

Afterthought

It was fun doing the project. I was able to focus on one aspect of London and work extensively on it through various methods. The design of the project required a lot of deliberation and was a good exercise.

One thing I regret has been the shortage of time. I could have done a lot more research into this topic and polished the project further if, say, I have several months more. But with the timeframe I am given, I am quite happy with what I have achieved.



London's Canals 101 - A Beginner Field Guide Documentation

Chenxi Cai



I made copies of the guide book and placed them at the front counter of Mason Place. When I was making the books, there were people watching me curiously. I hope they will be interested by my idea enough to go on the treasure hunt.

One curious problem that came up was where to place the "treasure" books. I went to both canals again and searched for ideal locations. They should be neither too easy nor too hard to find. After careful observations I chose several spots where I hid them. Let's see if people will be able to find them.

Distributing

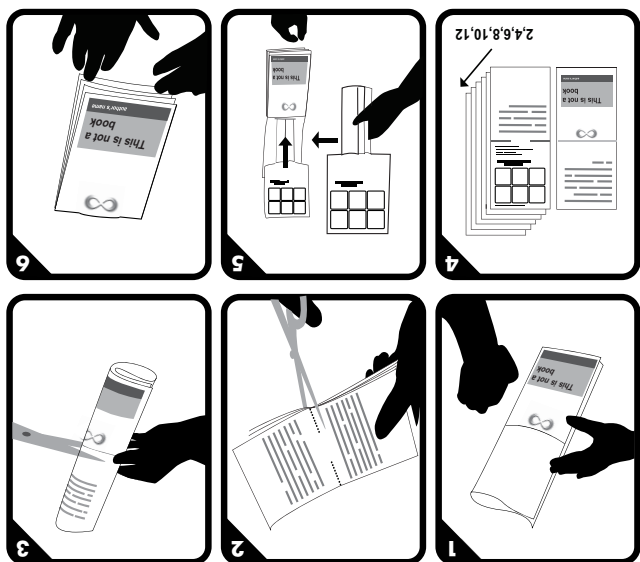
London's Canals 101 – A Beginner Field Guide



When I was visiting Leeds, I was very impressed by the way people engage with the canal, which connects Leeds and Liverpool and historically led to the boom of many towns on its route. That is why I decided to do something that reveals canals' transformed function from industrial to leisure use. I intended the project to help visitors make the first step to get to know the canals here.

Introduction

London's Canals 101 – A Beginner Field Guide



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London's Canals 101 – A Beginner Field Guide

Planning

So how do I go about doing this? I want to interview canal users and hear about their experience, so I first visited the Bow's Back River area, where the Olympics site is centered on. I was disappointed to find that it was not used quite extensively yet and many parts of the canals are still to be reclaimed, but I did see how the Olympics Park will incorporate the canals when it is finished.



I came into contact with the Inland Waterways Association, which is a non-profit organization whose members' interests include boating, towing, path walking, industrial archaeology, nature conservation and many other activities associated with the inland waterways. The London branch head was very nice and invited me to one of their gatherings at Camden Town. The talk was about how a team of volunteers spent weekends restoring canals all over the country. I also got to meet lots of canal users, including one lady who cruised through Leeds, Liverpool and back. Many of them own more than one boat.

I also tried to contact the British Waterways, and a lady at Campaign and Volunteer affairs sent me some online links. She told me that BW has just experienced a major shift of staff and her colleagues at Regeneration could not be reached for the time being.

Researching

Researching (Continued)

I took a walk along the Regent's Canal, from Regent's Park to Camden Town. The canal was rather busy with pedestrians, cyclers, photographers, and people just hanging out and chatting on the bench. Camden Market is built right by the canal and is bursting with commerce and activities. It struck as an interesting contrast with the Bow Back Rivers, which is still under development.



The project I decided on, *London's Canals 101 – A Beginner Field Guide*, consists of a guide book giving an introduction to the Regent's Canal and the Bow Back Rivers, with a scavenger hunt challenge for which I placed several more "treasure" books around the canals. I hope the project will engage its reader by actually getting them to visit the canals.

Designing