

The Packet

Issue 90 Spring, 2021.



Suggested Donation £1

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Front Cover: The Derby Canal on a Spring Day in 2021. .

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Chairman's & Comms Group Report.

This is a combination of reports from Eddy, David Savidge and the new Communications & Events Group. We will just remind everyone that the Society has now been merged into the Trust. Membership is unaffected other than the next card you receive will say Derby & Sandiacre Canal Trust Member. We hope you will continue to support the combined organisation going forward.

- A) Previously the Trust set the strategy for restoration and asked the Society to organise member- based activities such as volunteer effort, membership, events, and communication such as the members' meetings, Packet and monthly update. The Trust then concentrated on aspects such as planning, project management, engineering design, PR, website and anything else that needed doing. The Trust organised itself through a Board of Directors making the day-to-day decisions and meeting every three weeks. The Directors are overseen by Trustees, who meet quarterly and who are typically drawn from local authorities and the IWA. Sub groups have been set up to consider certain more technical aspects separately. These groups cover Engineering design and Communications.

In future the Working Parties work will be managed by an individual (currently David Savidge) and all other "Society" aspects through the Communications group. They will report back to the Directors. We believe it will allow us to be more co-ordinated and focus all our efforts on accelerating progress to restoring the canal.

B) Eddy has, for personal reasons and the merger of the Trust and Society, decided to step back from any organizational role within the Society and Trust. He will be greatly missed and we would like to thank him for all the hard work he has done over the past few years with the Society and Trust, in organizing the working parties, events and the monthly members meeting. He will still be supporting our work and you will see him out and about with the working parties. He wants his Sunday morning exercise of coming to the working party, and visit to the pub after, and to continue to be our expert in water voles at Draycott and our weed killer expert.



- 1) We learnt in February that one of our hard-working volunteer had passed away. Karl Fitchet had been a very active volunteer in clearing brambles and shrubs on the canal line at Borrowash and Draycott, and on-site at the cottages. Eddy had a picture of Karl being the first person to break through the massive hedge at the cottages, to start the clearance of the site. He was also renowned for the enthusiastic way he would take down ceilings and plaster off the walls, when we were getting back to the structure of the building. His energy on site will be greatly missed. Our sympathies and condolences go out to his partner Linda, following her sudden loss.

We would also like to express our condolences at the loss of Derek Hathaway, who has helped the Trust in a number of ways and organised the annual members walk with David Hayes. Derek has been a long-time supporter of our restoration and we will miss his “encouragement”.

- 2) At the cottages work has been able to progress despite the Covid 19 lock-down albeit with smaller, socially distanced teams. Fortunately, construction has always been a Government permitted activity. The progress throughout the last six months has been considerable with an emphasis on finding trades to undertake skilled work so that electricians, plumbers, Joiners, plaster boarders and skimmers have been brought it to work separately in their own rooms/cottage and in their own little bubbles. Half the external doors have also been installed. All the cottages have had floorboards laid, insulation squeezed into all the crevices, studding erected, internal door frames installed and trades have now completed the first-fix electrics, plumbing and plastering. We are on course to complete the car park and other works to be able to rent out the cottages in the summer.

(C) We have also worked on the café toilet block and, at the time of writing, brick walls have been completed by Don and Derek (despite the winter weather) and the roof is currently being built under Scott's close supervision. The new external staircase is in position awaiting final decorative panels and paint and we are awaiting contractors on site to put the paths in to the rear of the cottages. A phenomenal effort and a real credit to the team. And the work continues with an aim to complete all work this calendar year. Join us on the summer walk to inspect the works.



Anyone walking past the cottages will have seen that work started on the Draycott canal before Christmas. Not the best time to start earthworks, but unfortunately it took too long for the funder Network Rail and the contractor, Killingley, to agree contracts. Perhaps we shouldn't complain as the offer of £350k funding from Network Rail is worth a bit of legal hassle. However this meant that when Storm Christophe hit in January we had so much water that NR asked (is that the right word?) us to allow the excess water through our work site and relieve flooding of the railway at Draycott. They offered to pay for the extra work and have since met that promise.

(D) Putting things right is taking a lot longer than damaging them. Given the volume of water NR want to prevent a recurrence. As our canal water level is higher than the Hopwell Road drains, the canal could not be used to disperse this water without some serious pumping capacity. This didn't seem to be viable so the current plan is that NR will pay for enhanced works which will include the original repair together with a new pipeline below the existing path to transfer water alongside the canal and under Derby Road Bridge. This represents a substantial increase in cost and we await a formal agreement from them, due by the end of April.

At the same time we expect to mobilise ourselves so that we can complete the original works and lay the pipeline in the summer. We'd then move the voles in September and finish the job by November. Fingers crossed and watch this space, but it means we could have a second stretch of canal in place this year.

