



REGENT'S CANAL HISTORY



- 1812:** Digging starts to link the Regent's Canal Dock at Limehouse to the Grand Junction Canal at Paddington and trade from all over the world. Materials delivered by canal boat are used to build on Islington's predominantly agricultural landscape.
- 1820:** The Regent's Canal opens on 1st August 1820, from Islington to the Thames, with brass bands on a procession of boats through Islington Tunnel and fireworks in Regent's Canal Dock. The canal
- is 8.5 miles/37.7 km in length, including Islington Tunnel which is 960 yards/883 metres long.
 - cost £772,000 to build, double the estimate.
 - has twelve locks along its length.
- 1829:** The Regent's Canal and Grand Junction Companies merge to form the Grand Union Canal Company – their emblem is above right,
- 1948:** The canal network is nationalised under the British Transport Commission. British Waterways takes over canal management from 1962 until 2012 when the Canal and River Trust was formed.
- 1950s:** Horse drawn boats cease to operate in 1959, small tractors are in use to pull boats from c1940.
- 1964:** Towpaths open up to the public.
- 1970:** The GLC reports: 'Londoners, I cannot urge you enough to go and see your canal from waterbus, boat or towpath, but except for tower block dwellers and tall pedestrians, this is well-nigh impossible for most East Londoners. Canalside and towpath walks are common west of Camden Town, but non-existent in the east.'
- 1970s:** One of each pair of locks converted into a flood weir.
- 1974:** Locks made self-operating and lock keepers disappear.
- 1970/80s:** Step and ramp access built by bridges enable public access.