

History of Middlewich Canals

Knowledge Organiser

1670 to 1733 – Early British canals include a section of the River Welland in Lincolnshire, the Stroudwater in Gloucestershire and in the Sankey canal in Lancashire.

1776 – This was a time when Britain was bursting with trade, industry, and commerce.

Later 1700's – Construction of the Grand Junction canal began. James Brindley oversaw building it. It linked the four great rivers of England, the Severn, the Mersey, the Thames, and the Humber.

1947 – After years of neglect and the damage caused by the war, British canals were nationalised by the government.

Today – Most commercial traffic is restricted. Most canals are used for pleasure, hire boats and day trips.



Key facts

In England, canals were used for carrying goods. Until 250 years ago, roads were poor or not there, so journeys were very slow.

In the industrial revolution in the 18th century, the idea was put forward to build canals for a faster way of delivering raw materials and goods.

The Middlewich canal was built for the salt and dairy industry. Middlewich became an important port and trading place.

Today canals are busy with narrowboats used for leisure and are visited by walkers, bird spotters and cyclists.

Key Vocabulary

Waterway – any body of water.
Canal – long, manmade strip of waterway.

Freight – goods transported by canal boats.

Navigators – people who built the canals.

Locks – stretch of water enclosed by gates built into a canal to raise and lower a boat.

Boat lift – a machine for transporting boats at two levels.

