

OCTOBER

BRIDGE

2018



Swans relaxing in the sun at Lock 18 - photo by Ian Wakefield

The
Grantham Canal
Society
CHARITY NO: 507337



Supported by
The National Lottery[®]
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



This month's update from Mike Stone (Chairman)

The Society has spent the last few years promoting the benefits of the Grantham Canal and it is heartening to see that the message has been received by several groups along the Nottinghamshire section of the canal. Near the River Trent a group from Lady Bay has been cleaning the canal in the West Bridgford area where its appearance has been much improved; Morrisons Store at Gamston has encouraged improvements in their area; things may be happening to the canal through the Cotgrave Country Park as a result of the continued housing development; Cropwell Bishop Parish Council is keen to re-water the current dry section of canal through the village; and there are moves at Hicking to make more use of the canal basin there. These initiatives are being appropriately supported by the Society and particularly the GCS Canal Rangers team.

In Grantham South Kesteven DC has supported the local group maintaining the length of canal east of the A1 by supplying a small craft to permit volunteers to access locations that cannot be reached from the banks. Again our Ranger is working closely with the volunteer group. The GCS welcomes the support for the canal and these local initiatives confirm to us that the work we do is welcomed by those who live along the banks. Please continue to give support in this very practical way which delivers benefits to all who travel along the towpath.

This only leaves Leicestershire as the only county where there are no obvious local groups getting involved in the canal. Surely the good people of the villages of Hose, Harby, Plungar, Redmile and Bottesford have residents or a Parish Council who are interested in the environment and who

could take a lead at organising something locally. The local GCS Ranger would be delighted to meet with them.

Work is progressing rapidly on Lock 14 and by the time you read this significant demolition has taken place in preparation for rebuilding. We need more recruits for the construction work so why not bring your own team of volunteers? A team of four friends working one day per week could have a significant effect on progress. You will be taught construction skills that will be of real benefit to you – whether in seeking employment or just building a house extension. Why not come and see what is available? Visit us at Lock 14 near Stenwith any weekday and talk to Mark Owen.

I wish to thank those of you who have supported the SKDC Lottery and The Grantham Canal Society. Your support really will make a difference and enable us to achieve more on the canal. For more details see page 15.

Enjoy Discovery Day – I understand that this year's event is even bigger and better than ever!

Mike Stone.



**Meetings are held at 7.45 pm at Rushcliffe
Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford,
Nottingham, NG2-7HY, about 15 minutes from
M1 Junction 24 up the A453**

Friday 19th October, 7:45pm

Cruising on Remote Waterways - Jeanne and Derek Smith from the National Trailboat Association.

NOTES FOR YOUR DIARY

<u>Date & Time</u>	<u>Event & Venue</u>
Sun 14 th Oct 10.00-4.00	Discovery Day 2018
Wed 24 th Oct 7.00	Talk: Grantham Kesteven Rotary Club, Urban Hotel, Grantham
Mon 12 th Nov 7.30	Rangers Meeting, The Plough, Stathern
Sun 2 nd Dec 11.00 – 4.00	Dirty Duck Christmas Market
Talk bookings are already coming in for 2019!	

If you hear of a local event where we might raise awareness and funds for the society, please let me know communityandevents@granthamcanal.org or 07971173069 *Rosemary Gibson*

Archives and Oral History of the Grantham Canal

Capturing the memories of those who lived or worked by the canal is a vital part of the Grantham's living history and an initiative that we urgently need to breathe fresh life into.

Rosemary Gibson, who initiated this programme, would appreciate assistance to move the Oral History Group project forward. This involves working with Rosemary to organise and then run a Reminiscence Day as well as interviewing individuals to get their memories preserved for the society archives.

The society would also appreciate the services of an archivist - we have a great deal of historical information that needs to be sorted and organised.

