

RIVER NENE REGIONAL PARK  
INSPIRED SPACESNorthamptonshire  
County CouncilNorthamptonshire  
Enterprise Limited

## Turf cutting marks official start of Northampton Marina project

### Photo opportunity: Becket's Park boating lake, 1.30pm, Tuesday, 9 March

A special ceremony is being held to mark the official start of works to create a multi-million pound marina in the heart of Northampton.

The Environment Agency began works to remove trees from Becket's Park in February and will begin construction of the new marina next week. To mark this milestone, the Becket's Park Partnership – set up to oversee the regeneration of the urban park including the creation of the marina – has organised an event that will include an official 'turf cutting' ceremony.

The ceremony, at 1.30pm on Tuesday, 9 March, will follow a tour of the marina site. The visit will give invited guests the opportunity to learn about the transformation of the currently underused waterside - the marina is one of the first steps in making Northampton a more exciting destination for current and future residents as well as visitors and the boating community. Putting Northampton on the map as a waterways destination is important to the town's regeneration - the River Nene is a valuable natural asset.

The marina will offer 80 moorings, six of which will be for residential use. The remaining berths will be available for short term visitors and pleasure craft requiring long term leases. Moorings will also be available for operators of commercial leisure boats, such as hire boats and water taxis.

As part of long term plans to develop Northampton into The Market City, later phases of the Becket's Park project could deliver new landscaping, lighting, cafés and restaurants, while providing a busy, exciting link between the town centre and the waterside.

Paul Woodcock, Environment Agency Regional Director, said: "Northampton Marina will place Northampton on the map as a major destination. Becket's Park is at the heart of two navigations – the River Nene and the Grand Union Canal – and is perfectly placed to attract visitors to the town. "The Becket's Park development will really help to transform the image of Northampton and the Environment Agency is proud to be involved in making this happen."

Northampton Borough Councillor Richard Church, cabinet member for regeneration and development, added: "Creating a new leisure facility in one of our main urban parks will give the people of the town an interesting and exciting place to visit and it will certainly attract lots of boaters and other visitors to explore Northampton's historic buildings, market and cultural facilities. With works to the market square

lighting and fountain already underway, the marina project is another example of superb partnership working to make Northampton a vibrant place that people are proud of.”

The Northampton Marina project makes up phase one of the Becket’s Park Partnership’s Vision - part of the Becket’s Park Masterplan. It is being funded by the West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, Northamptonshire County Council and the Environment Agency with support from Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited.

John Markham, Chairman of West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, said: “The Marina will help breathe new life into the waterside of Northampton town centre. The revitalisation of this area is one of WNDP’s main priorities and that’s why we’re investing £1.8 million in the scheme. There are several opportunities for new jobs, homes, and leisure facilities along the river corridor which we are helping to deliver, making it a very exciting time for Northampton.”

The marina is scheduled for completion in March 2011.

Northampton is one of the potential locations being considered to host the National Inland Waterways Festival in 2011. If held in the town, the event would mark the 40th anniversary of the festival returning to Northampton and 250 years of the Nene being navigable from Northampton to the Wash.

## ENDS

**Media enquiries:** Contact Rita Penman or Catherine Burbage on 01733 464357 (during normal office hours, also for emergency service only, 24 hours).

All Environment Agency news releases, both regional and national, can be found on our web site: [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

## Notes for editors

You and a photographer are invited to attend the photo opportunity at 1.30pm on Tuesday, 9 March at the marina site in Becket’s Park. If your reporter would like to attend the tour, starting at 12.40pm, please contact Keredy Stott in Northampton Borough Council’s communications office on 01604 837392.

The funding for the marina totals £2,084,845, secured from –  
 West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (£1,831,000)  
 Northamptonshire County Council (£204,845)  
 Environment Agency (£120,000)

### About the Becket’s Park partnership

The Becket’s Park Partnership has been formed to oversee the development and progress of the project. The Environment Agency, Northampton Borough Council, West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited (NEL), River Nene Regional Park (RNRP) and Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) make up the partnership group.

**The Environment Agency** is the leading public body for protecting and improving the environment and promoting sustainable development in England and Wales.

It’s our job to look after your environment and make it a better place – for you, and for future generations.

Your environment is the air you breathe, the water you drink and the ground you walk on. Working with business, Government and society as a whole, we are making your environment cleaner and healthier.

We are the navigation authority responsible for the River Nene. We have produced a Waterway Plan to address our responsibilities for recreation and as a navigation authority for this river.

[http://www.fenswaterways.com/portals/0/plans/Nene/R\\_Nene\\_Waterway\\_Plan\\_Document.pdf](http://www.fenswaterways.com/portals/0/plans/Nene/R_Nene_Waterway_Plan_Document.pdf)

Our vision is that through our philosophy Your Rivers for Life, we will maintain, improve and develop our river navigation so that we offer all of our users safe facilities comparable with the best in Europe. We will do this in a sustainable manner.

To find out more about us, or about your environment, call 08708 506 506 (Mon-Fri 8-6) or email [enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk) or visit our website [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

**Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited (NEL)** is a partnership between the public, private and voluntary sectors. Working in association with Northamptonshire County Council, its purpose is to develop the county's economy and to support job creation in a key growth area.

Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited's key objectives:

- **Invigorating Northamptonshire's Economy**
- **Developing People**
- **Enabling Business**
- **Marketing and Promoting Northamptonshire**
- **Supporting Regeneration**

#### **The River Nene Regional Park CIC - A Community Interest Company**

1. The River Nene Regional Park (RNRP) is the implementation body for Green Infrastructure, supporting the growth areas in Northamptonshire. Since its inception in 2004, the RNRP has secured more than £15-million of Government funding to support the delivery of green infrastructure projects in Northamptonshire. Its strategic framework for the delivery of green infrastructure has been adopted throughout the county and supports the North Northamptonshire and emerging West Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategies.
2. The River Nene Regional Park:
  - Champions the provision of green infrastructure – a network of multi-functional green spaces across Northamptonshire
  - Secures funding – enabling partners to develop and deliver innovative projects that contribute to and enhance the green Infrastructure network
  - Co-ordinates the delivery of green infrastructure through partnership collaboration – ensuring that there is a strategic and joined-up approach among partner organisations involved in delivering green infrastructure. Partners include Regional Government Agencies, Local Authorities, the private and third or voluntary sectors
3. For more information, please see [www.rnnp.org](http://www.rnnp.org)

#### **WNDC notes:**

WNDC was established in 2004, and was granted planning powers (development control) in April 2006. The statutory powers and objectives of Urban Development Corporations (UDCs) such as the WNDC are set out in section 136 of the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980. A UDC's objective is to secure the regeneration of its area. This is to be achieved in particular through:

- Bringing land and buildings into effective use;
- Encouraging the development of existing and new industry and commerce;
- Creating an attractive environment; and

- Ensuring that housing and social facilities are available to encourage people to live and work in the area.

For the purpose of achieving the regeneration of its area, the WNDC may:

- Acquire, hold, manage, reclaim and dispose of land and other property;
- Carry out buildings and other operations;
- Seek to ensure the provision of water, electricity, gas, sewerage and other services;
- Carry on any business or undertaking for the purposes of regenerating its area; and
- Generally do anything necessary or expedient for this purpose, or for purposes incidental to those purposes.

WNDC website: [www.wndc.org.uk](http://www.wndc.org.uk)

