

PMP Surfacing

The UK's Principal Strategic Partner for **flexipave** & **flexistone**

Canal Towpaths



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flexipave 

Due to the tight nature of the site in Ashton-Under-Lyne, an old canal barge was used to transport materials to the required sections. It was also used as the main mix station, ensuring the path stayed clear of materials and improving efficiency.



Stretching over hundreds of miles, the tow paths that follow the UK's canal system offer a unique insight into the way our industrial heritage was shaped. In recent years, the Canal & River Trust has helped to reinvigorate many sections of canal towpath, allowing users to once again follow these historic water routes and reconnect with many lost parts of both urban and countryside locations.

In order to improve accessibility, KBI Flexipave has been deployed by the Canal & River Trust in several different locations throughout the UK. The key properties of the material – high porosity, flexible, eco-friendly and easy to install - make it an ideal way to combat standing water, water logging, water erosion and inefficient drainage. The ability to mix and install by hand also allows the material to be laid in very inaccessible areas.

In some cases, our installation teams have actually used vintage canal barges to transport our material and to act as mixing stations whilst working in locations with limited access, showcasing the unique synergy between old and new technology.



Below: The old towpath in Northampton was non-existent in certain places. The naturally worn path was barely visible, and heavy rainfall would leave the path impassable due to waterlogging.



Above: The naturally formed path in Ashton-Under-Lyne was a nuisance for pedestrian users and cyclists, having gone past the point of being rugged terrain and into the realms of being unsafe.

“This canal towpath is a popular route taking users from the Canal Museum at Portland Basin in Ashton-Under-Lyne into the heart of Manchester City Centre, passing the Manchester Velodrome (home of British cycling) and the Etihad stadium (home of Manchester City FC).

KBI Flexipave was chosen to be placed in three separate areas along the 8km route. These areas vary in traffic volumes but the all had the same problem of becoming muddy and/or water logged after periods of rainfall, making the towpath impassable to all users.

The KBI Flexipave material – with its high porosity allowing for natural drainage – was a perfect solution for the problem areas. It also had the added bonus of being eco-friendly due to the use of recycled car tyres within the material.

From a practical aspect, being able to lay KBI Flexipave surfacing by hand meant it was suitable for use directly behind heritage coping stones and it could be carefully laid around the natural shapes of the stones. This avoided the need to over lay surfacing material on top of the coping stone, allowing for a neat and tidy finish to the towpath.”

Rob Jowitt, Technical Engineer, Canal & River Trust



Above: The KBI Flexipave was installed on top of a simple sub-base. With a completely porous top-surface, the new path will be free from standing water and ice, creating a far more user-friendly public resource.



“The canal towpath within Northampton was well used by the public, but had severe drainage and usability issues. This meant that it was sometimes avoided as a means of travel.

Our requirement for a solution was one that was sustainable, would require minimal maintenance, but could be easily and quickly repaired if required. The logical choice to meet these design criteria was KBI Flexipave.

The works on site went very well, and the team from PMP Surfacing was always ready to discuss the material with interested parties, which included persons within the Canal & River Trust and the public. The resulting surfacing is one which blends in sympathetically with its canal based environment, but meets all our design requirements.”

Robert Drinkwater, Senior Project Manager, Canal & River Trust



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