If you are interested in either or both of the above then we would welcome you - please contact Rosemary on communityandevents@granthamcanal.org or ring on

07971 173069

GRANTHAM CANAL HERITAGE INITIATIVE at LOCK 14



Many thanks to John Clark, Jim Freeman & Ian Wakefield for these photos & details

Community and Education Update October 2018

The diary looks thin, but life at the moment is dominated by **DISCOVERY DAY!** We are planning old favourites and some exciting new activities. Look at the posters and website for a taster of what's to come.

Plans are already simmering on the back burner for 2019, but I will reveal more about them a bit nearer the new year when we have thought about the effectiveness of our efforts this year. Can't rest on any laurels yet.

Grateful thanks as ever for all who support our efforts in the background and in public.

See lots of you on **DISCOVERY DAY** when we hope we exceed last year's success, but success comes in many forms: the amount of fun we've had, the new members and volunteers we recruit, the information we get out there and more.

Offers of help, saleable items etc. before and on the day welcome. Drop me an email or text –

Rosemary –

**As always, if you can offer any
help, please get in touch:**

communityandevents@granthamcanal.org

or 07971 173069

Flora & Fauna along the Grantham Canal by James Faulconbridge



Owls

As the nights draw in, you're more likely to be walking the towpath close to dusk when the owls begin to reveal their concealment with hoots and calls. Autumn is when tawny owls are at their most vocal as they establish territories - the young birds who fledged in the summer are looking to establish themselves whilst the seasoned adults are determined to hold their patch.

The archetypal owl call is the 'twit - twoo' but this is the work of two birds calling and responding rather than the vocalisations of just tawny owl. The 'twit' is the contact call of both sexes, whilst the 'twoo' is the male territorial call. The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) are currently running a Tawny Owl Calling Survey to find out more about their behaviour and distribution - you can get involved on their website!

Another owl frequently encountered along the canal is the barn owl. On a recent Nature Walk with Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) volunteers, we were lucky enough to see this silent white bird hunting over the marshy grassland which flanks the canal in Woolsthorpe. Nest boxes erected on trees around the canal provide perfect breeding sites for these birds - most are installed and maintained by the Vale of Belvoir and the Rushcliffe barn owl groups.

The other two species most likely to be seen are short-eared owls which are winter migrants, and little owls which are non-native but generally considered to be a rather charming and benevolent addition to our UK fauna!

THE WAY IT WAS

By Mike Atherley



One of the most serious actions that involved the Grantham Canal nearly brought the society to its knees. British Coal decided that there were good coal reserves in the Vale of Belvoir and with government support started trial boring along the vale. Initial results were good and a suggestion was that three deep mines were to be sunk, one near Harby, one near Hose and one near Melton Mowbray. When the news broke there was much opposition from local people, farmers and the canal society and it wasn't long before huge signs made up from painted stones, straw bales and the like were very prominent on the hillsides. Protest meetings were held at most village halls. The canal societies view was will it involve or damage the canal.

British Waterways advised us that long term damage like mining subsidence would affect the canal especially the water courses that fed into it unless plans were in place to protect both items. With a lot of the society members being local residents likely to be affected by any major works also several committee members likewise it put the society in a bit of a pickle. Our constitution only allowed us to object if the canal was threatened. Slowly rumours started with one that suggested that if the mines were built, instead of a rail connection, a supersize barge canal would be cut to link a route to the river Trent. Most of the coal would be to feed the riverside power stations. It soon became obvious that this new canal would cut through the Grantham, depending on its route, but also would need all the water that normally fed the Grantham. So now the canal society had a justifiable cause to raise objections. British Waterways advised us that there would be no more development work allowed and we could only carry out very basic towpath maintenance until

such times that the project reached a conclusion. They were very much in favour of the idea of a super barge canal.

We asked IWA for help but were told they also favoured the barge canal idea and could not support us in fighting to protect the Grantham. We did cancel our membership with IWA until the whole scheme was abandoned. This whole campaign went on for several years and many public meetings were held to support our cause. Quite a few of us considered leaving the canal society, myself joined the Great Central Railway first at Loughborough then at Ruddington but had problems so didn't continue down that route. This pause in Grantham work was one reason we visited many other canal restoration sites around the country just to keep the team together with the hope of eventually returning to our own canal.

