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**From:** [REDACTED]  
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**To:** \_WEB\_Canals Strategy  
**Subject:** Canal strategy document response

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Dear Sirs,

I have attempted to read the above document with one considerable difficulty.

Firstly the print is so small as to be almost illegible and secondly it is so full of jargon that it is very difficult for a layman to understand. For this to be a public consultation document it is completely misconstrued and needs to be in plain language. In this it has failed and I imagine that considerable funds have been wasted on its production.

Also, I cannot understand why the major stakeholder the Canal and River Trust have no input when it is largely for their benefit and it is they who control the canal network.

There are two things which I have gleaned from the report;-

1. The development of Sharpness as a leisure area and access point to the canal. This is absolutely common sense and right. There must be 200 acres of brown, semi derelict land ripe for development. There is superb road access, existing businesses, historic and semi derelict buildings to utilise and no residential population to disrupt. It would all be in one place where it would be easy to administrate and supervise rather than the present system where it is complete chaos and no input from Canal and River Trust. This represents a very exciting opportunity to the benefit of all residents and visitors alike giving a vibrant centre for access to the canal network
2. Sensitivity to needs of local populations and their welfare particularly the village of Purton. 5 years ago Purton was a quiet rural village with a narrow country lane leading to it. Canal and River Trust, over time, have spread aggregate on the ancient and historic village green destroying that green space. They have installed a landing stage and promoted the centre of this tiny formerly quiet village, the home of council tax payers, as an access point for the canal by motor vehicle and actively discouraged use of Sharpness. The village over the last 4 years has become inundated by visitors bringing noise (paddle board pumps day and night), pollution, disgusting anti social behaviour, dangerous practices on the water, abuse and threatening behaviour and lane clogged by vehicles. At weekends particularly the villagers have to hide away, their village and village green being denied to them. The church have been unable to hold the traditional weekly teas and have been crippled financially. The tranquility of the village and the lives of people, some of whom have lived their all of their lives have been destroyed and their mental health seriously compromised. The landing stage is situated in exactly the place where animals, domestic and wild would be recovered. At present there are six dead deer in the canal between Sharpness and Saul probably frightened by speeding bicycles on the towpath. The wildlife around the wrecks has been decimated by marauding dogs. Birds cannot nest safely in an SSSI area and timber ponds are frequently invaded by paddle boarders., leaving no refuge for wildlife. There is no supervision or checking of licences whatsoever by CRT and health and safety on the waterways is a disaster waiting to happen, a recent situation which if were not for the prompt action of local residents would ended in a fatality.

This development has happened without any consultation with local residents or indeed planning permission by the local authority. The relentless pursuit of maximum use for maximum benefit in your report is unsustainable and

wrong if it is to the total exclusion of the interests of council tax payers. I cannot understand why the local authorities have allowed this situation to develop.

The villagers of Purton are generally very welcoming to visitors and are 'laid back'. We have witnessed the pleasure the canal gives particularly to organised groups of disabled and disadvantaged children. For the village to be accessed from the canal is absolutely right and proper, for it to be accessed by road and motor vehicles is highly unsustainable and damaging.

There is obviously a problem with the canal network and the rather haphazard, disorganised, probably illegal developments which have taken place without any regard to the impact on communities. The report seeks to address this which is good but there must be proper consultation and implementation for what could be a very exciting development for the benefit of local residents and canal users who with proper planning could co-exist very happily.

Yours sincerely,

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