E) Zoom has continued to support our monthly social meetings including the Society AGM. The first one was the AGM & that meeting agreed to amalgamate the Society into the Trust at the end of the Society financial year in March, which has now occurred.

We have also held three Zoom social evenings with a talk on the Wilts and Berks in January, given by Steve Bacon, which was very interesting and enlightening. Their restoration is 40 miles long and they have it split into four 10 mile zones. Then a talk by Chris Madge on our own restoration plus the trip boat in February and finally, a talk on the Bude Canal in March. This keeps many of the membership in touch but sadly not those dependant on paper only. For that we can but apologise and hope that the reduction in the infection rate of the pandemic will allow a return to the Social evenings at the Coach and Horses, possibly on 22nd June if all the restrictions continue to be lifted per the Government's road-map.

In July there will be the usual walk & talk along the canal line to take in the Draycott developments (Cottages and canal) and plans for the Breaston stretch. .

F) More behind the scenes news is that the large building that was a car repair shop alongside the canal at Longmoor Lane in Breaston has been sold with plans for re-development into flats and commercial use. This gives us an opportunity to resolve a long term problem section. Talks are positive with the new owner who is very supportive of the canal restoration, but there is a significant challenge of retaining the current car park and fitting in our canal. Discussions have been on-going about the feasibility of parking some cars behind the building and having a reduced width canal for 80 m or so. Needless to say this has turned out to be difficult because the 9.4m width of the canal line on the east side of the lane at what would be the lift bridge



point does not support a 6m wide lift bridge, room for the barriers and a 3.5m wide road access point.

G) Further to that the Engineering team have also been discussing another lift bridge requirement for Hopwell Road. Currently the requirement is to talk to Highways as to what width the bridge needs to be and what speed it must support i.e. two lanes and 60 mph national speed limit, or perhaps traffic light controlled single lane with a 30 mph limit. The latter would suit the approach to the surrounding farms and the cottages by slowing the traffic. It would make more sense as the road width to the railway bridge quite narrow. We await the further input.

H) At Sandiacre, Borrowash and Angler's Lane there are discussions continuing with Severn Trent about the sewers and solutions for their movement to allow navigation once again. We have had senior level access to Severn Trent, but as any sewer movement besides water has to be done by them in- house (they can't risk contaminating a water source) this is likely to be an expensive process. Our priority is for the Sandiacre Lock project and we are hopeful this will be completed in 2021 and fundraising is already well advanced thanks to receipt of a significant legacy.

To complicate the issue further Severn Trent also wish to lay a new water supply line from Borrowash Station road to the old Celanese site and of course they want to put it along the canal line. So, another subject for discussion with the objective ensuring it ends up under the towpath so as not to introduce yet another problem to be sorted out later! We are also hopeful that we may be able to access some of the £5m STW fund for community works – We just can't get it for the STW work itself.

J) A lot more work has been carried out at Spondon. The 80m section previously owned by the developer has now been transferred to us and we have taken over responsibility for its management. The latest change alongside the Wheeldon site has been the removal of the Heras fence alongside the canal. It has now been relocated to the edge of the site on the north bank. Makes the place look a whole lot better.

A short fence at each end is being considered to prevent anyone riding into the canal while we await further dig-out opportunities to extend the line.

K) There is considerable interest in improving cycleways, which has been increased by the pandemic. The government is keen to get us all out in the fresh air and are committing funds to support it. You will have seen the cycle path built by Derby City Council between Megalaughton Lane and Angler's Lane. We couldn't stop them putting it down the middle of the line as they own the land, but they have agreed that we can move it to put the canal in place. Following this "discussion" we are now coordinating with them to restore the canal section from Angler's Lane to Wheeldon's with some funding from them to cover the cycle path part of the development – in the right place of course.

We are currently talking to local authorities to promote the cycle path from Derby to Nottingham along our canal line. We need to ensure that our canal and a cycle path and various users all work together, but the opportunity to use this funding pot to complete missing stretches of land and particularly the fields that lead across from the Derby Road bridge in Draycott to Fosse Close at the Ockbrook is currently being explored. Of course, early indications suggest that the current owners will not be keen to sell a strip through the middle of farmland.



L) We have also acquired a stretch of land owned by Sustrans between the M1 and Risley Lane. While there are further small pockets of land and a few access issues to deal with we are now looking to improve the path and brand it as the canal path. The local Rotary are looking at a plan to help with this work.

So, there is a lot happening even though physically on the ground it might not appear so.