Eventually, in 1985, it was decided to build a single "Super Pit" at Asfordby near Melton Mowbray. This meant that the problems were over and we were allowed to return to normal with B.W. The new mine, complete with rail link, was completed and commenced production in 1995. However serious geological problems and low coal prices brought about its closure in 1997. It cost about £300 million. That amount would have probably been enough to restore all the derelict canals in Britain.

Food for thought!



Top:
During construction in 1988
Right:
Demolished in 1998



#Trending



Given the title #Trending – having a look through Twitter & Facebook posts – it's actually difficult to spot a trend.

Just occasionally a tweet will romp away for little apparent reason. The launch of lotterySK was one of these. Perhaps it's the lure of winning £25,000! I like to think there are many of you who see this new lottery as a way of supporting us – don't forget to nominate us as your good cause!

Google 'Grantham Canal' – and you'll find us at the top of the list – which is great! It's what every business and organisation dreams of! Until something goes wrong! Yup, our beloved canal suffered badly during the long hot dry summer. The Nottingham end of the canal was particularly low in water. The village of Kinoulton didn't escape either.

Our rangers helped where they could, but many of these enquiries were directed to the Canal and River Trust. Being predominant owners of the canal, it is with the Trust where overall responsibility lies.

We know the answer to these ills of course – full restoration – which we're working hard at with the support of the Trust.

Our Twitter and Facebook pages are a great way of keeping up with day to day happenings on the canal. These range from herbal remedies which can be found along the towpath, to the rebuilding of Muston Bridge in the 1980s.



Over the winter months we'll be discussing the canal's history on Facebook, and also other subjects related to our fabulous inland waterways.

Tony

**Fern Charity Enterprises
are delighted to announce a
Summer afternoon concert by the
Lyrical Songbirds which will be
held in a year's time on Sunday,
21st July 2019 at 3 pm in The Old
School, Cropwell Bishop.**

**The Choir will entertain us from
a range of musical repertoire so
there will be 'something for
everyone'.**

**Proceeds in support of the work
of volunteers of The Grantham
Canal Society.**

**A glass of sparkling on arrival,
home-made cake in the interval
and of course a Raffle with super
prizes.**

**To reserve your ticket (£10)
kindly RSVP to contact details
below:**

Elaine & Mell

jarobinson1981@gmail.com

0115 989 4459

**Fern Charity Enterprises
12-14 Fern Road
Cropwell Bishop
Notts
NG12 3BU**

CANAL CLEANUP ...

Following on from a very successful clean up by the Lady Bay residents a further planned cleanup took place near Lings Bar at West Bridgford.

On Sunday 16 September a team of volunteers, all nearby residents, met at Lock 3 (Gamston Lock) and made a splendid effort improving the area around the canal.

Grantham Society Ranger Rob organised the cleanup with the local residents and Gareth from Canal & River Trust guided the day's activities.

These are some of their comments from the day:

I want to thank you all, including the hard working children, for your wonderfully enthusiastic display of community action today. We worked together and made a difference to our local stretch of canal:

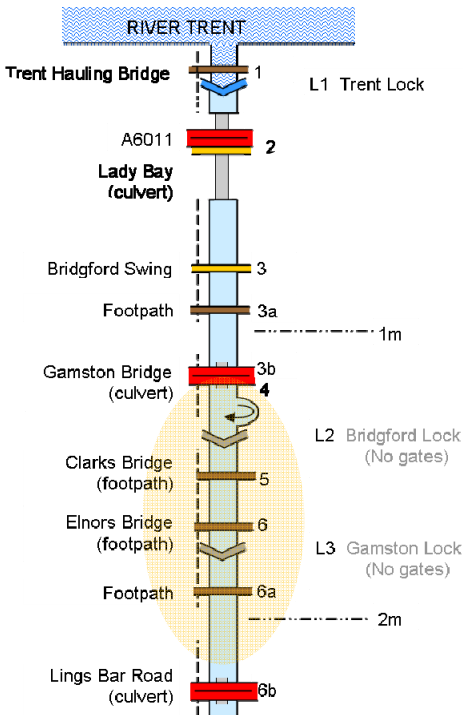
- One team spent time cleaning Lock 2 weir
- A partial tidy up of Lock 3 weir was also carried out
- Another team did a thorough litter pick from Radcliffe road bridge to Morrisons and beyond
- A splinter litter pick team returned a badly damaged shopping trolley, retrieved from bushes, to Morrisons
- A team spent time wire brushing, sanding and painting the timber fence and steel gate at Lock 3

