

## Along the Cotswold Canal Audio Trail Script

Location:	Bowbridge
Music	Fade In
Introduction	Along the Cotswold Canals. Welcome to Bowbridge, one of the places on the Canals Trail. This is one of a series of recordings made up of local people's experience that you can listen to at different places along the Cotswolds canals.
Music	Fade Out
Narrator	It is here at Bowbridge in the early '70s that worked first started on the restoration of the canal. Mike Ayland was one of the early campaigners who was instrumental in getting the project underway.
Mike Ayland	It was not the ideal place to start but it was the only where we could get immediate access. There was a beautiful yard, Orchard and Peer next door where we had the keys too and we used to helps ourselves to dumpers, concrete mixers and everything like that and put them back at the end of the Sunday working parties.
Narrator	From where you're standing you'll be able to see an overflow weir sometimes referred to as a by weir. This is the circular brick structure with the iron bars across the top. Circular overflow weirs are actually quite unusual. They're very efficient, allowing a large amount of water to pass quickly into a small space.
Narrator	It's now worth going over the bridge, watching out for traffic, to see the contrast between the two sides. On to go down some steps, which in itself is unusual. Once there, you'll be able to see how close the river and canal are at this point. For local resident Chris Balodis, this is a special place
Chris Balodis	There's sort of herons that congregate at this part of the river, and its sort of weird, you walk along, its very quiet, you can turn left...its a sort of tree covered, kind of leafy, always seems kinda like...I dunno...forestry but not. And then you get these beautiful birds that are just sort of fishing in the river, and they sort of stop and look at you but they're kind of weird, they are not scared. So, and for years of walking the dog around there, they just stand there...they look stunning. It's kind of a nice place to go.
Narrator	Local author Howard Beard also has happy memories of bird watching in this area. He recalls exploring the banks as a child...
Howard Beard	I also remember at one stage, a little closer to Bowbridge, moorhens had built their nest out among the reeds, and I remember going very little gingerly out to see the nest and see what the eggs were like. I fortunately got back to the bank safely.
Narrator	This wasn't Howard's only adventure on this stretch of the towpath. On another occasion he had an altogether different encounter, when he was walking with his grandmother ...
Howard Beard	. She was at that stage quite an elderly lady in her late 70's, I as I said was a small boy, and we reached the part of the canal where the river and the canal are separated only perhaps by 6 feet, including the towpath. And at that point, we were approached by two rather large dogs, and I remember to this day of being terrified of these dogs, because I was aware that my

	grandmother and I could be pushed into either the river or the canal on the other side. And it was something that was quite traumatic for a small boy, and this made me somewhat weary of large canine friends ever since.
Music	Fade In
Close	Thank you for listening, other recordings are available along the towpath or can be downloaded on our web site <a href="http://www.alongthecotswoldcanal.co.uk">www.alongthecotswoldcanal.co.uk</a>
Music	Fade Out