

The Packet

*The magazine of the Derby and
Sandiacre Canal Trust*

Issue 100

Spring 2026



Suggested Donation £3

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Front Cover

Volunteers hard at work clearing the undergrowth in the vicinity of Cockayne's bridge in November.

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Chairman's Report - Chris Madge

The Derby River Boat

The riverboat trips continued in September, but the promised path through the flood defence works didn't materialise despite the promises. The works, when they began, covered Phoenix Green, and there was a trial hole where the path should have been. A few trips had to be cancelled on safety grounds. Fortunately the season was winding down so whilst this wasn't a long term problem, it needed to be monitored.



The season ended in October, the number of sailings reducing in the final weeks. The boat was popular all season, despite passengers having to find their way through the works.

We tried to meet people on Exeter Bridge, but some insisted on finding their own way, aided by the OCOR works signage. One couple came early to make sure they didn't miss it. However, another insisted they were on time, despite our waiting for them, and then complained when they missed the boat!

The last few trips were beautiful as the trees changed to their autumn colours. We were well supported by the local kingfishers who are always a high spot of any trip.



Our end-of-season boat maintenance was done ready for winter. Simon and Neil checked the electric motors and applied grease liberally. We rebuilt the frame that prevents the boat resting on the jetty structure after flooding.



The OCOR works progressed quickly. The centre of Derby had equipment and compounds in place like this one outside Exeter House (see previous page).

The old NatWest bank on Stuart Street was soon to be demolished, but the Art Deco clock and columns were to be retained.

Work on the waterproof earth bund itself at Phoenix Green was delayed until the river boat trips finished. It was all change next day, with total disruption as the excavations began.



The following week's rain raised the river levels, enabling Mike to move the boat to its winter moorings. He was escorted through the works and then had to squeeze past the barriers. However, the boat's batteries hadn't recharged



because the charging system's supply had, unbeknown to us, been disconnected. We think this caused an automatic cut off, so some manual effort was needed over the last ten metres of the move.

Mike set up the camera to provide some security as usual. This showed that a lot of leaves had dropped, so we hoped the wind would remove them from the solar panels, so aiding power generation.



However, the camera also showed an intruder on the boat's roof. We thought it was a mink so we reported its presence as required by law.



We expected the solar panels to recharge the batteries over the winter, despite the leaf fall

We had a good end of season volunteers' gathering 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.

Pontoon

The planning application was progressed in September. The ecology survey threw up no adverse findings. There's no wildlife to worry about as our design doesn't affect the river bottom or disturb fish. The plot being very small, we didn't expect to have to comply with Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) rules. However, we needed to achieve a 10% compensatory wildlife improvement. We hoped our work with the Wildlife Trust within the "Derby Nature Collective" would help.



We had a good meeting with the rowing clubs to check if our pontoon would restrict them by the mid-river "island". We agreed some helpful safety processes and to indicate the rowers' space with floating markers. That was done using Outram, prior to sailings on a Saturday. We didn't realise it coincided with the beer festival - our antics amused few of their attendees. It looked as if the marking out was a success as we soon had agreement from one of the clubs who also suggested trimming some trees to increase the available river width. Any on-going maintenance will benefit all parties.

We worked with the pontoon supplier on a few minor changes to the design, but felt ready to go otherwise. No longer trusting the OCOR contractors after their



broken boat access promises, we gave up on their "competitive" quote and commissioned the cable move. It has a five week lead time, is controlled by National Grid (NG) and will require excavating the path to lay the new cable. This gives us a chance to assess if the path structure will take the load of the pontoon with the river in flood. A corporate donation was used to cover the cost as our enquiries about NG covering it had drawn a blank, but there may be scope for NG funding other work as they feel a little guilty and want to help.

In October we consulted the Council planners about the BNG issue, not having heard from the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. We took direction to employ consultants to do specific surveys, do the maths, and certify what we need to deliver. Existing surveys said that there was no wildlife to enhance, but the legal requirement seemed unavoidable.

Fortunately the corporate donation covered the additional £5k, but the time delay caused issues. We couldn't get the remaining funding without planning

permission. This was preventing us from ordering the pontoon, etc, until 2026, so delaying the installation and threatening the riverboat re-start date.

The temporary options we looked at weren't good. However, the city was planning celebrations in June 2026 to celebrate 50 years of twinning with Osnabruck, so they should have wanted the riverboat running by then.

Within our list of needs was a finish definition for the pontoon, so the trip to Hampshire earlier at least allowed us to show the planned finishes and components.



The last planning application enabling BNG survey, was expected towards the end of November. It was still hoped that the twinning celebration in June 2026 would galvanise the Council into delivering its promises. Although the start of the 2026 season looked to be delayed until early June, we pushed all parties for the earliest start date.

In January the planning application had gone in and been validated by the Council within 24 hours. The initial responses were easy to deal with and showed that it was being pushed through. We expected a decision by mid April.

However, the cable move was well behind NG's five weeks. We were dealing with the possibility of Himalayan Balsam contaminating the works, Council permissions, path closures, an unexpected patch of unregistered land by the Museum, and a six week notice period before works could start. The contractors had discovered a cantilevered section within the path and were debating how to dig a trench through it. There had been quite a clear dialogue with NG but as there was a lot to do in a short time, we co-opted the MP to put some pressure on. We arranged a meeting with a senior person, but the June deadline was getting tight!

