

BRIDGE



The Newsletter of the Grantham Canal Society

WINTER 23

FREE

In this issue:

New volunteer coordinator

AGM time again!

The Big Autumn BBQ



Photo by Estelle Slegers Helsen

Published quarterly by

The
Grantham Canal
Society

RESTORING THE NOTTINGHAM TO GRANTHAM CANAL



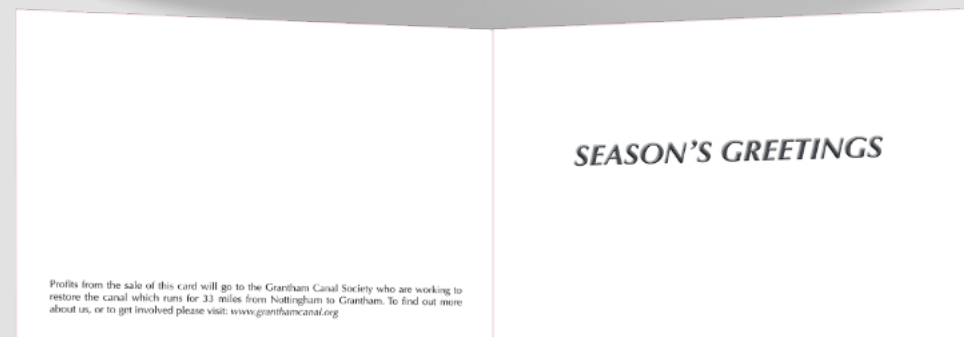
CHRISTMAS IS COMING ...

writes Polly Browne



Our beautiful and exclusive Grantham Canal Society Christmas cards are about to be printed. Details will be sent out by email as soon as they are available.

For every card purchased a donation is given to our funds, which will also help to raise awareness and spread the word about the good work we do, so please consider supporting us by sending GCS Christmas cards this year.



SEASON'S GREETINGS

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Diary dates for 2024 (all Sundays)

21st April Spring Craft Fair

9th June Strawberry Cream Teas

11th August Activities Day

22nd September Produce Fair.

If you would like to help at these events, please contact:

volunteer@granthamcanal.org

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS

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FROM THE EDITOR

A recent conversation with an acquaintance has prompted me (*trust me I do need prompting!*) to ruminate somewhat on the huge benefits of retirement, namely the increased time for leisure activities, relaxing and just 'me' time.

Right now, as I type this drivel, I am on another break from merry old England, enjoying the slow pace of life afforded to visitors to the beautiful island of Crete. Being retired allows me to take these breaks and through the magic of technology continue to work on GCS publications (*although I can hardly call it work*) while I'm away. It is, I think, a win-win situation.

It's not all work of course (a line borrowed from an advert some of my readers may be familiar with). Not being the type to lie on a beach, I'm packing numerous books (courtesy of my trusty e-book reader). I've read countless thrillers, spy stories, history books, etc., – many will probably be forgotten by the time you read this!

But returning to my theme, the other major benefit of retirement is of course having the ability to use some of that spare time for good and in our case volunteering activities such as helping GCS to restore this lovely canal and being able to give something back to the community. It literally cost us nothing, just a small bit of that ever-increasing spare time. For those who are not yet retired, it's a great excuse to switch off the TV, get off the sofa and breathe some fresh air ... think about it. Why not give volunteering a go?

Email: volunteer@granthamcanal.org today.



Write to me at:
bridge@granthamcanal.org
with your comments, ideas, news, submissions, articles for inclusion, etc.

Brian Cantwell (Editor)

CHAIRMAN MIKE STONE WRITES ...

As the trees start to shed their leaves and the days get cooler and wetter the active volunteers of the Grantham Canal Society prepare for Winter. This is the season when the hard work occurs (to avoid disturbing nesting birds and other species in the Spring and Summer) and the tough and committed souls labour to restore the canal from Nottingham to Grantham.

I am happy to report that a number of new recruits have joined the workforce bringing their various disciplines and offering their expertise to make restoration change happen. We thank them for coming forward and giving their support for without all this voluntary effort little progress would be achieved.

