



## Welcome

This is the first issue of the Waterways for Growth (WfG) newsletter. Our project is supported by ERDF funding from the European Union Interreg IVB North Sea Region programme. It brings together 15 partner organisations from 6 countries. We're investigating how the multi-functional use of our navigable inland waterways – canals, rivers and lakes – can be developed in a sustainable way to support economic activity. Three themes we explore are:-

Business and new product development

Waterway regeneration

The sustainable management of inland waterways

## WfG Partnership widens

**West Flanders inclusion in WfG was approved at the NSR Steering Committee meeting in June 2010**

They will implement activities across all three Work Packages, allowing some identified gaps in activity to be covered,

They will focus on ; stimulation of waterways based entrepreneurship amongst young people, development of the social economy, tourism development based on 'MICE' activities, action-orientated masterplanning, and the integration of waterways with their surroundings, Finally they'll consider the relationship between freight transport and other functions of waterways.

## Coming soon..

### WfG Business Development Meeting – WP2

Emmen (Netherlands)

**Date** – 9<sup>th</sup> November 2010

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### WfG Partner Meeting and Workshop

West Flanders (Belgium).

**Date;** 3 – 4 March 2011

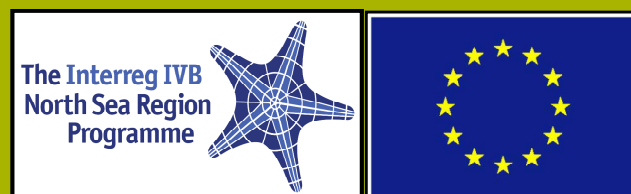
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## Our partners

British Waterways (Lead Partner)  
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council  
Telemark Fylkeskommune  
BIS Bremerhaven Touristik

Lansstyrelsen Varmland  
City of Karlstad  
Forshaga Municipality  
Grums Municipality  
Hammarö Municipality  
Kils Municipality

Gemeente Emmen  
Gemeente Langedijk  
Stichting Recreatietoervaart Nederland (SRN)  
Toerisme Scheldeland  
Provincie West-Vlaanderen

# Waterway business - What's the attraction?

**WP2 in Waterways for Growth is concerned with how businesses can take advantage of the opportunities offered by inland waterways and new products and activities that can be developed based on the waterways. A range of actions are under way in the partner regions to take forward this theme, coordinated by the Working Group for WP2**

Business networking and the upskilling of entrepreneurs has formed an important part of this work. Examples of activity under way include:-

The creation of a local platform for entrepreneurs in the tourism & recreation sector in the city of Emmen (Netherlands);

Workshops, study trips and seminars for waterway-related businesses organised by the City of Karlstad (Sweden), also involving the Swedish municipality partners in Waterways for Growth - Forshaga, Grums, Hammarö & Kils;

Business to Business meetings and study trips organised by Toerisme Scheldeland (Belgium);

The development of the social economy in the city of Bradford (England), working with local partner Dream Achievers to assist with public engagement in relation to the Bradford Canal scheme.

The development of new products and activities is under way by some partners. For example:-

City of Bremerhaven (Germany) is designing prototype e-routing and e-marina systems to provide tourist information on waterways and points of interest;

City of Karlstad (Sweden) is developing new technology approaches to create multi-lingual guided tours;

Marketing and promotion activity related to waterways is under way in many partner areas, including Karlstad (Sweden) and Scheldeland (Belgium);

SRN (Netherlands) has commenced work on the development of a handbook for the water sports industry, based on feedback received from Waterways for Growth partners.

This wide range of activity is being supported by exchanges between partners. For example a number of staff exchanges have taken place between the Bremerhaven & Telemark regions, with the aim of bringing together waterway tourism business and clustering tourism activity between the two areas.

All this activity has been reviewed by the WP2 Working Group at a meeting in Bremen (Germany) in June 2010 and will be followed up at a workshop to be held at the forthcoming Steering Group meeting in Karlstad, Sweden in September 2010





*"Investing in the future by working together for a sustainable and competitive Region"*

SRN helps launch 'Safe sailing' the initiative that that looks to improve safety on inland waterways in the Netherlands. See the WfG website for more info.

STOP PRESS: The UK Government announces that British Waterways will change from a Public Corporation to a Registered Charity in 2012.

The Telemark Canal will feature prominently in the new Telemark Regional Park - currently being established .