On the legal side, the MP helped us get a response and we just needed the documents. However, The workload of the engineering department controlling the project had grown due to further problems with Darley Abbey bridge.

The OCOR phase 2 works on Phoenix Green were well advanced and definitely preventing our access to the boat. The long delayed demolition of the first office building was completed as you can see by the gap!

We expected a positive decision on the planning application in February but progress with the cable move was still slow. Given the long list of outstanding items and a rather un-informative administrator at NG, the meeting organised by the local MP, Catherine Atkinson was helpful. She arranged key people from NG to attend and whilst we got a better update, I'm not sure that the process was speeded up. NG were pushing their contractor, but were



concerned that the archaeologists overseeing the works could bring them to a halt if artefacts were found.



We were still waiting for legal documents from the Council, but there had been an email response. We pushed Councillors, who were themselves trying to move it on as evidenced by their influence over planning.

The OCOR phase 2 flood defence works in the city were proceeding apace. Our previous access to the boarding platform was completely closed off and the new, higher bund was starting to take shape. It was just as well we didn't proceed with the previous pontoon!



Working Parties

Draycott - September

The new cycle rack was installed, hopefully encouraging passing cyclists to stop and visit the café while their bicycles are properly protected.



The debate on protecting the residents' car park had moved from a full blown

barrier to a lockable chain. The tenants seemed happier, but we'll monitor its effectiveness and hope that we do not need the barrier.

The Canal Company notice from the Hopwell Road canal bridge was hung on an external wall at the café.

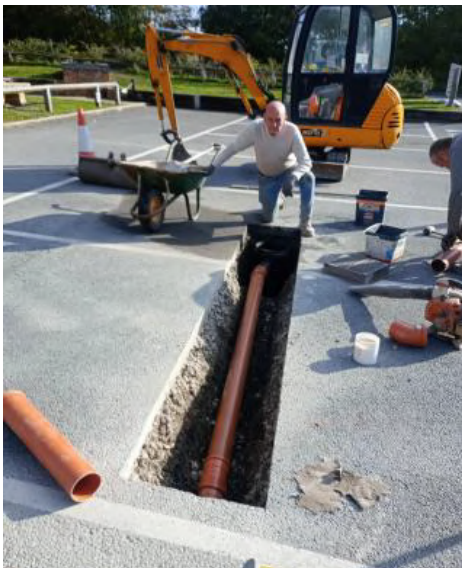


Don and Tony completed the borehole works by lowering the concrete infill and sealing everything with mortar.



Draycott - October

In the car park, the original contractor installed the new drain and connected it into the land drain.



The water processing system upgrade was finished by installing an automatic cut off linked to the UV lamp. If the lamp goes out, the flow stops. We now have a maintenance schedule, so everything is covered. Water samples were taken and we had no immediate response - we expected to hear promptly if there was an issue.

Perhaps the most important activity was reed cutting. The weather had been really dry so we were able to do it before the winter rains came. We hoped Network Rail (NR) would finance the hire of a digger to dredge the channel, but they had other priorities. From past experience, NR have more to lose than we do. The concrete bridge having gone, it made sense to allow water to flow towards Derby Road rather than puddle around the Cottages.



The forestry team began tackling the old hawthorn hedge between the winding hole and Hopwell Road. It had been left untended for many years so it will be difficult to lay. It may not look so good for a year or two, but it will improve over time and provide further bird nesting territory.

Draycott - November

The new drainage arrangements were tested by the heavy rain which resulted

in a river level rise of 1.5 metres and substantial water flows at the cottages, and they disposed of excess water within minutes.



Draycott - January

The remainder of the short section of hedge along Hopwell Road was laid - a difficult job given the size and age of the hawthorn - and the cutting back of the south hedge heading towards Breaston was started.



We looked at a stretch leading to Spondon Bourne, although that too will be difficult and may need to be carried over until the autumn.

Spondon Bourne - September

The meeting with the Council to discuss work here was productive. We agreed a basis for work to start, although the land transfer continued to delay us. We couldn't consider working on the culvert until this is sorted.

Spondon Bourne - January

One of our teams worked on the section of the canal path west of the Spondon Bourne which is exceptionally muddy in winter. Working with the Council they cleared vegetation around the pathway. The plan was to straighten the path and lay MOT, after consulting with neighbours to try to get a few more community minded residents to help out. We planned to set up a gazebo to talk to them with the aim of getting a few names to help finish the job. Our request to "buy" the stretch of land from the City Council was still under consideration.

Spondon Bourne - February

Don and Tony cleared the path ready for further work and laying an MOT surface.



We were still seeking ownership of this stretch, but it looked as if the change in Local Authorities was prompting a review of the Council's land holdings and so delaying a decision.

However, whilst one part of the Council vacillated, another was particularly helpful. We had the planned works agreed and permissions (and even help) to reduce the trees on the path, and the Council will supply the MOT. We just need to supply the labour.

We set up our gazebo on 21st February, "consulting with the neighbours" over the planned works after putting leaflets through local doors inviting them to come and talk to us.



Spondon Bourne/Ulliker's Bridge - January

One team did some initial investigations, successfully locating the canal wall in a number of trial holes.

Spondon Bourne/Ulliker's Bridge - February

The team continued their exploration of the canal line. It's not quite an archaeological site, but the wall is being located and mapped. We've discovered

the gaps and lack of a block wall on the outside.