Further support of a different kind has come from those who have joined the Society as members. Every Member is important as they identify to the many organisations with which the Society interfaces just how well the organisation is considered by the public. Numbers of members have steadily increased over the past 50 years from small beginnings, numbers eventually reached 500 – a target in 2008 – to a figure which is now approaching 900. The next critical figure used as a target by local authorities, benefactors, etc., is 1,000 members. Please could you help us reach that number during 2024? Reaching that number will make a real difference to our success going forward. Why not ask a friend or neighbour and give them a leaflet? They might say yes and the worst that can happen is they say No!

Look at the scope of work our volunteers are undertaking now or during this winter – which may be jobs you could help with:

- Working with Belvoir Castle to restore the underground feeder from Knipton Reservoir to the Canal
- Instructing and liaising with the consultants who are assessing the feasibility of a new link to the River Trent
- Rebuilding *Otter*, our weed boat, to continue the removal of weed along the navigable length of the canal
- Conducting a review of the society policies to ensure we continue to meet all legal requirements
- Working for the canal owners, Canal & River Trust (CRT), to repair any leaks and weaknesses to the structure of the waterway
- Undertaking preliminary work required to effect restoration of Lock 13 of the Woolsthorpe flight

If you would like to try volunteering just contact
volunteer@granthamcanal.org

- Minimising leaks at Locks 18, 17 & 16, which were first restored in the 1990s.
- Working with the volunteer groups in West Bridgford to enhance the appearance of the west end of the canal.
- Upgrading and developing the Society's website www.granthamcanal.org
- Improving society records, reports and communications

There are around 30 miles of the canal from Grantham to Nottingham that need improvement just to maintain the very basic conditions that apply along much of the waterway. As has been reported here and in the press CRT financial support from the government will substantially reduce over the next decade and all their resources will be directed to the waterways used for cruising and leisure. The continued restoration of the Grantham Canal will depend on activity by Society volunteers and the much appreciated support received from the wider local community.

Please continue to support, in whatever way you can, the canal and our restoration efforts and extend the improvements that have already transformed some lengths of the route.

Only with your support can the Grantham Canal Society make real and lasting improvements happen!

Of course we could deliver results more quickly if a few more would join the Management team and lead on some of our forward tasks. You saw my appeal in the last edition which rewardingly produced a couple of offers from prospective volunteers.

Please consider if you or a member of your family or a friend could spare some time to assist the Society. We are flexible and understand that everyone has other commitments so we fit in with your availability.

We would like to improve everyone's experience of the Nottingham to Grantham canal and with your help I think we could achieve more!

Best wishes.



