

## Chairman's Update

### November 2025

Welcome to the November update. I'm writing after a significant change in weather with autumn well and truly arrived. As a result it looks like the summer closures by CRT are being lifted progressively as water returns to the system.



I have to admit that I've escaped the worst of the recent weather as I've been away on holiday in Japan. Whilst it was great to have a break we did manage to look at some alternative canal boat services. We travelled with a large group including our treasurer. We concluded we don't think there's much to learn and we came away thinking how professional our offering is in comparison. However perhaps on one score we are a bit out of date. The picture shows the complicated controls of a do it all toilet, all in Japanese. However, I'm not sure this would work in place of our porta-potti, bearing in mind that our customers couldn't get the hang of a composting toilet!



This means of course that my fellow trustees/directors have worked hard in my absence to provide the continuing progress detailed below.

#### Working Parties

The focus for working parties this month has again been on making sure we were not going to be affected by flooding. With the heavy rains we saw the river level shoot up by 1.5 metres and increased water flows at the Draycott cottages.



As you can see the flows were substantial, but were dealt with by the cleared pathways along the ditch already reported. It also tested out the car park drainage at the café and the new system passed muster well, disposing of excess water within minutes.



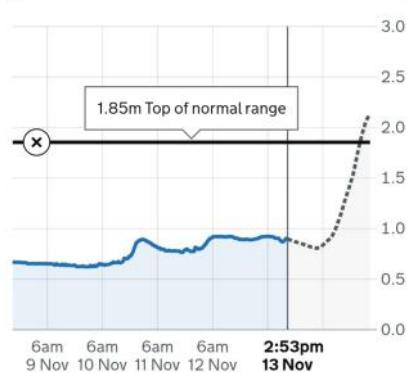
Latest at 2:30pm on 13 November ①

Height 0.90m ① Trend Steady ① State Normal ①

Normal range 0.58m to 1.85m

Height in metres over the last 5 days and up to 36 hour forecast

This station includes an automated model. The highest level in the model is 2.13m on 15 November at 2:30am. [Read more about how we forecast river levels.](#)



Elsewhere the teams have been undertaking a lot of work. The Borrowash wall continues and we are now looking to get some engineering assessments to assess how we may need to strengthen the canal walls alongside the railway line. We need to know how to avoid a potentially devastating breach onto the railway. We are also looking to see if we can get funding to cover the cost.



We have put a lot of effort to tidying the area at the top of the Sandiacre section. The bridge under Longmoor Road was blocked some years ago and the undergrowth had taken over some of the sections alongside Longmoor Road and Sandringham Road. Our teams have now



cleared the area so the public can once again read our interpretation panel. The team also cleared the undergrowth further along the canal line to the west of the bridge and heading towards



Bostocks Lane. This is a public access path which quickly closes in if not managed. It's also the area which is most likely to block the Longmoor Road and associated footpath.



Back at Hopwell Road, Draycott the forestry team has started to tackle the old hawthorn hedge separating the winding hole and Hopwell Road. The hawthorn has been left untended for many years so it will be difficult to lay.



However whilst it may not look so good for a year or two it will improve over time and provide further bird nesting territory.



And finally we now have a date for the formal renaming of Dagleys Lock at Borrowash. Feel free to join us at 11am on

3rd December for a short ceremony.

## Riverboat

The riverboat finished operations as planned at the end of October. The OCOR works were held up waiting for us to finish. We didn't realise that it would be all change the day after we finished. As you can see Phoenix Green has now been totally disrupted as the excavations started with a view to forming a waterproof earth bund of the right height. The rains in the following week meant we'd be able to move the riverboat to its



winter moorings. Unfortunately in order to get to the boat, Mike had to be escorted through the OCOR works and squeeze past the barriers so that the boat could be taken from under Causey Bridge. What hadn't been clear is that the contractors had also disconnected the power charging system. This meant that the batteries were not being recharged after the last trip. We think this caused an automatic electronic cut off, so the trip to Darley Abbey needed some manual effort over the last 10 metres to get us in place. As usual Mike has set up the camera



to provide some security. This has shown that the leaf drop has been high, so we're hoping the wind will move the



leaves and aid power generation. However we had another outcome from the camera when we found an intruder exploring the boat roof. We think it was a mink and have reported its presence as required by law. We're expecting the solar panels to recharge

the batteries over the winter despite the leaf fall and the management team are checking with the supplier to make sure everything is at it should be and we are set for the new year's start.

## New Pontoon

Matters are progressing as detailed last month and we have the last BNG survey shortly, which will enable the planning application to be submitted. As expected the scheduled celebration in June should act as a backstop to push the Council to deliver its promises. It is looking as though we may delay the start of next year's season until early June, but we continue to push all parties as hard as we can for the earliest start date.

We had a good end of season gathering of our volunteers at the end of the month in the nearby pub. It was well supported and enabled us to thank everyone for their continued input and earning the Trust around £9,000 over the year.

## Other Projects

Sandiacre continues to progress and we have now clarified STW requirements and are moving to the negotiation with neighbours. Mike Snaith has been investigating funding options and applications will be submitted shortly.

At Draycott we have received formal acknowledgement of the drainage project by EMCCA and pointed towards funding for transport that may move the canal reinstatement forward. The rationale seems to be that it will protect rail travel from floods, which is a high priority to EMCCA.

Martin has also engaged with Nottingham University with a view to getting student delivery of several projects that will help the restoration forward. The most important one is to gain expertise in assessing the financial value of the benefits of our canal. There are various rules in undertaking this calculation, but to have an independent assessment will strengthen any funding applications (and project plans) going forward.

## IT attack

Late in October we were attacked by eastern European hackers. They picked up email addresses from our website and flooded the emails with requests for membership. Fortunately Andrew and Chris were very much on the ball on a Sunday night and picked it up quickly, and found a solution to prevent the attempt from causing damage. We presume the attack was timed for the weekend as in most companies no-one would be monitoring things. Anyway thanks to our guys quick thinking we escaped any serious disruption. Its also a lesson to us that even small organisations are at risk.



## IWA

Martin's grey water recycling project is gaining traction and we are now looking to suggest it as a potential money saver for the Chellaston housing development. We work on the basis that if we can save them money we will get at least part of that saving applied to the canal restoration.

Our early recommendations to the IWA Trustees on how they can aid Trust restorations has been accepted by the IWA trustees and we have now been asked to undertake some further analysis, so we remain hopeful that this will free up resource to help the restoration at Derby in due course.

## Members' Meetings

Thank you to all who attended the AGM on 28th October. We had an excellent turnout. Key aspects were to recognise and thank Kevin Miller, who had served on the Trust for many years and was now stepping down, although he has offered to be available to help with relationships at Erewash Borough Council—while it remains in place.

We were also able to recognise the winner of the Kate Birtles cup. Simon Knott was recognised this year for his involvement on the Riverboat commentary system and electrics and for his regular participation on the various working parties each week.

**Our Next Meeting** will be by Paul Sturges who will talk about Derby in the 1950s. For some it may be an evening of nostalgia, for others a reminder of how times have changed and how much change we have seen in such a short time.

There will also be an opportunity to buy some canal themed Christmas cards to supplement DSCT funds.

There will be no meeting next month (or monthly update) as Christmas will intervene in December. Anne is making good progress in finalising next year's programme. Current plans include a talk about Tapton Lock on the Chesterfield Canal on 27th January as our next meeting.

Meetings will be held **at the Cottages as usual starting at 7.30pm.**

Hope to see you soon.

Chris