Borrowash - September

The windy weather caused a few trees to lose their branches or worse. Roger and team had to clear up the mess at Dagley's Lock, Mear Drive, Borrowash and Sandiacre.

We continued with the Borrowash Wall, and used the flail for some hedge trimming - it was so much quicker than the hedge trimmers and easier on volunteers' backs. Normal activities to place by the vole fence at Draycott, and by Ulliker's Bridge.

Borrowash - October

We repaired and upgraded the

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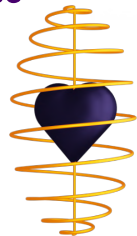


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Continued from Page 11

interpretation board at the bottom lock. It gave us a chance to rename it as Dagley's Lock after Nigel, who spent many years organising local support and maintaining the Borrowwash section until illness prevented him from continuing.

The increasingly difficult steps down to the Ock Brook crossing had worn away. The team did a superb job of restoring them.



Borrowwash - November

The teams carried on with the Borrowwash Wall, and we planned to assess the canal walls by the railway line to see if they are strong enough to avoid a breach onto the track. We also looked to see if we could get funding to cover the cost of the assessment.

Borrowwash - December

The formal renaming of the bottom lock at Borrowwash as Dagley's Lock was arranged for the 2nd December. We were pleased that Nigel was able to join our volunteer party and friends from his many years involved in the restoration to celebrate the event.



Corporate Visits

On 3rd September, Vinci EMR (in orange) undertook work at Derby Road, Draycott, tidying both sides of the road hedge.



On 10th September, Alstom Burton (in Yellow) took on the challenge at Chellaston with impressive results and keeping the line clear.



On 24th September, volunteers from DWP Midlands cleared the ditch from Dagley's Lock to the Ock Brook, put in new fence posts to the Foss Close, and put extra steps in the canal path.



On 22nd October, Alstrom Branston did a good job of clearing the ground on the Draycott to Breaston stretch around the pipe bridge.



We try hard to get the participants to keep in touch with us. It is important to attract younger, working age people as our work party members, and others, grow older.

Sandiacre - October

At Sandiacre, a hanging branch from an ash tree with die-back was endangering the public. The team used the tower

scaffold to tidy it up. It was much safer, but took so much longer - with ash trees dying it becomes an increasingly likely problem.



Sandiacre - November

The area at the top of the section was tidied up. Longmoor Road bridge was blocked some years ago and the undergrowth had taken over some of the sections alongside Longmoor Road and Sandringham Road. The area was cleared so that our interpretation panel can again be read.



Undergrowth further along the canal line to the west of the bridge and heading

towards Bostocks Lane was also cleared. 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.

Sandiacre - January

After clearing the bridge under Longmoor Lane, the teams tackled ivy growth by ring cutting the larger trees and clearing the grassy areas. Further along stakes were installed to prevent vehicles from driving along the path parallel to Longmoor Lane between the bridge and Bostocks Lane.



Golden Stream - October

Where the stream crosses the canal path, we erected a barrier to stop children falling in. The Parish Council



asked us to do it after a safety complaint was made. We were then taken to task on social media for hampering wildlife!

Shelton/Harvey Road - January

The wet weather over the Christmas period caused a few working party dates to be cancelled, but the teams had considerable success on the dryer days. It was a good time to maintain some interpretation panels at Harvey Road and Shelton Lock, areas we don't get to very often as we don't own the land



Chellaston - January

We were in the season of the year when maintenance of hedges and trees was allowed - a big change from summer mowing. Roger and team had a few fallen trees to respond to. They were able to clear one that was blocking the path at Chellaston within a day of it being reported.

Longmoor Lane - February

I received a call during a particularly persistent downpour to say that a resident of Longmoor Lane had a stream of water running through his garden. I visited to see we now had a canal in place behind his house. The old canal route was infilled, but the clay lining means that it holds water between the



raised old towpath and the hill on the other side. Unfortunately, a few years ago a builder decided to provide a nice piece of flat lawn outside his property and flattened the bund. This resulted in a channel funnelling all the water through the property. He sold the plot and left the issue for others to sort out.

Whilst this was nothing to do with us our volunteers have used some of the vole fence to keep the water at bay pending a careful replacement of the bund in the summer. Hopefully residents will appreciate our efforts and support our restoration and a permanent solution.



Breaston - February

We'd been in contact with the Navigation to discuss some tree planting. Apparently Thatcher's Cider are encouraging the planting of apple trees at pubs to produce fruit for public consumption. It's been tried successfully along the canal network in certain places and I'm sure is a good idea. However it seemed important that we avoided planting in a location that would interfere with the canal restoration. The land outside the pub is owned by the Navigation so the call went out and negotiations were successful. The deal was that we helped to prepare the area with our equipment and they planted in the "right places".



IWA

It was agreed that Martin Pilbin would give a short presentation to the IWA AGM, to be held at Nottingham University on 27th September, discussing the opportunities of “Grey Water Transfer”, and funding that will be made available. We also offered to host visitors at Draycott and tell them what we’ve achieved. A local visit is normally offered at the end of AGM business, and we shared the honour with Cromford this year.

I was also asked to help on a small panel to look at how the IWA organises restoration support. I was keen to do this as I believe the next step for funding waterways properly is to convince national government and utilities of the value of a national water infrastructure in times of regional droughts and floods. It could radically change restoration if the government invested billions of pounds in this and each individual restoration took its share of supplying the national network. This can only be driven by a national organisation like IWA.