Christmas gift idea: a GCS membership

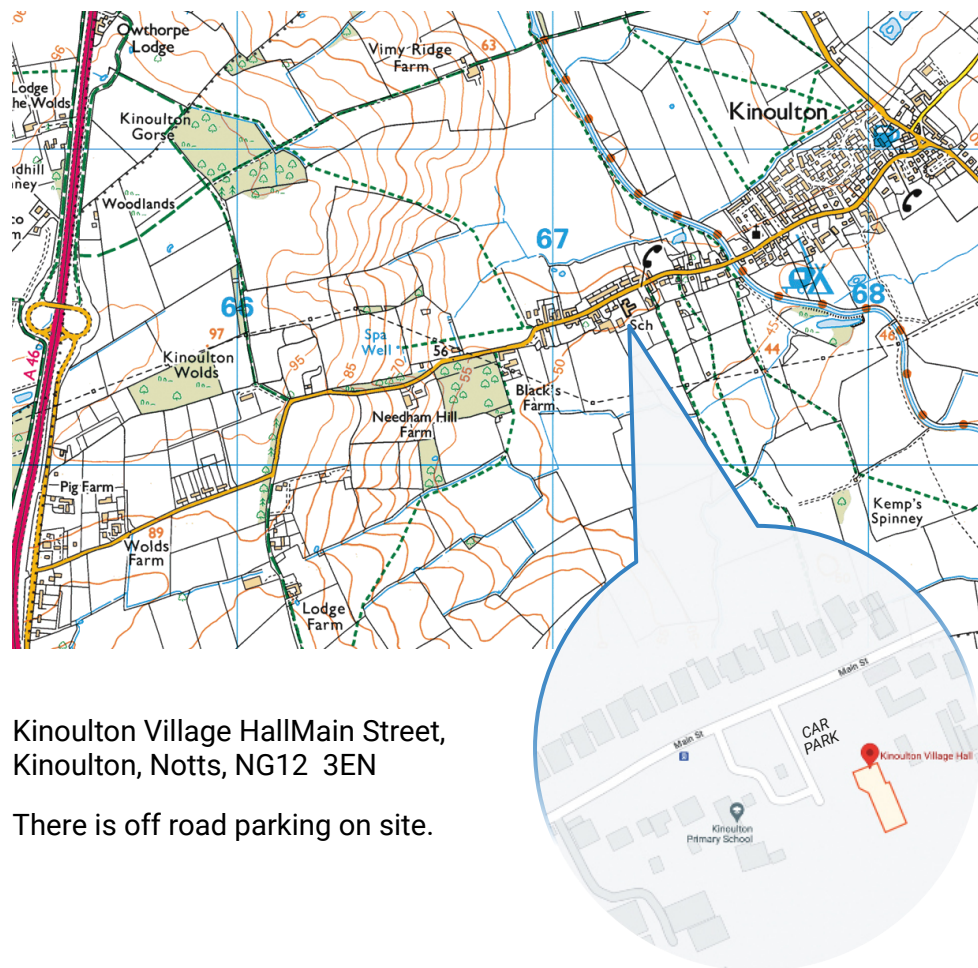


ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 7 pm 22 November, Kinoulton Village Hall.

As a member, you are welcome to attend, and the relevant documents are on the following pages.

Only current members can participate during the AGM, however following the AGM there will be a break for refreshments, and time for a question-and-answer session and informal discussion which will be open to members and any other person attending the meeting.

Questions should be sent to Ashley Mather, Acting Company Secretary, by 15th November 2023, preferably by email to secretary@granthamcanal.org, or in writing to Lion Cottage, 6 Chapel Lane, Elton, Cambs, PE8 6RE



Kinoulton Village Hall Main Street,
Kinoulton, Notts, NG12 3EN

There is off road parking on site.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

Notice is hereby given that the Forty-fifth Annual General Meeting (the "AGM") of the Grantham Canal Society will be held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 22nd November 2023 at Kinoulton Village Hall, Main Street, Kinoulton, Notts, NG12 3EN. Directions are attached.

A Form of Proxy accompanies this Notice, will you please record your votes on the various resolutions. For your votes to count, your Proxy must be returned to me as Acting Company Secretary, preferably by email, to reach me no later than midday on Wednesday 15th November 2023.

The AGM will be convened by Mike Stone (Chairman), Tony Osbond (General Manager), Jane Grylls (Treasurer) and myself (Acting Company Secretary). Those persons will be the only persons entitled to speak at the meeting.

Michelle Storer and Rosemary Gibson have tendered their resignation from the Committee.

Michael Stone and Rod Gordon will be standing down in accordance with the Society's requirements whereby a third of the longest standing members of the Society's committee stand down at each AGM. They have both agreed to stand again for election to the Committee.

Nikyla Manners and John Trigg have agreed to stand for election to the Committee.

If any member of the Society wishes to propose another member of the Society for election to the Committee, he/she must send a written proposition by email or letter to me (Ashley Mather) to reach me no later than Wednesday 15th November 2023. Such proposition must be in writing, give the full name, address, telephone number and email address of the candidate, be signed by the proposer and an independent seconder (also member of the Society) and countersigned by the candidate to signify his/her agreement to stand. All signatories must be clearly identified.

If any member of the Society wishes to put a question to the AGM (relevant to the business of the AGM) please send it to me in writing (preferably by email if possible) to reach me by Wednesday 15th November 2023.

The Report & Financial Statements of the Society will be available on application to me. They will not be circulated to members individually, but hard copies can be made available upon request subject to payment of a small fee to cover the cost of copying, postage etc.

The Agenda for the AGM and a Form of Proxy accompany this Notice.