## News + info

# Developing transport on small inland waterways

**One of the issues we're considering is how freight and passenger traffic can be developed on the smaller dimension waterways around the North Sea.**

As barges and ships have become bigger, freight transport in particular has disappeared from many waterways. Much of the focus at national and EU level has been on developing a network of large freight waterways, to take advantage of economies of scale. *Waterways for Growth* looks at the opposite end of the spectrum - how the decline in the transport function of small waterways might be reversed.

There's undoubtedly growing interest from businesses in moving goods in a more sustainable way and increasing fuel costs means shippers are considering more cost effective transport modes. However many barriers remain to bringing back transport on small waterways – for example a shortage of suitable vessels and loading / unloading points; a perceived risk in changing to an unfamiliar mode of transport; and the low costs of road transport during the current recession.

In Scotland, British Waterways has been investigating for

freight opportunities on the Caledonian Canal, which provides a link across the Scottish Highlands between the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean and on the Lowlands Canals, linking Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Work on the Caledonian Canal has highlighted opportunities to move large volumes of timber and fish feed (for fish farms) through the canal. This would help relieve pressure on local roads in the region. Ideally this traffic would be moved by a specially designed tug and barge system, maximising payloads within the constraints imposed by the dimensions of the canal. Such a system would have its own cargo handling facilities, while the barges could act as mobile storage units when required.

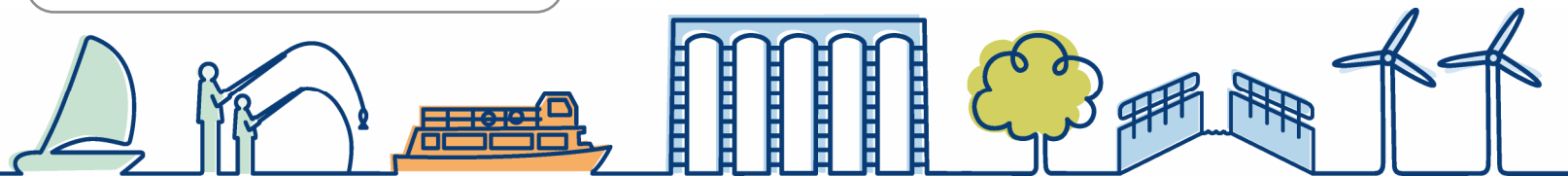


## Langedijk on show

**Partners met in Langedijk on 6-7 May 2010. The meeting took place in conjunction with the Koolsail festival in the region, which is held every four years.**

Partners were welcomed by Jaco Koolaard, the Alderman with responsibility for spatial planning at Gemeente Langedijk. After the Steering Group Meeting, a workshop focused on furthering cooperation and partnership working. A number of waterway-related initiatives in the Langedijk area were visited on Day 2. First up was a visit to the innovative Twuyverhoek housing development, which makes full use of its waterside setting and resultant

recreational opportunities. Next was a tour of the Museum Broeker Veiling, an historic water-based auction house and visitor attraction. Finally there was a visit to the Veldzorg initiative, a social enterprise engaging with people with learning difficulties and focussing on activities in the historic "Thousand Islands" landscape in the Oosterdal area.



# Sharing our knowledge and expertise

**Waterways for Growth partners have been active in sharing their knowledge, expertise and ideas developed through the project to other organisations in Europe and beyond. For example:-**

The Lead Partner, British Waterways, has presented on the work of the Waterways for Growth partnership at a number of external events, including:-

An international conference held in Porsgrunn (Norway) as part of the Norway – Hubei week in September 2009 on the theme of cooperation between businesses in Europe and China;

The Arkhangelsk Maritime Partnership held in Arkhangelsk (Russia) in October 2009 and supported by a range of stakeholders including the Interreg IVB North Sea Region Stratmos project.

In conjunction with the Swedish Maritime Forum, British

Waterways led in a workshop in January 2010 to look at the future of freight traffic on the Trollhätte Canal and Lake Vanern in Sweden

British Waterways, SRN and BIS Bremerhaven Touristik took part in a workshop organised by the Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung (BMVBS) in Düsseldorf in January 2010 to look at the future management of water tourism in Germany.

Other partners have been active in promoting the work of Waterways for Growth in their regions. For example Toerisme Scheldeland (Belgium) held a seminar on water tourism and the role of the EU, entitled De EU trekt vlot at the Belgian Boat Show, Gent in February 2010. Telemark County Council (Norway) held a conference in association with the Langesund International Shanty Festival in June 2010 at which Waterways for Growth was put forward as a case study on European cooperation.