Martin gave his presentation, as planned, and his suggestions on “Grey Water Transfer” were positively received. The IWA Chairman, and others, looked at our progress and they seemed to be impressed by our successes at the Cottages.

The project at the IWA was progressing positively in October and it looked as if we may get additional central resources provided for restoration. This would have been

most helpful for us with Biodiversity Net Gain or the Sandiacre negotiations, but better late than never.

Martin’s grey water recycling project has been gaining momentum and we are now thinking of suggesting 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.

The IWA Trustees accepted our early recommendations to the IWA Trustees on how they can aid Trust restorations, and we have been asked to undertake some further analysis. We remain hopeful that this will eventually free up resources to help the restoration at Derby.



Other Projects

Sandiacre

In September, we were waiting for a meeting with Severn Trent Water and had started bid writing to fund the £200k shortfall on sewer moving costs.

In October, we hired a specialist to handle our negotiations between neighbours and Severn Trent re compensation for land impacts or disruption. The involvement of a professional in finding a legal resolution was expected to pay for itself by reducing our potential liability. Funding applications were being prepared with a view to getting work under way in 2026.

In November, Severn Trent Water's requirements had been clarified and we were about to start negotiating with the neighbours. The submission of the funding applications was imminent.

We had a couple of meetings with the key neighbour in January and were expecting to start a three way negotiation of terms. It was complicated by his property being held in Trust for three people. We noticed that large blocks had been moved onto our land by an "unknown" neighbour and were trying to discover the reason for it.

In February we finally clarified the position on the key neighbour. The next

step was to go back to Severn Trent and hopefully accelerate the rate of progress both with him and with other neighbours.

Draycott

In September the key project at Draycott was still the Network Rail one. They had rebuffed us by refusing to share the completed hydrology report. We didn't know why, but suspected it was just big company rules. The report was commissioned by the electrification section of Network Rail and, having decided not to electrify the line, they no longer needed our involvement. However, there was the inkling of a breakthrough with the East Midlands Mayor's office, EMCCA.

In October, we were promised access to the hydrology report after all and were working with the County Council Flood team to promote the bigger, 5 mile project. EMCCA responded positively and agreed to consider our request for feasibility funding when a new recruit joins them in the new year.

In November, EMCCA formally acknowledged the drainage project and we received pointers to funding for transport that may move the canal reinstatement forward. The rationale seems to be that it will protect rail travel from floods - a high priority for EMCCA.

Martin, our Chartered Engineer, and I met with two officers, including the Director of Climate Resilience and Climate Growth, and received a very positive response. We outlined the opportunity for water transfer and flood protection between Spondon and Long Eaton. They felt it would meet the



mayor's objectives and wanted details to consider further.

Our strategy was always for EMCCA to push Network Rail into action, and that seemed to be even more important. Interestingly, we had the inside track to the meeting and EMCCA personnel from another senior contact at the Environment Agency who is part of the Derby Nature Collective.

We updated our two new Trustees, from South Derbyshire and the County, on our plans so they can influence planning and/or lend support to the canal. The County Trustee is from the new Reform administration, which may help us understand their approach to our project, given that the national headlines suggested they don't support ecological improvement.

We were still waiting for EMCCA to respond on the drainage project between Breaston and Draycott and

understood that EMCCA hoped to find some funding, but we hadn't been told officially.

However, a local developer approached us to see if they could offer a similar scheme to that at Spondon. The thinking was that they would build a section of the canal as part of a major housing development. That begs some questions for the planning authority, but it seemed like a good deal that should enhance the amenity for locals considerably. Also, this type of project would probably mean the spoil could be reorganised on the combined site - if it is uncontaminated. There was a long way to go, but it's good to have a back up option. We will be talking to the planners to see if this has legs before we do too much work.

We continue, slowly, with the purchase of land from Sustrans and have the potential for another small piece of land to consider.

Derby Riverside

We'd made little progress on this in September due to our holidays, but we have had a most generous offer. Peter, our editor, had persuaded a couple of his clock enthusiast friends to repair the tower clock we had in pieces in my garage. The plan was to use it in Erasmus Gardens. We think that it would be great to show off Derby's clock heritage - and it will be nice to get my garage back!

With OCOR 2 about to be kick started and OCOR 3 - the flood defences from the city centre weir to Spondon were under consideration in October, we were looking at how we could influence the



development to cater for river traffic. It was very early days, but it'll be better than playing catch up as we have been doing with the second phase.

The clock experts had begun the repairs, but they asked if we knew anyone who could recreate the lugs on the assembly shown, please let me know. Apparently this has become worn over the years.

Land Purchases

Our land purchases in the Breaston area continued to progress. Following a very positive meeting with our Local Authority Trustees, we were encouraged to push for land transfers from Local Authorities rather than have the issue tied up for a few years by the Local Authority reorganisation. With that in mind we fully reviewed all Council owned sections and made an offer to buy two parcels adjacent to the M1 from Erewash Borough. We also agreed terms for a small section in Breaston as shown in the photo opposite. It will require some work to bring it under control when we own it.



are complications arising from them granting leases that are taking time to resolve, although with the activity on other plots it is useful to have time to accumulate the funds required.

We also continued slowly with the purchase of land from Sustrans. There

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 nobody would be monitoring things. Anyway, thanks to quick thinking by Andrew and Chris we escaped any serious disruption. It's also a lesson to us that even small organisations are at risk.