Ashley Mather (Acting Company Secretary)
Lion Cottage, 5 Chapel Lane, Elton, Cambs, PE8 6RE
Tel: 01832 280720, email secretary@granthamcanal.org

AGM AGENDA

AGENDA for the Annual General Meeting to be held on Wednesday 22nd November 2023, at 7.00 p.m. at Kinoulton Village Hall, Main Street, Kinoulton, Notts, NG12 3EN

- 1a. Welcome and opening remarks by the Chairman (Mike Stone)
- 1b. Apologies for absence
2. To receive the Trustees' and the Independent Examiner's reports and the Accounts (Financial Statements) for the 12 months ended 31st March 2023
- 3a. To note the resignation of the following members of the Society from the Committee
 - a. Michelle Storer
 - b. Rosemary Gibson
- 3b. To encourage and invite members to apply for the vacant positions being carried on the committee including Chief Executive officer, Events Manager, Operations Manager and Health and Safety Adviser
- 4a. To document the standing down of Michael Stone and Rod Gordon in accordance with the Society's memorandum and articles of association whereby a third of the longest standing members of the Society's committee stand down at each AGM
- 4b. To re-elect the above who have both agreed to stand again
- 4c. To elect the following members of the Society to the Committee
 - a. Nikyla Manners
 - b. John Trigg
6. To authorise the Committee to determine the remuneration of the Independent Examiner
7. To conduct any other business relevant to the AGM

By Order of the Committee

Ashley Mather (Acting Company Secretary)
Lion Cottage, 5 Chapel Lane, Elton, Cambs, PE8 6RE

Notes :

The Trustees' and the Independent Examiner's Reports and the Accounts (Financial Statements) will be available for inspection prior to the AGM, on application to the Acting Company Secretary.



A couple of photos by Mark Poyser showing the increased water levels recently.



MEET OUR NEW VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Hello and welcome tome! I'm Mark Cherry and I've taken over the role of volunteer coordinator from Mary at last. It was meant to happen earlier but after 34 years of teaching and a decision to retire my replacement went on maternity leave causing a 6 month return to the interactive whiteboard which was promptly followed by a fractured kneecap delaying things even further.

I'm 62 and have been married to Alison for 33 years and have three sons who have all left the nest in Grantham. I was a Business, Economics and Finance teacher in Lincolnshire grammar schools and joined GCS on my retirement. I am a member of the Monday work party where I've been involved with the fitting out of the containers and lots of green paint! You may have seen me manning the merchandise stall at previous events at the depot. I've been trained as a crew member for the Three Shires and on my one trip out to date seemed to acquire a bit of a reputation for selling more merchandise.

I have been on several canal holidays where I tend to be given the driving role whilst Alison has a fondness for going on ahead and working locks. The most recent trip was from Silsden taking a wide beam out on the Leeds Liverpool canal.

The canal isn't my only interest and I'm presently the Chair of the Barrowby Parish Council Allotment Committee and the associated Barrowby Gardeners' Association. I have two plots including a very productive polytunnel.

I've also renewed my relationship with art and attend a regular class where I've been developing my use of watercolour, acrylics and pastel pencils. I tend to focus on animals and birds with an occasional landscape painting.

In relatively good weather you may find me down at the RSPB reserve of Frampton Marsh near Boston doing a bit of bird watching. It's well worth a visit.

I look forward to meeting more of you over the coming months – I'm sure you'll be getting emails off me!

If you would like to learn new skills, meet new people and make a difference, email volunteer@granthamcanal.org to get involved.

Mark Cherry



Log on to the GCS page on the Co-op website at <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/70006> to nominate GCS as your chosen charity when shopping at a Co-op Food store – you can also nominate us by calling Co-op Customer Services on 0800 0686 727 quoting our reference number 70006. If you are not local to the Bottesford store, it is only possible to choose us over the Internet by using the link above.



Did you know that you can "Give as you live" and donate to The Grantham Canal Society by doing ... nothing much?

You simply buy your goods through the website giveasyoulive.com or app and sit back and let good things happen!

A considerable amount has already been raised this way for the GCS.

Another way to donate funds via your online shopping is to use www.easyfundraising.org.uk



with easyfundraising, you shop, brands donate to us, it won't cost you anything extra!

- 1 Sign up at: www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause
- 2 Search for (The Grantham Canal Society)
- 3 Your favourite brands donate to GCS

7,000+ online brands



Get the App ...



Reading this but not member of The Grantham Canal Society?