(Most of the land referred to is the 45 degree line from near bottom left to the M1..Ed)

For Sale in aid of the Trust Funds – I have 3 Oak nest boxes topped with old cottages tile £10 (or more if you wish!) If they need posting that will be extra but around Derby locality they can be delivered while I'm out for a ride. Of course it's a bit late for this year but birds need time to get used to something new in their environment so buy now & perhaps next year you'll have some nesting birds!

Or how about a Tree Bee box? These are recycled pallet material. £5. Once used the bees won't use the same nest site again so in that instance it can go in the bin. A typical tree bee colony only numbers 300 so there won't be a big swarm about. We had one in our nest box a while back which quite offended the blue tits who had used the box the year before. The bees are quite inoffensive & you really wouldn't know they are there.

Contact Roger Ashmead 07814 927154 or rsashmead@Yahoo.co.uk if you want one.



A short walk around Sandiacre – by (Derek Hathaway) & David Hayes.

Starting from the centre of Sandiacre, this loop takes you along the Erewash Canal, then for a short distance along the Derby & Sandiacre, returning via Springfield Park, just under 2 miles in total.

Access: There are no public car parks near the centre of Sandiacre, but roadside parking can usually be found (but be considerate to residents). Or, if you plan to end in a pub, both the Red Lion and White Lion have parking, as does the Bridge Inn on Longmoor Lane (starting from ③). Alternatively, there is usually space along Lock Lane.



Travelling by bus, the centre of Sandiacre is served by the i4 between Derby and Nottingham (www.tinyurl.com/trenti4) and my15 (www.tinyurl.com/trentmy15) between Long Eaton and Ilkeston. Cross over the canal bridge heading towards Stapleford and immediately turn right down to the towpath alongside the Erewash Canal. This broad canal was completed in 1779, starting at Trent Lock and heading north for nearly 12 miles to the Derbyshire coalfields; it was fully re-opened in 1983 after a vigorous campaign by the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Association (ECP&DA). Originally, it joined the Cromford Canal but there are no realistic plans for restoration



.After about half a mile, you can see the eastern terminus of the Derby & Sandiacre Canal on the opposite side.

The canal here is running parallel to the River Erewash and to your left are Toton Sidings, potentially the site for an HS2 station.

Continue to the bridge and cross the canal. The buildings here

originally housed the lock-keeper and today are the museum of the ECP&DA. This is normally open on Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays but precise times are on their website www.tinyurl.com/ecpda).

Either continue up the lane or start at the end of the Derby canal by passing across the front of the museum. You immediately come upon Sandiacre Bottom Lock, currently under restoration by the Trust.

Carry on along the canal route; a short incline shows where the Top Lock is buried. After that, the canal passed under the road, using Cockayne's Bridge, with the Bridge Inn alongside. The bridge has been blocked off to make it safe after a vehicle fire caused structural damage in 2019. The Trust agreed to this, having obtained assurances from the Council that it would be restored when necessary for the canal re-opening. For the moment, use the steps on the left hand side, cross Longmoor Road and regain the canal using the track on the right. Leave the canal route almost



immediately, cross over the road to Springfield Park using the gate then traverse the length of the park aiming towards the top right hand corner.

Once there, the park extends a little further to the right and you exit on to Kensington Road. Turn left and follow the road round to the right. At the T-junction turn left on to Sandringham Road.

Follow that road until you come back to Longmoor Road and follow it down to the left. Once under the A52 bridge and past the junction with Lock Lane, you find yourself walking parallel to the Erewash Canal again which takes you back to the centre of Sandiacre and your start point.



It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Rachel (Read) Russell. For many years, Rachel printed The Packet at Royce's, (with permission), which saved us a great deal of money. These editions were in the early years printed every 2 weeks, but membership was low then. As membership grew, the frequency of The Packet lessened. Rachel and husband Dave kept all the membership details, did lots of recruiting at shows and working parties and were responsible for the distribution of The Packet. Dave, Rachel, Doug, Paul Birtles and I spent many evenings around our dining room table, stuffing envelopes, sticking on labels and putting them into bundles for delivery or for posting.



The evenings were full of fun as we consumed copious amounts of wine and endless tubes of Pringles. We got a superb system in place and could do the job in 3 hours.

Doug and I also spent some lovely time on our boats together; they on 'Wild Rover' and we on 'Eliza'. Rachel was my friend for many years and she will be sadly missed. If you knew Rachel and want to raise a glass to her, a G&T or a Southern Comfort would be very appropriate.

Judy Flack.

BLACKWOOD CLARINETS

INNOVATIVE CLARINET ENSEMBLE BASED IN THE EAST MIDLANDS



Blackwood is an ensemble of clarinetists drawn from bands and orchestras of the East Midlands. The players join together to showcase this most versatile of wind instruments. Over the last five years Blackwood has developed from a small group of friends to become a true choir, from the piccolo clarinet to the booming contra bass.