Upstairs Room at the Cafe

We spoke to Garry and Joyce about providing some extra facilities for them. As our upstairs meeting room is rarely used, except for our meetings, they were considering using it as a more casual area with soft chairs and access to a coffee machine. It sounded like a win/win situation as they get space for

people if the café is full, especially when it's too cold or wet to sit outside, and we have access to softer chairs for our meetings (some members had been bringing cushions). It appeared that the café had been full, despite the weather.

Members' Meetings

On September 22nd Sean McGinley, a long standing senior manager with the Canal and River Trust (CRT), gave a talk about the CRT. He has recently been given the responsibility for restoration nationally. His talk was well received by a full house. He answered many questions fully and honestly about how they will work with restoration groups going forward.

Thanks to all who attended the AGM on 28th October when 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 announce this year's winner of the Kate Birtles cup. Simon Knott was recognised for his involvement on the riverboat commentary system and electrics, and for his regular participation on the various working parties each week.



On 25th November Paul Sturges, Professor Emeritus at Loughborough University, gave us a fascinating talk

about life in Derby in the 1950s, much of which was based on his own recollections.

On 27th January, Martin Pilbin explained our strategy to use the canal for flood prevention, water transfer and grey water recycling. The audience was rapt and raised a number of technical questions, all of which were expertly fielded.

On 24th February, we were treated to a very interesting talk about the purchase and restoration of South Wingfield railway station by Liz Best aided by Carol Brown. This was a project taken on under the Historic Buildings Trust's control, with Derek Latham a key driver.

Future Meetings at the Cottages

April 28th: Jenny Abnalls, a Trustee at the Erasmus Darwin Museum in Litchfield, will talk about Erasmus Darwin - inventor of the boat lift.

26th May: Mary Wilson, from the Belper Mills, will talk about Life as a Mill Worker in the Derwent Valley. She may be coming in costume, and will bring a helper.

July 28th: Tim Mellor, Chairman of the Derby Artefacts Recovery Club, will present a talk on metal detecting.

Sept 23rd: Alastair Clarke will present a talk called 'From the Trent to the Mersey'. In the wake of narrow boat 'Cressy' In 1939 Tom and Angela Rolt set out to explore the canals of England in the narrow boat 'Cressy'. The account of their cruise was a book called Narrow Boat and this inspired the national movement to preserve and cherish our

inland waterways. Eighty years later Alastair Clark set out on a bike to follow the part of their voyage which followed the Trent and Mersey canal.

June Walk

We are awaiting confirmation of a walk and talk on June 23rd at Raynesway at the Severn Trent processing site. We will see what is involved in cleaning our

Canals for Water Management - Martin Pilbin

Martin, our volunteer Chartered Civil Engineer, gave a talk about the use of canals for water transfer at the January '26 meeting - Ed

Restoring the Derby and Sandiacre Canal is far more than a heritage project. Re-imagined as a multi-functional green-blue infrastructure, the canal can play a central role in sustainable water management, climate resilience, biodiversity recovery and community well-being.

Once central to industrial development and funded through the transportation of goods, many historic canals are now underused or degraded, disconnected from surrounding communities and

water and also have a presentation from their project manager about the water transfer scheme to take water from Minworth to East Anglia via the Grand Union canal.

lacking sustainable income streams. As pressures on land and water increase, the future lies less with the transportation of goods and more with the management of water.

By integrating storm-water capture and storage, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), water transfer and recycling, biodiversity net gain and recreational open space, canal restoration delivers exceptional environmental, social, heritage and economic value whilst at the same time unlocking the development of social and affordable homes on land previously considered unsuitable. Crucially, the combination of these benefits also enables innovative funding and financing making canal

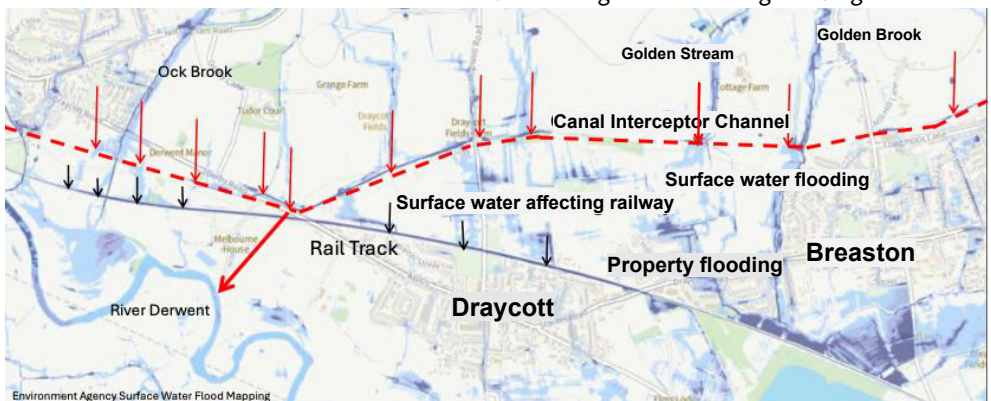


Fig 1 The Borrowwash Interceptor protecting land, housing and the railway from flooding

restoration environmentally and economically viable.

As planners confront the challenges of growth and climate change, restored canals offer a viable solution which can be adapted to meet current planning needs for urban growth, climate resilience, water management and biodiversity loss, connecting past, present and future through water.

