

BRIDGE



The Newsletter of the Grantham Canal Society

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

SUMMER 25

In this issue:

*An appeal from the Chair
Western Depot
Produce Fair*

FREE



Volunteer stalwart Mary on the GCS stand at Dysart Park Volunteering Everywhere Day in Grantham on Sunday 1 June.



HERITAGE FUND



Canal & River Trust

A MESSAGE TO THE MEMBERS

After considerable thought and much soul-searching, I have concluded that it is now time to retire from the Chair of Grantham Canal Society.

The leadership role of one of the most successful restoration volunteer groups needs leadership of a younger member and, more importantly, one who is not located over 150 miles from the action.

Since I joined the Society in 2007 to assist with the 'Grantham on Water' event there has been some very positive enjoyment for me in monitoring the restoration progress. Apart from a rowing craft we didn't have a boat; the water was shallow in parts; there was no base we could call home; volunteers were keen but in smaller numbers and were regarded by the canal landlords as being a nuisance. Looking back, I wonder why I joined!

The future didn't look too promising either when almost the first impact was the failure of a lock wall at Lock 18. But we kept going and received much local support, both individual and corporate; some of the waterway was cleared and dredged; a refurbished work-boat appeared from Whatton Jail, followed by a brand new trip boat from Oxfordshire; landing stages were built and the landlord finally gave permission for the Society to operate the craft on the canal.

Since then, progress has moved steadily to restore more of the canal near Belvoir, develop a practical base and lately the Society has been sufficiently forward thinking to commence the processes to be followed to reconnect with the River Trent.

These developments have been made possible by you, our Membership, who are a collective group of like-minded individuals who have supported the work undertaken by a further group of physically active volunteers who, together, have delivered, and continue to produce, the further lengths of restored canal we see today.

Tomorrow now offers the opportunity for a new leader to oversee progress during the next decade.

The appropriate time for the hand-over will be the Annual General Meeting of the Society in November and I look forward to seeing you at that event.

My thanks to everyone who has supported the restoration of the Grantham Canal since the Society was formed in 1961.

Until the AGM, your chairman,

Mike Stone.

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The last 100 Club draw of this season has just taken place, and it's the big one!

1st Prize	£300	PH
2nd Prize	£100	PH
3rd Prize	£50	NM

New season starts now, to be in for a chance of winning email peter.gs@icloud.com £24 per number.

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FROM THE EDITOR

As I sit here writing this introspective stultiloquence (and yes, dear reader, I had to look it up as well!), it's raining ... I'm not surprised, are you? After all this is England and we are currently in the middle of an English summer! Having just returned from a very leisurely motorcycle trip – just over 1,000km – through Spain. From Lanjarón in the foothills of the Alpujarras near Granada/Málaga to Santander (to catch a ferry home) with temperatures in the upper 30°s for most of the six days it took, I was somewhat surprised to come back to a heatwave. It was a pleasant surprise however and I enjoyed an excellent ride up the old Fosse Way in ideal biking conditions, despite an attempt by a suicidal pigeon trying to kill me!

What has all this waffle got to do with canals you may well ask. It's all about water ... simples. As with many canals in Britain, our canal faces significant challenges in maintaining adequate and sustainable water levels. We *have* made impressive progress over recent years in bringing sections back to life (thanks to our wonderful volunteers) but water remains one of the most limiting factors for full navigation.

Our canal is particularly vulnerable during the recent dry spells. With climate change (that old chestnut!) increasing the frequency of droughts, the challenge of storing and moving water has never been more urgent. As you know, several stretches remain dry or only partially watered, however I believe there are many interesting projects in the pipeline (excuse the pun!) such as a solar-powered pump system to help improve the situation. So watch this space.



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

Brian Cantwell (Editor)

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 ...



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 the app and sit back and let good
things happen!

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

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

THREE SHIRES NEWS

Elizabeth Bland

The 2025 season has been very busy so far and with the weather improving it looks like we will have a record year in terms of income earned for the Society. Our partnership with The Duck at Woolsthorpe has proved to be a great success. The 'Cruise & Dine' option has been particularly popular, and we are taking several bookings each week for this package, which includes a 1½ hour cruise on *Three Shires* followed by dinner at the restaurant. The chef has produced a special menu for us at a special price of £14.50 for two courses, or £19.50 for three courses. 'Cruise & Dine' trips can be booked through our booking team – see details below.