Blackwood enjoys sponsorship from both Windblowers, Nottingham's specialist retailer, and, courtesy of Barnes and Mullins Ltd, Vandoren, the world renowned French reed and mouthpiece maker.

In 2019 the group left the U.K. for the first time, performing 3 concerts in the Marina Alta, Costa Blanca area of Spain.

The ensemble regularly play in support of good causes, most recently the Children's Bereavement Centre, a charity based in Newark.

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Arboreal Update – Roger Ashmead.

Wherever you walk along the canal one thing is certain, there are a lot of trees about and they are all at different types and at different stages of their development. It's no surprise therefore that there is quite a bit of consistent effort required to keep things in order. Since becoming trained to use a chainsaw I now walk along looking at the trees & hedges with quite a different view point, and no that is not just 'can I chop it down?'

Sandiacre.

This was a piece of work carried out along the stretch adjacent to Sandiacre top lock that was done before the Covid restrictions were in place. The requirement was to pollard one of the crack willows that adorn our banks. In this particular case the tree had been innocently growing in position for many years only for a developer to have built a house quite close to it. As a result, when the wind got up the tree would bang on the edge of the house roof. The Trust received a request, via Derbyshire County Council, for it to assess the situation & deal with it accordingly.



When the team arrived on site we were faced with this: -

As can be seen, there were a clutch of trunks to be dealt with around 6in (15cm) diameter. Most of these trunks were able to be simply felled, snedded and logged. However several leant towards the house & for these Chris Shaw attached a winch to the trunk and pulled it toward the tow path prior to the final cut in what we shall call an assisted fell. A touch unorthodox perhaps but very effective in keeping the trunks from falling onto the roof, the fence, or into the garden.

The pollarded tree was left looking like the next photo and the resulting logs were neatly stacked alongside the path. Crack willow isn't the best wood for a log burner but can be used if dried well, especially if burnt in an enclosed log burner. Of course, there is the advantage that the wood comes cheap! For our part just so long as it disappears off the canal line we are quite happy as green crack willow will re-root & grow again if left on the ground. Needless to say the log fairies made the pile disappear in a short space of time. The tree will regrow and in due course, though it can be cut earlier next time to prevent the house being affected again.



At Spondon one of the crack willows along this stretch fell onto the allotments in August last year. The allotment holders expressed concern



about the trees alongside the boundary as some were creaking and moving considerably during the high winds in January, 2021. On the grounds of safety a

small team was deployed to take down the trees. For various reasons this turned out to be a long job and has been on-going ever since several days a week.



About 10 trunks have been removed, several of them needing assisted felling to enable them to fall safely onto the canal line and while doing so the banks-men at either side needed to be vigilant for walkers & cyclists. All the wood has been cut up & either left in stacks that have since disappeared or have, in some cases, been delivered to a few locals in need of wood to replenish their wood stores. We have gained a few members out of that too.



However, in taking out the trees and clearing the ground it became obvious that over time an awful lot of rubbish such as metal sheeting, asbestos reinforced cement sheeting, broken glass sheets and general junk such as old chairs etc. had built up alongside the original fence of the allotments. The original fence had since collapsed allowing much of the waste to spill down the canal bank. Chris Shaw & Keith in particular have put in a big effort to collect together all the junk into segregated piles or builder's bags which are currently in the process of being removed. Here's just some of it and loaded ready for final removal. There were 4 bags of glass amongst the 10 on the trailer. Well worth removing.

The allotments management provided a professional team to remove the asbestos containing material, which has made quite a difference and a flatbed trailer for the junk. However, while the professionals did the asbestos material, the Trust volunteers were the ones to move the junk from the canal line onto the trailer. Quite a task.

In early April Covid restrictions were lifted allowing larger working parties to restart so the Trust wasted no time in deploying a team to the site to chip a lot of the brash and generally help with the clearance of the site



The result was a large area opened up & now mowable once the vegetation regrows. 3 months of effort but what a difference. We have had nothing but good comments from the locals passing by as to what a good job we have done. All much appreciated.

Chris Shaw has also provided some entertainment for everyone by being creative. We now have Minions, Owls and a Squirrel to adorn the line at Anglers Lane and their photos have gone around the world on social media. Take a walk along there and see for yourself.



Ivy Cutting.

This is a new task but one brought on from two fronts. At Angler's Lane we had a small tree fall during the storms earlier this year. When we cut that up to clear it we found that the tree trunk was about 3 in (7.5cm) diameter with a build-up of ivy taking that diameter to around 10 in (25 cm) diameter. Around the same time local arborealists 'Canopy' were asked to look at Sandiacre & make recommendations. They made a similar comment that the trees at the stretch in Sandiacre between Cockayne's bridge and Bostocks Lane are in danger of being overwhelmed by ivy. They suggested that we cut a block out of the main ivy stalks on all our trees as soon as possible.



