



Grantham Canal News Sheet

This latest issue of the Electronic News Sheet is for **anyone** who would like to be updated on GCS activities and progress. If this is the first issue you have received and you would like future monthly issues, please send an email to: Membership@granthamcanal.com stating your name, confirming your e-mail address and indicating that you wish to receive the News Sheet. Future copies will not be sent without your permission. You do not have to be a member but please consider joining. Details on the "Contact Us" page on our website: www.granthamcanal.com

1. The A46 and Your New Fosse Bridge

Plenty has been said and written over the past year about the problems that the 'A46 Improvements' will cause us at Joshua Mann's Bridge 16 so, for a change, we offer you these recent photographs of the nearby Fosse Bridge 18 and its 21st century successor . The new bridge is going to be big ... and expensive (at £2 million!) ... but should do a good job of carrying the new dual-carriageway A46 over the canal, its towpath and a diverted bridle path.



Two views from a different perspective of the 'new' bridge at Cropwell Bishop (17a). In due course the bed of the canal will be re profiled and head off on its original route towards Cotgrave. *(Pictures: I'm not saying but it wasn't me! Ed)*

2. The Trip-boat:

The engineer from Oxfordshire Narrowboats has hopefully made his final visit to fit modifications to [The Three Shires](#). During last seasons cruises, some customers and crew commented on the high level of engine noise. If all goes to plan, the engine should now not need to run so fast and therefore be much quieter. It will be interesting to see what happens in the shallow section past the bridle bridge as both [The Three Shires](#) and [Centauri](#) struggle there.

If you are interested in Skipper and Crew training, please email Mike Oliver - michaeloliver31@aol.com or if you prefer please ring him on 0163 681 4348.

Please telephone **01949 850 999** to book trips.

3. Workparties

A couple of extra days in early March have allowed the workparty team to make a real impression on the area between Casthorpe Bridge and the Bridle Bridge. There are still some brambles to be cut back there and then a few willows to be removed on the way back towards Woolsthorpe. If the weather is kind this task should be completed by the end of the month.



NB. Next official workparty dates are Thursday 24th and Saturday 26th March, weather permitting, then Thurs 28th & Sat 30th April. 2011 plus a few odd dates in between.

If you are interested in helping, please send an email to volunteers@granthamcanal.com and if you wish I will put you on the workparty emailing list.

4. Vincent's Bridge.

Vincent's Bridge (Br. 67) is under wraps, having some major pointing done, which is likely to take 6 to 8 weeks to complete. As you will see from the photographs, the boats will not be able to reach the A1 until this work is finished.



5. British Waterways.

Government statement on transfer of state-owned waterways into new waterways charity

The Government has today (Monday 28 February 2011) announced its preference for a phased transfer of state-owned waterways in England and Wales into the planned new waterway charity, with British Waterways' canals and rivers moving in 2012 and the Environment Agency (EA) navigations moving in 2015. The decision is intended to ensure that sufficient funding can be found to enable the charity to take on the liabilities associated with the EA navigations from the start of the next Spending Review.

Commenting on the announcement, British Waterways' Chairman, Tony Hales said: "We welcome the Government's continued commitment to the planned 'national trust for the waterways' and hope the EA navigations may be able to benefit in the future. While there will be some who are disappointed by the decision not to include all the state-owned waterways from the outset, we appreciate the Government's caution in ensuring the considerable issues of financial sustainability for the EA navigations have first been fully addressed."

Consultation on the proposal to establish a 'national trust' for British Waterways' canals and rivers in England and Wales is expected to begin in March. The setting up of the new charity will be enabled by the passage of the Public Bodies Bill through Parliament later this year. The new waterways charity is expected to be up and running by April 2012, subject to Parliamentary time and consent.

Defra has already started the process of establishing the new charity, appointing an Advisory Panel on First Appointments and Transition to provide advice to Ministers and advertising for 'Transition Trustees' who are due to be appointed in April.

For further media information contact:

Ed Fox 020 7985 7226 / 07801 049829 / edward.fox@britishwaterways.co.uk

Jonathan Ludford 020 7985 7275 / 07747 897783 / jonathan.ludford@britishwaterways.co.uk

Notes to editors:

British Waterways cares for over 2,000 miles of historic canals, rivers and docks, which attract over 13 million people each year for walking, cycling, angling, boating or simply the peace and quiet. The Government has backed British Waterways' plans in England and Wales for its canals and rivers to be transferred into a new 'national trust' for the waterways. This exciting new charity will, from 2012, begin to attract new investment and give local people a greater role in how their waterways are run.