Storm Water Capture and Transfer

Climate change has intensified surface water flooding, water scarcity and pollution pressures. Canals, with their linear form, extensive catchments and water control, are well suited for integrated water management systems. Typically following natural contours, a restored canal can intercept surface water flows and operate as a strategic cut-off drain, capturing heavy rainfall and releasing it gradually to downstream watercourses i.e. the proposed Borrowwash Interceptor Ditch releasing flows direct into the river Derwent - See Fig 1 above.

This capture capacity allows canals to reduce flood risk while protecting downstream infrastructure such as roads, housing and railways. At a wider scale, canals may support regional or national water transfer, such as the

Grand Union Transfer Project (Ref 1) reducing reliance on long-distance pipelines or new reservoirs.

Water Storage and Climate Resilience

Using restored canals for storm-water storage enhances climate resilience at a catchment level. Existing structures such as locks, weirs, bypass channels and towpath heights can be adapted to regulate flows and temporarily increase water levels during extreme rainfall events. The Glasgow Smart Canal (Ref 2) is a great example (see Fig 2).

Unlike underground tanks or hard-engineered storage, canals provide visible, adaptable storage without removing valuable land from developments or public use. This approach also reduces pressure on combined sewer systems, lowering the frequency of sewer overflows and associated pollution incidents.

Water Recycling for Housing

Water scarcity is a national concern limiting development. Restored canals can support non-potable water recycling systems for new housing developments, helping meet household water efficiency targets and reducing demand on treated water.

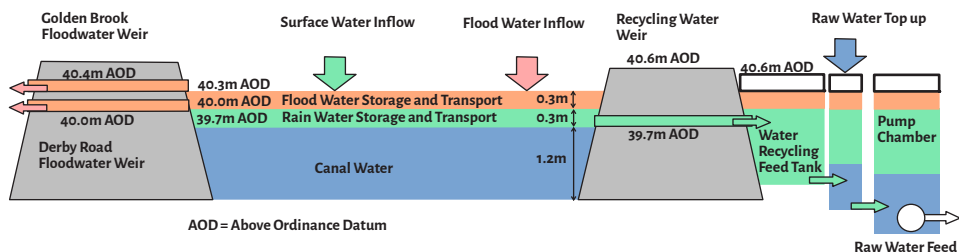


Fig 2 A multi-functional canal, navigation, flood water storage, transportation and recycling.

At a local scale, canals integrated with housing SuDS - such as swales, rain gardens, permeable paving and constructed wetlands can form the backbone of wider surface water networks. With appropriate treatment, urban run-off from development can be naturally filtered before entering the canal, improving water quality while reducing pollution and flood risk. The recycled water can be used for toilet flushing and other non-drinking

purposes. As summer rainfalls decline stored water offers a cost-effective backup supply to enable community scale water recycling, reducing the need for expensive network upgrade and removing the maintenance responsibilities from individual households.

More advanced schemes could integrate canals into grey-water recycling systems. Grey-water from housing can be treated

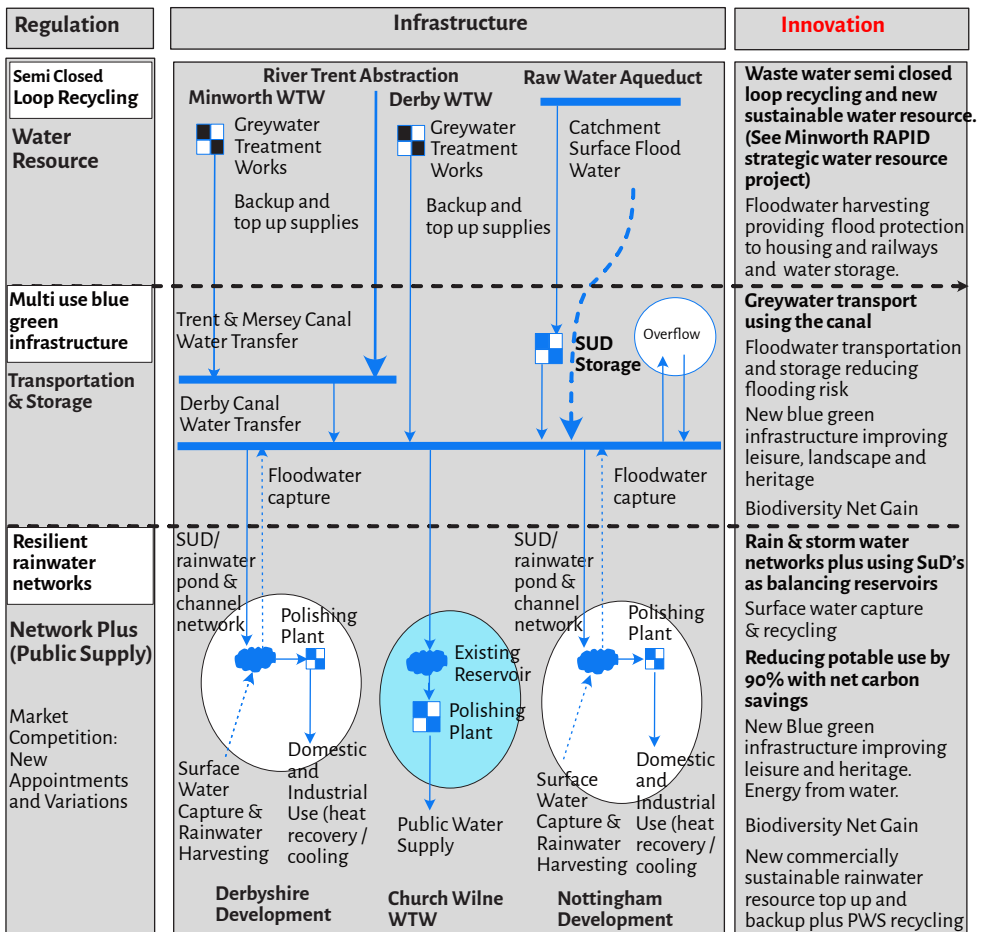


Fig 3 Community based rain water recycling.

