

Cycling along the Towpath of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal - (Requested by Councillor Pope)

The canal towpath is the responsibility of Canals and Rivers Trust. The Canals and River Trust allow cycling on all towpaths but promote a code of conduct to cyclists. <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/see-and-do/cycling>

As part of the Local Sustainable Transport Project the canal towpath between Burscough and New Lane was improved with a 2m wide stone surface being laid. The canal towpath was signed as a Pier to Pier Cycle Route from Wigan to Southport.

Use of the towpath by cyclists and pedestrians helps supports canal-side businesses. It is possible that use of the canal towpath by cyclists north of Maghull has increased due to improvements to the canal towpath in Sefton and Liverpool

The wider the towpath the easier it is for cyclists and pedestrians to pass. The towpath between Parbold and Burscough is quite narrow in places. As part of the project LCC would have liked to have improved the canal towpath on this section, although there was not sufficient budget to do this.

Improvements to the canal towpath generally lead to an increase in walkers as well as cyclists using the towpath, so there are likely to be more people using the towpath in total. A wider towpath means two pedestrians can walk side by side. An improved surface means that they do not need hiking boots or wellingtons in winter

Where towpaths have been improved elsewhere LCC receive few complaints - as people tend to get used to the new arrangements fairly quickly. However, if there is a particular problem 'hotspot' this should be reported to the Canals and Rivers Trust enquiries.northwest@canalrivertrust.org.uk in the first instance. However, please also let Alistair Simpson know as there may also be scope for LCC to work alongside the Canals and Rivers Trust to promote considerate cycling on the canal.

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