Every member we have adds to the likelihood of us gaining grant funding, membership numbers are a great way of demonstrating the amount of our support, so why not join us and help make a difference to our canal and preserve our heritage? Only a small proportion of members are active volunteers, the remainder help us just by being members. It doesn't matter if you live miles (or in some cases continents) away, you will still be supporting our efforts.

The cost is modest, annual subscription rates are:

Single Adult: £20

Family: £30.00 (Family membership covers two adults plus children living at the same address)

Under 16s / Concessions: £15

And, if you would prefer not to have to renew every year: Life Membership: £150

WORKPARTY & CONSTRUCTION UPDATE *General Manager Tony Osbond*

Reading my last summary of canal operational news in the summer edition Storm Antoni had just hit us in August but now in October as I write my piece from Cornwall, Storm Babet has "stormed in" with Eastern Scotland taking a battering and viewing GCS WhatsApp platforms over the last day or so the East Midlands has also taken a pounding.

The maintenance teams are keeping an eye on conditions around Locks 18-16 with possible overtopping into the Dirty Duck and also mindful of the cottage adjacent to Lock 17.

So onto operational issues: Woolsthorpe Depot has been tidied up with our new Excavator and Dumper straightening up the compound area adjacent the stern of Corvus, laying additional hardcore before both pieces of equipment being transported to the Knipton Feeder to start the repair work on the feeder. A big thank you to Antony Haslam at Belvoir Estates for providing transport to move the equipment.



Work on the feeder has gone well with the work to replace a section of the underground feeder, which was leaking very badly, virtually complete. A big thank you to Paul Strickland the tenant farmer for facilitating the delivery of materials into his farm and also access across the grassland to the site requiring the feeder renewal.

Lock 18 repointing of the towpath chamber wall has been completed down to water level and has made a positive difference of losing water into the adjacent field.

Stop Planks were installed at the top gate position and the canal water between the stop planks and the top gates was drained to inspect the paddles and paddle gear. This exercise was carried out in a day with the stop planks being removed and the canal returned to normality.

We have reported our findings to CRT as new paddles will be required as will the timber supports for the gear.

Workparty & Construction continued

The bottom gates require new Balance Beams as well as the timber supports for the paddle gear.

The timber supports for the paddle gear we have in stock for top and bottom gates, we just have to await notification on the paddles at the top gates before we can carry out a replacement. New Balance Beams for the bottom gates will be included in the next financial year in 2024

Preparatory work on Lock 13 is continuing. The project will be subject to conforming to CDM (Construction Design Management) Regulations 2015 with CRT as Client, GCS as Principal Contractor and Howard Worth IWA Honorary Consultant Engineer as Principal Designer. Work on the Enabling Works i.e., temporary by-wash and access points to fit in with work on Lock 18 paddle gear replacement.

CRT have now appointed a Project Manager to oversee the work required to complete the repairs to Culvert 12. Preparatory meetings will be held with CRT to discuss this project and the involvement of GCS as contractor. A start date to be decided once the extent of the work has been established.

Winter working on canal maintenance out of bird nesting season is being carried out with both the Friday and Saturday teams. Currently we are carrying out vegetation and tree clearing from the canal in the area of Locks 9 and 10 with further planning and action to be completed in other areas of the canal.

It should be noted that in the Lady Bay/Gamston area the action group WeBCan have carried out a considerable amount of work in clearing reeds from the bed of the canal. The canal is looking a lot better for their efforts; disposal of the reeds arranged by GCS for CRT to carry out the removal.

Background work on the Trent Connection is gathering pace. We have commissioned a feasibility study after interviewing four consultants and selecting a local consultant to complete this exercise.

Further meetings with Notts County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council have been carried out and preparatory meetings arranged with Developers involved in the proposed housing developments on Tollerton Lane. These developments will affect the bridging of the canal at Gamston Lings Bar, Ambleside and Tollerton Lane.

The Feasibility Study should be completed in November for GCS to digest and plan a way forward towards implementing our long-term vision in connecting the canal to the River Trent.

Finally back to Woolsthorpe Depot and the situation with getting *Otter* back into the water. Jim Gaut and his team have been working fearlessly in completing the work and is very near to getting back in the water to carry out weed and reed removal.