through constructed wetlands or reed beds before being returned to the canal, maintaining water levels during dry periods supporting ecological function. This aligns with circular economy principles and demonstrates how canals can be adapted to meet modern sustainability standards - see Fig 3.

Biodiversity Net Gain and Ecological Restoration

Many abandoned canals already function as ecological corridors, though often fragmented or degraded. Restoration allows these corridors to be enhanced and reconnected, creating continuous habitat networks through urban and semi-urban landscapes.

Re-profiling canal banks, introducing varied edge conditions and planting native marginal vegetation can support

fish, amphibians, invertebrates and bird species. Wetlands and backwaters provide refuge whilst also capturing inflow sediment. Adjacent grasslands and woodlands contribute to a wider habitat to improve ecological resilience.

Under current planning policy, developments are required to deliver measurable biodiversity net gain. Canal restoration can generate biodiversity units to support local housing and commercial developments at scale rather than fragmented and remote - see Fig 4.

Housing, Recreational, Health and Open Space Benefits

Beyond water and ecological functions, restored canals deliver significant social benefits. Upgraded towpaths can

Continued on Page 27

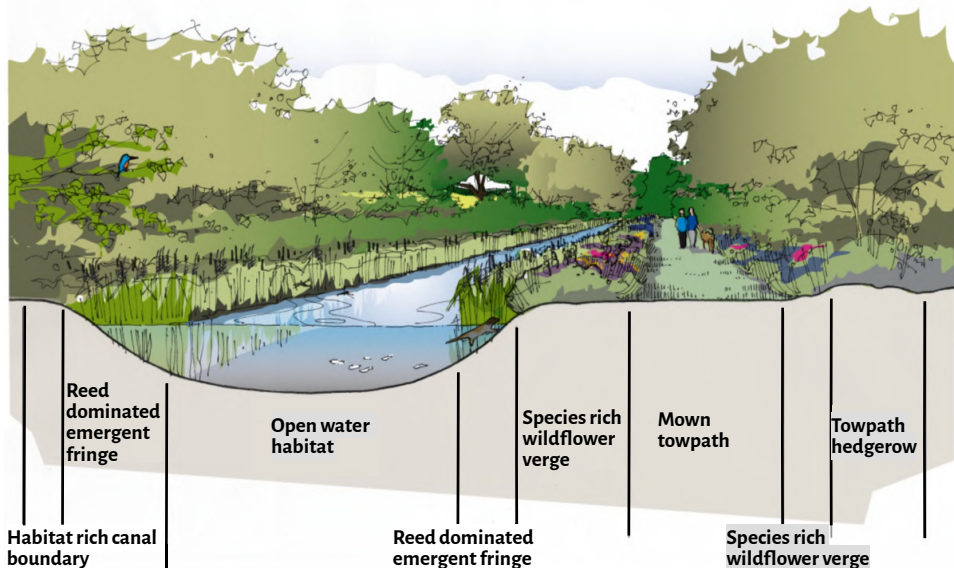


Fig 4 A biodiversity vision for good quality restoration.

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Continued from Page 25

provide safe, accessible routes for walking, cycling and horse riding supporting active travel and reducing car dependency. Landscaped corridors create attractive open spaces improving mental well-being, encouraging outdoor activity and strengthening local identity.

Recreational activities such as canoeing, angling and wildlife watching can be reintroduced in partnership with local clubs and community organisations. In dense urban areas where access to green space is limited, canals function as linear parks, connecting neighbourhoods and providing continuous, high-quality open space without competing with development land.

These benefits translate into economic value. Proximity to attractive waterways can increase property values (Ref 3) by up to 10%, support local businesses and crucially unlocks blockages in the delivery of social and affordable homes. Canal restoration often acts as a catalyst for wider place-making and investment.

Financing Canal Restoration

The multi-functional restoration enables new and innovative financing opportunities. Whilst public funding for heritage, flood risk and environmental enhancement remains important, it is rarely sufficient on its own. Successful projects increasingly combine public, private and third-sector investment.

Developer contributions, including Section 106 agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, can support restoration where canals provide SuDS, flood management, public open space, biodiversity mitigation for new housing. Biodiversity

net gain credits generated through canal restoration represent an emerging revenue stream.

Water companies may also invest where canal restoration contributes to flood alleviation, water transfers, water quality improvements, or demand reduction. In some cases, long-term operational savings from reduced sewer overflows or deferred infrastructure upgrades can justify upfront capital investment and operational fees can support the long-term viability.

Governance and Long-Term Management

Successful canal restoration depends on clear governance and sustainable management arrangements. Partnerships are essential to ensure canals continue to deliver multiple functions over time. The responsibilities for maintenance, water quality monitoring and management must be understood, particularly where canals form part of critical drainage or water supply infrastructure. Whilst restoration is the vision, the commercial role for Canal Trusts has yet to be decided. Community involvement through volunteering can strengthen local ownership, enable restorations and reduce long-term costs.