Unfortunately we didn't have time to scabble the towpath or to paint the white bits on the steel gate. We also need to do a much better job to clear Lock 3 weir.

Gareth

Some more jobs for the future

- remove litter from the canal
- remove some of the worst duckweed (need a boat for this!)
- measure the depth of the silt.



BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITY



The CRT's contractors will hopefully be cutting the overgrown vegetation from the hedge bottom to the canal waterside during the week. This will make things look better but I don't think they will take the cuttings away with them. If not the canal and towpath could be left with lots of rotting vegetation around. I really hope not.



Thanks also to Sharon and her daughter for providing the scones, jam, cream and chocolate goodies.

Great work folks, looks like a really positive day. These are the things that improve the local communities sense of wellbeing when they know people care for their patch and they can get involved. Great job all, particularly Gareth and Rob for organising
Scott Miller
Volunteering Development Coordinator
(Partner Groups)
East Midlands Region
Canal & River Trust



Thank you and the rest of your team very much for making this day possible and providing the equipment, expertise and supervision. I believe most of the volunteers enjoyed the day and, if available, would be willing to give it another go.

Do you think we could set up another Task Day in 4 to 6 weeks time?

Ranger Rob





Discussion and Conclusions

Following the Principal Inspection of the of the lock it is proposed to alter the Condition Grade of the lock from a C (Fair) to an A (Very Good). The restoration work has repaired the defects and has been completed to a high standard. The grades of the structure are proposed to be as followed.

Condition Grade A Very Good

Serviceability 1 Fit for Purpose

Consequence of Failure 1 Single Minor Injury

This condition grade is still considered appropriate despite the minor issues that have been identified in this inspection, such as the leaks through the ground paddles and stiffness in the downstream gate paddles.

These situations require monitoring in the future to see if the situations deteriorate. The restoration works to the lock have also changed the technical object type for the structure from 018 (Weired Lock) to 010 (Lock). New sub assets have also been created for the new lock gates (GR-008-001-01 for the top gates and GR-008-001-02 for the bottom gates) that have been installed. The condition grade of the lock gates will be reviewed by the Lock Gate Technicians separately to this report.

Anglian Water spend a day volunteering on the canal

On Wednesday 26th September a team from Anglian Water spent a day on the canal as part of their *Local Community Volunteering – Love to Help* programme. The team consisted of a mixture of office and field staff. They spent the day working on the towpath adjacent to the Woolthorpe Depot, clearing the pathway of weed and cleaning up some of the old bricks ready for future use.

The aim is to develop wheelchair-friendly access along this section of the towpath. Feedback from a prominent team member at Anglian Water was very positive; they felt that they were well looked after, and it provided a great opportunity for office and field staff to work together. The following comments highlight the success of the day,

“Hopefully we can have a few more days helping out in the future” and “Can you please pass on many thanks from us to all, for a fantastic day.”

Many thanks to Anglian Water for their time and effort, and to Mark Owens for his support on the day and the GCS staff who helped make this happen.