Removal of Corvus from the Depot is ongoing with CRT. The boat will be subject to an on line auction being arranged by CRT. It is hoped that by the end of March next year all the formalities will have been completed and Corvus will have gone to "pastures new".

Finally, a Broadband connection into the Depot? Discussions with BT Open Reach are on going as is the availability of obtaining a modem to locally get a Broadband connection. A case of watching this space with our GCS Team on the case.



Refurbished *Otter* back on the water!

THREE SHIRES TRIP BOAT

Senior skipper John Trigg

The trip boat has had an excellent 2023 cruising season (now ended).

I thought it would be interesting to share the statistics with you. These are collected by our magic Google Sheets Booking sheet which is ably managed by Paul Dadford. You may know that it is the maths behind the spread sheet boxes that produces the figures. Here we go...thank you Paul.

- The boat and crew have raised £9,135 approximately
- They have done 106 trips of varying lengths
- We have carried 1,186 passengers which amounts to 1,223 crewing hours
- The most popular trip is of two hour duration to Denton Winding hole and return and we travelled this route 55 times
- We also had 33 short trips to Bridge 62 and return

May I take this opportunity to thank all the Skippers and Crew that have made this happen – a great team effort.

The Work Parties led by Kevin have kept the canal open for us and this year the water levels haven't been too bad.

We have continued to have excellent Trip Advisor reviews; thanks are due to Elizabeth Bland for keeping this on track. Also, huge thanks to our social media team for promoting the trips throughout the season.



Thank you to everyone who has been aboard Three Shires this season, and have very kindly shared your photos with us on social media. We have been glad to welcome our friends from the Village Link Magazine (above), Alison and her friends (left) who then morphed into a band of pirates! We are very much looking forward to next year's schedule and seeing your photos!

Nikyla Manners

THE BIG AUTUMN BBQ

Mary Noble

The 24 September was planned as an Activities Day down at the Woolthorpe Depot but only two non GCS stallholders responded, so we decided to change it to the Big Autumn BBQ.

Our volunteers worked hard from 8am to put our stalls out, which included the BBQ, Refreshments, second-hand books, Tombola, Membership/workwear, 'Win a bottle', Childrens Bridge Building etc., and the lawn games.

Alick Burt brought his beautiful Wooden Canoes, David Pullen was on duty with the Inland Waterways display and Peter Cadwallader set up the Grantham Canal Water Restoration Group stand.

Gary from 103fm 'The Eye', Melton Mowbray Radio, set out his stall and we were ready for visitors by 10am.

We welcomed many visitors throughout the day and some were even interviewed by Gary for his radio show..

Everybody declared the burgers and hotdogs were great, and the home-made cakes and apple pies went down well with a cuppa.

Many tombola items and bottles were won and carried home along with numerous books.

We were very lucky with the weather – windy but warm and dry. Come 3pm and the volunteers were on hand to put everything away ready for next year.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE FOR TAKING PART



#Trending

with Nikyla Manners

@granthamcanalsociety @granthamcanal @granthamcanalsociety

EVENTS

It has been a busy season of events this year: visiting Cotgrave Country Park and Harlaxton Village Fair with our pop-up stand, and our Craft Fair and Big Autumn BBQ. Thanks to all who visited and thanks to the wonderful craftspeople who joined us. The Events Team are meeting this month to start plans for next year so keep your eye on our social media pages for more information.

CANAL WALKS

Having completed the Nottingham and Beeston Canal, Helen Segebarth and John Kilcoyne (pictured right) are now enjoying our very own Grantham Canal and are three quarters of the way along. All the best with the rest of your walk, and thank you for sharing your journey with us! We love to hear about everyone's canal adventures so keep sharing them with us please.

And finally, the last we heard of the Woolly Duckies, they had set off on their own canal adventure on their homemade raft. I cannot confirm whether they returned safely so please keep an eye out for them and keep us updated!

All of this is possible thanks to our fantastic volunteers so if you have a flair for construction, publicity, events or just want to meet new people and be part of something amazing, email: volunteer@granthamcanal.org

We look forward to meeting you!



Some of our hard-working volunteers operating a 'chipping' machine - just one of the many diverse jobs that need to be carried out in our journey to restore this canal.



VOLUNTEERS WANTED



*The Grantham Canal Society Needs **YOU***