A start was made as a trial at Sandiacre by a team of two people and 2 hours later around 20 trees had been so treated using handsaws and loppers. Some of the trees are a lot worse than others & the ivy stalks can be 3 in (75mm) diameter so it can take a while per tree.



At Angler's Lane, with the larger working team, many of the trees on the 80m section have now been cut so this year it will be feasible to see the leaves of the tree & not the ivy. Certainly for the larger ivy stalks the chainsaw was much quicker.

A further survey showed that the same problem exists at Chellaston where many of the crack willows have a significant ivy problem, so there is plenty to do to keep our trees in good condition and the public walking by as safe as is reasonably possible over the next few months. Some of the trees below are proposed to come down in the autumn as having large crack willow leaning out over a path is not good long term as it will surely fall sooner or later and the last thing we want is to harm anyone.

MEWP Training.

As if all the above wasn't enough the Trust decided that it would be a good idea if some of its chainsaw operators could operate a MEWP (Mobile Elevated Work Platform), otherwise known as a Cherry Picker to some. (Most I think. Ed) This came about as one recommendation from Canopy was that we pollard a tree on the Borrowash West stretch. As a result a price was obtained & agreed and Chris Madge and Roger Ashmead were nominated to be trained by Park Training near Loughborough to gain a City & Guilds Accreditation. There were two parts to the course, firstly the training with the MEWP and then the use of the chainsaw while up in the MEWP basket.



It turned out to be reasonable weather even though it was February and there was a period of classroom training, then a transport to Stanford Hall where the MEWP was located followed by practical training. As you can see we did manage to get up in the air – Chris Madge in action – though there was a lot of checking & levelling carried out before we reached this point!



The following day we returned for a second session of using the chainsaw from the MEWP. We learned that the MEWP would indeed stop working if it became too out of balance as the first thing the instructor did was to get stuck in the air for a while because his weight had caused the feet to sink a little and the tilt alarm to activate. We had to use the emergency lowering method to rescue. All good training. We then learned different types of cut whether intended for dropping a branch, or section of a branch, directly to the ground or a shorter length to be cut & snapped manually so as to be dropped to a position to one side. The scenario put to us was, 'well you might be over a greenhouse'. Hmm. We managed quite well during training but we would have smashed the odd pane before we got the hang of it completely!!!!



Finally there was the assessment day and we returned to demonstrate our learning, thankfully successfully. The Trust now has two people trained to be able to use a chainsaw from a MEWP. So if you are walking about the canal line in the autumn you might just find us up in the air with banks-men watching out for folks on the ground while more difficult trees are dealt with. We have several trees on the waiting list that need surgery.



AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE DERBY & SANDIACRE CANAL TRUST

SPRING 2021

Dear Neighbours,

All across the UK disused canals are being restored and abandoned waterways are being rebuilt generating huge benefits for the neighbouring communities. Canals now enhance the local environment adding to the amenity value, leisure and wellbeing opportunities, job creation and wildlife habitats as well as preparing for use by narrowboats and for other water activities.

Many of you may be aware of the long-standing plans to restore the former Derby Canal to full navigation from the Trent & Mersey Canal at Swarkestone to the Erewash Canal at Sandiacre via central Derby. The Derby & Sandiacre Canal Trust (a registered charity), with the support of Derby City, Derbyshire County, Erewash Borough and South Derbyshire Councils, and Sustrans (the national cycling charity), has already acquired significant sections of the original route and sections of the canal at Draycott and Spondon are currently being fully restored. The Trust now owns, or controls through partners, 94% of the 12 mile canal line and has outline planning permission to restore the entire waterway.

As part of the ongoing project, the Derby and Sandiacre Canal Trust has recently acquired from Sustrans, two sections of former canal land to the north of Longmoor Lane Breaston which were superfluous to their network. We are therefore contacting all persons who we believe immediately adjoin that land, or live close by, to inform them of this change.

In the long term, the mission statement of the Canal Trust is the full restoration of the canal. In the short term, however, we will be looking to improve the public footpath (which was the original towpath along the southern bank of the canal), to undertake some tidying up of the vegetation using volunteer labour and to generally enhance the canal corridor environment. However, under the current Covid 19 restrictions it seems unlikely that we will be able to start such work for some weeks!