For further details about how your organisation can be involved in similar events please contact David Lyneham-Brown on

chiefexecutive@granthamcanal.org

Neil White

Fundraiser

The Grantham Canal Society

07934 025435



The team get to work on clearing the path which must ultimately be “Wheelchair friendly”



**All smiles but a few aching muscles!
Photos courtesy of Ian Wakefield**

Project Presentation Cropwell Dry Section Return to Water

By: David Lyneham-Brown

Preamble

The restoration of the Grantham Canal has been in progress since the late 1960s/ early 1970s. Active restoration has focused on the east end of the canal within the South Kesteven District Council/ Lincolnshire County Council area, largely because that is where funding has been most readily available and the councils have been consistently encouraging and co-operative. By the end of this decade almost £10 million worth of restoration will have been completed out of an estimated £50 million (+?) project cost. The Grantham Canal Society (GCS) has decided, while continuing to work from the east, to develop a new project zone much further west, on what is known as the Cropwell Dry Section. This will be the second major project in Nottinghamshire, the first being the £400,000 project to restore Hickling Basin and nearly three miles of canal in the mid – 1990's. The section is approx. 4.7 miles in length. The bed of the canal requires extensive clearance, as do the banks.

WHY Cropwell Dry Section Project

- 1/ It is in Nottinghamshire; the closest major project to the west (metropolitan) end of the canal on the existing cut
- 2/ It will take considerable time to execute – many imponderables, unknowns and uncertainties
- 3/ There is local community interest which GCS intends to mature
- 4/ As it is dry the necessary but restrictive conditions on working with water in the cut do not apply
- 5/ Will create long-term publicity and participation opportunities
- 6/ Can be done in parallel with existing restoration projects
- 7/ Local British Geological Survey expertise available

A. Nottinghamshire

This project is in Nottinghamshire the significance of which lies in its potential for raising the profile of the canal in that county. Probably only 1 person in 10 who live north of the Trent have even heard of the canal and raising that awareness is a vital objective for the GCS. Oh that the founders had called it the Nottingham to Grantham Canal (AKA The Leeds – Liverpool). This is the closest major project to the west (metropolitan) end of the canal on the existing cut – the Trent Connection will be much bigger but much has to be done before we are in a position to tackle that.

B. Considerable Time to Execute

This is not a project to be rushed, as there are likely to be many imponderables, unknowns and uncertainties yet to be revealed. Initial research, planning and preparation can take place in parallel to the clearance of the canal as referred to in point 3 below.

C. Local Community Interest

This interest is already manifesting itself from not just CBPC but also from CB's individual residents. GCS intends to develop this interest and work in active partnership with the community along the section. This will also involve also approaching Kinoulton and Cotgrave PCs as the dry section begins and ends just inside those parish boundaries.

Until recently it was thought that housing development close to the canal would have impact and trigger potential opportunities but apparently planning permission has been refused.

D. Benefit of the Section Being Dry

As the Cropwell Section is dry the necessary but restrictive conditions on working with water in the cut do not apply. Having cleared the section work parties will work to maintain that clearance and GCS will seek to restore water in short sections from the Kinoulton end. A rolling series of cofferdams will facilitate that progression. Restoration work can be undertaken on an incremental basis and controlled water flow used to test water retentiveness section by section.

E. Publicity and Participation

Both long-term publicity and participation opportunities of benefit to the canal can be achieved through this project. A key objective of the GCS is to greatly increase the involvement of the community along the entire canal corridor and this project provides such an opportunity. That participation, beside the progress made, will provide ample opportunity for profile-raising publicity.

F. Balancing Resources

Running parallel projects presents a few potential problems but without the pressing nature of water flow this project can be undertaken as a second stringer. Working in parallel with existing east end projects resources can be balanced according to the stage reached.

G. Local British Geological Survey Expertise Available

Given the unknowns attached to the gypsum penetrated geology it is fortunate that we have the BGS in close vicinity and even more fortunate that one of their retired geologists has already offered his expertise to the GCS.

Planning and Preparation Issues

At this early stage the GCS intends to open up conversation with the following:

Canal and River Trust
Cropwell Bishop Parish Council
Rushcliffe Borough Council
Waterways Recovery Group and BITM

Building the working relationship between GCS, Cropwell Bishop Parish Council, parish residents, local business interests, CRT and Rushcliffe Borough Council around this project is critical.

At a practical level we will prioritise the clearance of both canal bed and banks and subsequently maintain that cleared state.