Photos : Ralph Poore

7. GCS Event Stand

Not exactly a stand but on the 26 March 2011 at 8.00 pm , Rosemary is giving a talk on the Grantham Canal to the Long Eaton Boat Club at Sheetstores Basin just off Fields Farm Road (NG10 1AU), not far from Long Eaton Railway Station. I'm sure she would like some moral support if anyone is free.

8. Grantham Canal Rangers

Following an establishment grant from the National Lottery's 'Awards for All' programme, a Grantham Canal Ranger service is now well on the way to becoming established.

The ranger service which will be wholly voluntary will be part of the Grantham Canal Society, it is proposed to launch the service on the 7th April.

Activities and duties identified for the ranger service include:

1. Patrols of each section of canal, checking its state, condition and reporting any problems to British Waterways or the Grantham Canal Society's maintenance team.
2. Wildlife monitoring – there are three designated SSSI sites along the canal.
3. Dissemination of information to towpath users and the local community on what activities are happening.
4. Report back on any ideas or views from contact with canal users.
5. Recruitment of new members to the GCS during canal-side activities.
6. Fund raising – to ensure the sustainability of the ranger's service.
7. Organise litter picking, bank clean-ups, incidental repairs and maintenance
8. Promote local interest by making presentations / talks on the canal and activities.
9. Educational – to assist visiting groups, organisations schools and youth clubs by acting as canal guides.
10. Co-organisation and support of canal side events with the local communities.

A team of 14 rangers have now been recruited - the photo was taken on the 12th February at an all day Induction workshop presented by BW. Although most of the canal has now an allocated 'length ranger', there still is the need for rangers to cover the following lengths:

Hose Bridge to Plungar Bridge (39-49)
Muston Gorse Bridge to Stenwith Bridge (57-60)
The A1 to Earlsfield Bridge (68a – 69)

If you are interested do contact:

David Lyneham Brown – david.lyneham-brown@granthamcanal.com
or Jeff King - northking@ntlworld.com



Photo
Peter Stone

9. Letters

Dear Sir,

I refer to your comment in the latest issue of your Bridge magazine published on your website, which I quote below

"Those of us who live in Cropwell Bishop and walk the towpath towards the A46 will have noticed a distinct change over the last few weeks. The Community Payback Scheme, operated by the probation Service have had groups of up to 24, out in the bed of the canal, seven days a week, doing a magnificent job clearing the trees and brambles etc. For obvious reasons we can't show the workers but the before and after photos below speak for themselves. We would like to thank everyone involved for making such a difference."

We certainly have noticed a distinct change, there are no birds and the wildflowers which rely on shady conditions are now dead.

I am appalled that you are condoning what can only be described as vandalism.

Are you really proud of the pointless destruction of the ecosystems which support a variety of wildlife.

There appears to be no attempt at conservation despite the following statement from your website.

"And at all times, care has been taken to preserve and encourage the habitats of flowers and wildlife."

just slashing and burning - with bonfires being left unattended might I add.

Can I ask to what end this wanton destruction is being inflicted ?

Regards, Mark Seabourne

The above email arrived a few days ago. Many thanks for your views Mark. I'm sure there are some that will agree with you just as there are those who wish to see the Grantham Canal open and in water. Canals are man made structures and as such need to be managed. Without the effort of the GCS we would not even have the pleasure of walking the towpath because until the 1960's that was completely overgrown too. The alternative to restoring the canal was to fill it in and build on it (I gather there was such a proposal). Any remainder would by now be a stinking ditch. Once culvert 45 is repaired I'm hoping to see some water and my first kingfisher, moorhen or coot at Cropwell. Ed

What do you think? Please send me your views and I will endeavour to publish them in Bridge. Ed

Photos : Ian Wakefield unless credited otherwise

If you spot anything new or unusual on the Grantham , please contact the editor with photos if possible. Any questions and I will try to find answers.

The editor can be contacted at: ian.wakefield@granthamcanal.com