References

1 <https://guctransfer.co.uk>

2 <https://waterprojectsonline.com/case-studies/smart-canal-2022/>

3 https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/107931/1/Gibbons_Valuing_environmental_benefits_canals_2021.pdf

Would you like to help the Derby Canal Restoration?

We would like to thank those who have already come forward to offer their help with the restoration.

New volunteers to support existing “experts” in all fields, except ecology where we are looking for a volunteer to take the lead as detailed below, will always be warmly welcomed.

If you know someone with building or site management skills who have perhaps recently retired, why not suggest they get in touch with us as we will need those skills for projects such as Sandiacre Bottom Lock restoration, the Spondon Bourne culvert and the canal rebuild generally.

Some specific areas where we would to strengthen our teams are:

Engineering: We now have expertise to cover most of our civil engineering needs, but we would still welcome anybody with engineering skills who would like to join our new, enlarged, engineering team.

Ecology: We require a volunteer to take the lead on ecology. We would also welcome anyone who would like to work with the lead, whatever their past experience. So if you can get involved with surveys and monitoring, or want to help rejuvenate the biodiversity of the canal route, please join the team.

IT: We have a volunteer who has been heavily involved in developing our river boat volunteer allocations on line, but would welcome anyone who would like to work with her.

Fundraising: We have access to a

fundraiser on a paid basis, but if you have fundraising expertise, please join our team.

Marketing: We have a good team dealing with our existing website, social media and the Packet, but we need to keep up with new trends and to stimulate interest in new groups of the public. If you have up to date social media nous, or want to write articles about our activities, please join our team.

In all the above cases experience and knowledge is very helpful, but the key criteria is a desire to change our communities for the better. The amount of time spent will be set by your availability, but the salary is non existent! The reward comes from achieving progress and working with other passionate people.

If you are interested, then please contact Chris Madge on 07827 946444 or by email at

chris.madge@derbycanal.org.uk to discuss further.



Printer Cartridge Recycling - David Savidge

Over the years the Derby and Sandiacre Canal Trust has had an arrangement with a printer cartridge recycling company. We have had printed envelopes that you can send in two cartridges at a time for free, and the Trust gets between £1 and £2 per cartridge. Unfortunately, we are running out of envelopes and now the only way to send your old cartridges is via online contact with Recycle4Charity.

If you go to www.recycle4charity.co.uk, at the top right hand corner there is a button 'to register'. After you have pressed the button, the next screen asks if the charity is already registered. In the box type 'Derby & Sandiacre Canal Trust'. It will show you that we are already registered with the number C43552. This is the same detail as on the old envelope,

if you have one. Click on this and it will ask for your name and email details. This is so that they can send you the label. Just follow the on screen instructions that will ask how many cartridges and their type. Hopefully, this will generate the label required. I noticed that they have local drop off points, but I didn't follow the link to find out where they were.

As per the Tesco advert 'Every Little Helps'. So, if you can use them, the Trust gets a little more money for our projects and you can clear out your stack of old cartridges.

Legacies - Chris Madge

We were recently contacted by one of our supporters who wanted to leave us a legacy. For him, it is important that some of his estate goes towards completing the canal restoration he's long supported and, in so doing, leaving something that his children and everyone else could enjoy for the next 200 years. He writes:

"People normally think of writing a will when something drastic or tragic happens in their lives, perhaps an illness in the family or a friend or colleague dies suddenly. Of course, in general we should all keep our affairs in order as a matter of good financial prudence. For most of us our major asset is our home,

which can be valued at hundreds of thousands of pounds.

For me it was important to think carefully and calmly about what I would like to do with my assets, when I eventually pass on. Of course, for most of us the stock answer is 'I will leave my assets to the kids', but I would suggest that thought should be given to other good causes - the Government not being one! Local charities would benefit hugely from any legacy you could leave.

In conclusion, please make sure your 'house' is in order and if you would like to make a gift in your will like me then the Derby and Sandiacre Canal Trust - a registered charity - would put it to good

use. You could specify which project you want it to go to or simply leave it to the good governance of the Trustees.”

The importance of getting things in order in good time cannot be overstated. Over the last year two of our trustee directors have had to deal with a relative's estate where the will was either unclear or non-existent.

So please consider leaving a legacy because:

- A gift in your will is a legacy that lasts beyond your lifetime and provides a lasting benefit for family and friends
- There is no inheritance tax on gifts to a charity so all your legacy can be put to good use.
- Inheritance tax is charged at 40% of your taxable estate AND a donation to charity can also reduce the tax your beneficiaries will pay by 10%
- It can be used as matched funding, so our charity can raise grants to multiply

the value of your gift and be even more effective.

- There's total flexibility and you can leave:
 - ◆ A specific sum of money – a lump sum
 - ◆ The whole – or a percentage – of your assets, after other gifts and expenses have been paid
 - ◆ A particular item, such as jewellery, shares or a piece of land

If you consider making a gift in your Will, we recommend you speak to your solicitor or other adviser to ensure the wording is right so that your gift is used as you intend. The Derby and Sandiacre Canal Trust can also help with the cost of a will if we are a beneficiary.

If you want to discuss this feel free to contact our Treasurer or Chairman in full confidence.

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