greater community interaction and educational benefits for local Schools and Collages with historical and environmental field trips.

Furthermore, the enhanced environment around the canal can increase property values and make the area more attractive for new residents and businesses, contributing to long-term community growth and prosperity.

### Wellbeing, Mental Health, and Leisure

Access to green and blue spaces—such as restored canals—has been widely recognised for its positive impact on mental health. Regular exposure to nature helps reduce stress, anxiety, and depression, while encouraging physical activity and relaxation. The Grantham Canal's restoration will provide walking and cycling paths, boating opportunities, fishing spots, and tranquil areas for reflection, catering to a variety of leisure interests.

Leisure activities along the canal promote social interaction and physical wellbeing, particularly for those who may struggle to access other recreational facilities. Accessible, well-maintained outdoor spaces are especially beneficial for children, the elderly, and those with mobility challenges.

### Conclusion

The restoration of the Grantham Canal is a valuable investment for local and county councils, businesses, and the wider community. By improving economic prospects, strengthening community bonds, and enhancing wellbeing through leisure and mental health benefits, the canal's revival will leave a lasting positive legacy for generations to come.

Your support is vital for the Grantham Canal to secure its future for generations to come.

*Robert Leadenham*

Cllr Robert Leadenham (Acting Chairman Grantham Canal Partnership) M: 07398 012921