As a registered charity our objective is to improve our area for the benefit of the wider community, and we operate solely through unpaid volunteers committed to give their time to enhance their community for the long term. **One immediate benefit for neighbours is the increase in property values alongside a restored canal of up to 19%.** We are also aware of land drainage issues, some of which have been caused by the canal being filled in. Please go and see for yourselves the canal rebuilding at Draycott, where we are working with Network Rail to solve the flooding of the railway. You can also see on Hopwell Road, the work the volunteers are doing to restore "Canal Cottages"; in addition to the three homes, there will be a coffee shop, meeting rooms and a canal museum.

Whilst the Trust already has over 700 members, we very much welcome the involvement and support of all neighbours. Further details of our work can be found on our website www.derbycanal.org.uk and you can follow our activities on our Facebook **@Derby-Canal** and Twitter **@derbycanal.org.uk** A membership application form is attached for you to show your support and get regular updates; new members (and volunteers) are always welcome! I have also attached a "Friends of the Derby & Sandiacre Canal" form if you would prefer to help us by making a small monthly contribution to the Trust. If you choose to support us, please fill in the Gift Aid section if you pay Income Tax, it costs you nothing and we receive an extra 25p from the Taxman. Please see Gary Harding at membership@derbycanal.org.uk should you have any queries about membership.

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding the canal land next to you, please do not hesitate to contact me at: paul@derbycanal.org.uk, but if you have queries about the Canal Project generally please contact our Chairman, Chris Madge at: chair@derbycanal.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

Paul Turner, Founder/Director, The Derby & Sandiacre Canal Trust Ltd. Company limited by guarantee 02986417. Registered charity 1042227.

The Breaston Canal Towpath Walk.

As many of you may remember from the talk I gave at the Society AGM back in November 2019 (which was subsequently printed in the following edition of "The Packet") one of the reasons for me starting the canal restoration project was, perhaps light-heartedly, wanting a moat at the bottom of fields on the farm. Well, this has taken a step forward – the Trust has recently bought from Sustrans two stretches of the former canal land north of Longmoor Lane, Breaston bordering our farm.



Some years ago, when Sustrans had significant Millennium funding they acquired this land in the hope that they could extend National Cycle Route 6 along the canal line east from the Navigation to the M1. The route subsequently was diverted to run along Longmoor Lane to then turn south down Poplar Road leaving two pieces of surplus land. Fortunately we had an agreement with Sustrans that we could buy canal land back from them at an agreed price which is what we have done with a loan from a Member.



The "cunning plan", ahead of full restoration, is to rebuild the towpath (which is a public footpath/Right of Way) along the full length from the Navvy to the M1. To what specification will depend on funding and we are current starting to seek permissions from the other owners along this section. We are also consulting with the many neighbours and have hand delivered the "Open Letter" below. My thanks to Cllr Kevin Miller who helped post half the 83 letters through letterboxes. It will be interesting to see how many members this generates; I have put a secret mark on the forms so that Gary can monitor this!

Currently the footpath is a mud bath in winter and is certainly not navigable by anyone other than the fittest with strong shoes. In due course, post "Lockdown", we will be looking for volunteers to do some initial "jungle bashing" and then start serious planning, design and fundraising when we have clearance from the other landowners.



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An Investment Opportunity – The Cottages.

Over the past few months the Directors and Trustees have been reviewing the position with regard to the Canal Cottages on Hopwell Road at Draycott.

The decision has been made to retain all the properties, with a view to letting them on assured tenancies, and to acknowledge the huge amount of volunteer work that has gone into the project; it also means that we retain full control of the whole site for the benefit of the Canal. This was agreed so that the long-term rental income can support the maintenance needs of the fully restored canal and to allow the Trust to benefit from capital appreciation of the property. We will therefore need to arrange long term finance to cover the full costs of the development. It is anticipated that the total value of the completed development will be in the region of £1,200,000 and that the total borrowing to complete the restoration should not exceed £625,000.

We have been well supported by various lenders including Society members, and Trust Directors and Trustees when we needed you most and at the riskier time for the project. In order to finish the “Canal Cottages” project we need to borrow a further £100,000 and, rather than approach a commercial lender, we are offering the opportunity for members to lend funds to the Trust on the following beneficial terms:

A 5-year fixed term with early repayments only at the Trust’s discretion.

Interest fixed at a rate of at least 3% p.a. over the term.

Interest to be paid annually on loans calculated to the 31st of March each year (with basic rate Income Tax deducted at source).

The security offered will be in the form of a caution placed on the land title to rank after the commercial lender, which will state that there is no disposal of the properties without consent of the collective members.

The minimum amount loaned will be £5,000.

Repayment will be made on the 5th anniversary unless you agree otherwise at the time.