David Lyneham-Brown

Chief Executive/ General Manager

Email: chiefexecutive@granthamcanal.org

Website: www.granthamcanal.org



The Grantham Canal Society has become one of the first beneficiaries of the new weekly on-line lottery – **LotterySK.**

LotterySK is a new weekly, on-line local lottery launched by South Kesteven District Council to raise thousands of pounds for charities and voluntary organisations within the district.

Players have a chance to scoop a £25,000 jackpot and 60 pence for every £1 ticket sold goes to good causes in South Kesteven - more than twice the proportion raised by the National Lottery.

The first draw takes place on Saturday 27 October 2018.

You can support **The Grantham Canal Society** by buying a ticket so **please check out details on page 15.**

You can either sign up by direct debit or payment card and buy tickets for one, three, or six months. Winners will be informed via email and will have the money transferred automatically to their chosen bank account.

Gatherwell, is running the scheme for South Kesteven District Council and runs local lotteries with other councils in Mansfield, Portsmouth, Corby and Melton Mowbray.

To buy your tickets visit www.lotterysk.co.uk

Rebuilding of the Linesman Hut at Hickling

A rather long running project this one but the end is in sight - no, honestly it is!

For a while local residents and walkers familiar with the area thought it was a Grantham Canal Society project and we were often asked when we were "saving" it but it was never on our project list.

Some years ago this hut was slated for demolition and disposal but various interventions persuaded the then British Waterways to put it on their minor projects list for restoration.

The timescales for this project were extended by a succession of events that impacted both British Waterways and its successors, Canal and River Trust.

Loss of resource, a series of crisis events around the national network that depleted already stretched budgets and a series of re-organisations precipitated by grant aid restrictions meant that CRT inherited a project which required a level of technical support but did not fit into anyone's priorities and did not have any resource to support the delivery.

However, all the hut timbers were retrieved and rather than build with new timbers the originals have been treated and reconditioned. A planned mock rebuild in the workshop will enable all the components to be checked out for fit. Much of the work has been carried out by apprentices as part of their skill sets enhancement and once the chimney has been rebuilt reassembly on site will take place.

Throughout the project CRT sought support from a range of sources, both internal and external, without success, including a few occasions whereby they were let down when a solution appeared to hand.

The project has therefore relied on the good will and support of individuals, both within the Trust and the local community, who have pulled strings to redirect their resources and priorities to offer assistance or even given their own time to help push the work forward.

So when exactly? - not sure, but CRT have promised to expedite and let us tell you through "Bridge" when all is firmed up.

DL-B





**PLEASE
SUPPORT
US**



Tickets
from **£1**

Win up to
£25,000

50% of ticket price
goes to our cause

Tickets are **now** on sale
so don't delay!

**DON'T FORGET TO NOMINATE
THE GRANTHAM CANAL SOCIETY
AS YOUR CHOSEN CHARITY**

To buy your ticket visit
<https://www.lotterysk.co.uk/>
or call the Lottery Team on 01476 347474

GCS Trip Boat

The Three Shires Donation

Last winter 2017/18 Steve Parkes had his Mountfield Lawn mower refurbished and serviced by John Trigg (Senior Skipper).

Steve Parkes has recently sold the refurbished mower for £45 and has donated this sum to GCS which has now been put towards a new bilge pump for the bow of Three Shires. GCS and Three Shires are extremely grateful for Steve's generosity!

Thank you
John T.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES



WEEKDAYS AT LOCK 14 or



**FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS
WITH ONE OF OUR
WORKPARTIES**

If you can spare some time to join one of our teams then please email volunteer@granthamcanal.org or lan.wakefield@granthamcanal.org

A big Thank You
to the public who have
supported our Sunday Short
Trips with 'The Three Shires'
narrowboat, and to the crew
and volunteers who have
made it possible.

John Trigg and
Mary Noble

HAVE YOU VISITED US ON DISCOVERY DAY?

If so then please would you become a member of The Grantham Canal Society and support our efforts to restore this beautiful canal.

It doesn't matter if you live miles away or don't wish to actively volunteer - you will be supporting our efforts.

THE COST IS MODEST - BUT THE BENEFIT TO US IS ENORMOUS!