The interest rate has been set at the current rate, which compares favourably to the market, but also provides certainty and some benefit to the Trust over commercial loans it would otherwise have to take out. However, when you receive your interest payment, you may decide to donate some or all of the interest to the Trust. If you are a UK taxpayer you can also gift aid this donation, which currently stands at 25%, so for every £100 donated we actually receive £125.

Should you wish to lend to the Trust or you need any further information, please contact either myself, Chris Madge (Chairman) or Chris Rees Fitz-Patrick (Director).

Whatever you decide please let me thank you, on behalf of the Trust, for your current and ongoing support of our work.

Derek Troughton, Treasurer

From the Archives.

Memories of Derby and its Canal. The Packet Spring 2006.

Ken Elliot, who lives in Australia, contacted us recently after hearing of the Society, from friends who had been to Britain last year and, as he used to live next to the canal, he thought that some of his memories might be of interest.

Following discharge from the Army after World War 2, Ken went back to his occupation as an electrician for British Celanese at Spondon but the pay was only £5 per week and he found that it was impossible to live on his wages.

He vividly remembers the day when he stood at the end of the street in tears not knowing what to do – baby Ann was on the way, rent was £2.10.0 (£2.50) and income tax was 1/- (5p), leaving the family to live on £2.9.0 (£2.45) a week.

Ken decided to do something about it and found a better paid job at Rolls-Royce, where he worked on Rockets, Submarines, Oil Engines, Test Beds and just about everything else, but still couldn't afford to live decently. So in 1964 the family decided to emigrate to Australia.

His life before taking this momentous step was very happy; he lived at 181, Siddals Road and the house was part of a block of houses which stood between the factories on Siddals Road, backing on to the canal.

It was close to where the Nursing Home now stands on Station Approach. He was born in 1922 in Liversage Street Cottages across the road from the DRI. This was a



very close knit community which he misses greatly, and one of his memories as a child was of a Guy Fawkes night bonfire in one of the cottage yards when he picked up an unexploded "Little Demon" firework. Needless to say, it went off and split his hand open – remember that there was no NHS then and treatment wasn't so easy to obtain. He recalls that the best

source of wood for the fire was the canal at the bottom of the garden. *See picture which we are pretty sure is the back of Ken's house.*

To him, the canal was always neglected and in 1929 he saw his first motorised narrowboat – it made a change not to have to jump out of the way of the horse! He remembers that the boaters were small, dark people looking like gypsies.

Naturally, living where he did he remembers boats at the wharves on both sides of the river and in Phoenix lock. One of his recollections is of cattle drinking at the

overspill pool near the junction with the Little Eaton branch, prior to going to the cattle market and slaughter house.

This pool was known to Ken as the Pike Pool and was situated around where the timber yard is on Old Nottingham Road, just before Pentagon Vauxhall. Its outlet was next to the Pub by the Trent bus garage – the same culvert from which Severn-Trent gave us the sandstone blocks a few years ago.

Nearer to home he knew the White Bear Pub where they kept budgies in cages - a novelty then – and also, White Bear lock and the long bridge: the lock was the scene of a family tragedy when his cousin Wendy drowned in it.

As you can imagine, Basses Rec was his playground and his memories are of crossing the canal bridge from Siddals Road, passing the allotments, and over the Mill Fleam (known as the Rat Water to him and his mates) probably using York Bridge, and going to the Public Baths on the Rec. There were allotments to cross between the canal and Mill Fleam then.



He also went further afield and used to cross the river on the footbridge which was attached to 5 arches bridge (I can remember that in the 60s as I used to come to Derby from Liverpool, train spotting, and stand on the bridge Ed.) and ventured via the bridge arch to Little Meadows where the Derby Serenaders Marching Band used to practice on Bass's Rec., remember that this is the 1930s and they are still marching). Ken reckons that the Derby Canal Company made more money from fishing licences than boat tolls then – 6d for a child ticket and 1/6d for an adult, not small sums of money in those days – the company only took £1 in tolls during World War 2.

There were also pigsties into which they went for a dare and you can imagine what happened when they went home stinking! On the plus side they milked cows at a farm there – remember how close to the city centre this is – and took a free pail of milk home.

Earth, Wind & Fire (Crick Show). The Packet Summer 2006.

What a show, those who have read the Waterways Press will know what happened but only a few of us know what happened before the show.

Judy and I drove over to Paul Birtles' house on the Friday before the show to collect a few things, Peter Brookes having already arrived, ready to travel with Paul and the caravan.

We set off at about 13:30 and headed for the M1 in the rain and no sooner had we crossed the Trent when the off-side caravan tyre blew.

Paul stopped on the hard shoulder and no sooner had we passed them when our driver's side windscreen wiper stopped working – this is on the M1 in the rain

remember. I rang Peter to see if they were ok and he said that they had a spare and would fit it and carry on. Meanwhile we had exited the motorway at junction 23 and headed into Loughborough to find a FIAT dealer.

We rang Paul to be told that the spare did not fit and Peter had scrambled down the bank in the pouring rain to meet a relative who was taking him to a garage in Sawley for a new tyre.

There is no FIAT dealership in Loughborough.

The nearest was in either Leicester or Kegworth and as neither of us know Leicester we opted for Kegworth seeing as it was next to our friend's house!

Picture the following – Peter scrambling down the bank in the rain and Judy driving along with her head to one side looking through the passenger windscreen.

It was too dangerous for us so we stopped until the rain cleared.

The garage was of course very busy but accommodated us after about half an hour and a further half hour later we were on our way, some £140 lighter – it couldn't have been the wiper of course, it had to be the complete motor unit.



As we approached junction 24 I rang Peter again to see how they were, to be told that they were just at junction 24, some £54 lighter. He said this just as he passed us waiting at the lights, not 20 yards away. There then followed an uneventful trip to Crick, except for the rain.

If that was bad, then how would you describe the show ground: it had rained and rained and rained so that the whole place was a quagmire. We heard later that a street drain suction tanker took three tanks full of mud from the bottom of the entrance field and it was still difficult to move.

It took a long time to set up the marquee and make it reasonably waterproof and tempers were a bit frayed by the time we finished.

There then followed some fun and games trying to park the caravan on a muddy sloping field. Finally we all settled down to a lousy night's sleep. Saturday dawned and we had a reasonable day on the stall, except for the rain, sleet and gale force winds. We then went down the Pub for a meal. This turned out to be the best part of the weekend with a good meal and a lot of fun involving most of the people & staff in the Pub and a LOT of drink.

Sunday dawned with remarks about people having a BBQ at 7am. There was the smell of burning meat and a great pall of smoke coming from the west - the local dog food processing plant had gone up in smoke overnight.



A Fire Engine being used to pump water from the canal some $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to the fire in the village – the pipes ran along the road which had to be closed to accommodate it. This unfortunately meant that roads from the M1 to the site were closed and diversions in place with the resulting chaos being so bad that the local radio station was advising people not to bother going to the show. Consequently attendance was way down and we were sitting around for long periods twiddling our

thumbs.

Monday improved slightly with better weather but attendance was way down due to the diversions and bad weather and consequently we only just about broke even.

What a weekend!

Trials & Tribulations at Borrowash.

Oh how we wish we had an active community group at Borrowash!

Over the last few months we have spent an inordinate amount of time and effort at Borrowash doing other than restoring the lock. First people complained that the remaining seat was an attraction to the 'local' youth population so could we remove it and, when we did, people complained that there was nowhere to sit! The other seat was destroyed by vandals some time ago.

Then the youths moved to the lock side and proceeded to try to fill the lock with cans & and bottles, dog owners tried with bags of dog poo, and graffiti appeared. This prompted the Borough Council to complain and also question safety, as someone might wander down there in the dark and fall in. (Their remedy was to erect a knee high solid steel barrier, making it far more dangerous).



We pointed out that we are the victims of anti-social behaviour and not the cause of it. The matter was suggested that the matter should be referred to the local police who had, apparently, moved them on from 2 other places, so why not the lock

We eventually took some of the matters into our own hands and bought a pair of waders, cleared the lock. The bags of rubbish were deposited at the parish rooms for disposal.

On top of all this one resident insisted that we replace some trees which he had planted on OUR land, not to mention the shed shown in the last issue.

The shed has been removed and the fence reinstated.



One of the bottles had "xxxxxxx's bottle do not touch or face the consequences"

Not enough for a prosecution but clearly an educated vandal.

It's not just youths that are trouble, some of the vandalism has been caused by adults in the past and most dog owners are adults.

A Risk Assessment (ASBO) is now being done.

ASBO: A Statement of the Bl.....n' obvious.

The parish council have not yet replied to our written and active.

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BUYING A CARPET????**
THE LAST TIME YOU HAD A CARPET FITTED

Did the Fitters cut your
doors **FREE OF
CHARGE**
WE DO!

Did the fitters **MOVE** your
**FURNITURE WITHOUT
CHARGE**
if you could not manage
WE DO!

Did they **TAKE YOUR
OLD CARPET UP** if you
couldn't manage
WE DO!

**WERE THEY ON TIME,
POLITE and BAG up all the
WASTE afterwards**
WE DO!

Did they do a
GOOD JOB
WE DO!

Was the fitting **STILL FREE**
even on the cheapest
carpets and Vinyl
OURS IS!

Did the shop offer to
**BIND any WASTE into
MATS & RUGS for you**
WE DO !

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SATISFIED in any way,
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