The Summer Sunday and Bank Holiday 30 minute trips have also been popular this season, giving passengers an opportunity to get a taste of cruising along the Canal and hopefully encouraging them to take one of our longer trips. We continue to offer our two and three hour private trips – fully crewed – for you to enjoy the tranquility of a leisurely cruise along the Grantham Canal. These can be booked on any day of the week, and the boat is hired exclusively for your group (max 10 passengers) – an ideal way to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries or a day out with family or friends. All private hire trips can be booked by emailing bookings@granthamcanal.org or calling 07486 955775.

If you would like to join our team, we are always happy to enlist new crew members! Full training is given so you don't need crewing experience. For further information, please email boatmaster@granthamcanal.org



AN APPEAL

The Society appreciates the work undertaken by the volunteering members in various, sometimes very different, fields. It is also aware that whilst they may have broad shoulders there are limits to the workload of every individual. Currently, some of their shoulders are creaking! Why?



We are a very successful Society and with that growth comes an assumption by those stakeholders along the canal and others, that we have the resources to meet their expectations. But to deliver these expectations, we need more help in some very specific business areas. Some of these are mentioned elsewhere in this issue.

I have never said this before, but some volunteers are becoming overloaded with work and the society is in danger of missing real business opportunities.

Please **seriously** consider if **you** could offer any assistance, however small.

A **little help** could make a **BIG** difference ...

Please reply to: volunteer@granthamcanal.org

Don't just think it doesn't concern you, it should be of concern to every Member !!!

MIKE STONE (CHAIRMAN)

2025 Hours Summary							
	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	TOTAL
General	1084	1113	1146	1216	828	745	6132
Skilled	504	528	654	534	664	677	3561
Professional	77	64	85	115	61	32	434
Total	1665	1705	1885	1865	1553	1454	10127
Individuals	7	8	9	8	7	6	
Teams	6	10	7	8	7	7	

Data kindly supplied by Rod Gordon

WESTERN DEPOT

Gary Dykes

The Grantham Canal Society has some exciting news to announce!

For the past five years we have been looking for a base at the western end of the canal, and finally last year a suitable site was identified next to the canal at Morrisons in Gamston. After many months of work on the legal side of things and applying for Planning Permission, we are now able to implement the purchase and delivery of a shipping container. This will be used to store all the tools that we need and the tea and coffee making facilities that are essential. For the first time in 228 years there will be a base at our end of the canal from which work can be carried out, starting in the Autumn.

We know that many people interested in volunteering are put off by the journey on the A52 to the existing depot, but now they will be able to work locally. We are hoping initially to have work parties on Wednesdays, and if there is demand from people who are still working full time we could have a weekend work party. Work will concentrate on the canal west of the A46 through to Lady Bay. No experience is necessary, just a love of the outdoors and a willingness to put in the hours that you are able to. You will learn new skills and make new friends. If you want to find out more, please email volunteer@granthamcanal.org

Huge thanks to Morrisons who are providing the land at no cost and will be supporting us in many other ways.

100 CLUB WINNERS

	APR	MAY	JUN
1 ST £30	RK	MN	SP
2 ND £20	LH	MM	CC
3 RD £10	SM	VT	JD

To request a number for next years Lottery draw drop a line to 100club@granthamcanal.org

WORKPARTY & CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

We were certainly spoilt by the endless spring sunshine in April/May and the lack of substantial rainfall as we moved into the summer months of June and July and wondering what to expect. Endless days of sunshine and dry weather is what we got and as I speak in late July rainfall which is the life blood of the canal is in short supply.

We won't and don't let it get us down and so we get on with our maintenance work as before and it has been a very busy summer so far:

- we completed the installation of our western boundary fencing to comply with our Lease agreement with CRT
- our Log business now has a more permanent base and structure with the construction of a brand-new store. We are now busy with stocking the area with logs ready for the autumn/winter season of sales
- repair and maintenance work to Lock 16 has commenced with work to the paddles, the top approach walls and gates being repaired before we move into the lock chamber and the bottom gates where brickwork repairs will be carried out and carpentry repairs to the gates

Water in the Summit Pound has been consistent over the summer even allowing for the exceptionally hot and dry weather. Denton Reservoir at times has replenished levels but as the water requirements below Lock 18 have been substantially reduced because of our work on Lock 16, then calling on extra water has been reduced.

We are in the process of planning our winter vegetation and tree clearance for the Friday, Saturday and Monday teams over the period September 25 through to March 26. Sections of the canal where we need major clearance will be identified where re-watering can be considered.

Part of this process will include another day where Greenfields Countryside Ltd from Cropwell Bishop have committed their teams to assist GCS on the clearance we started earlier this year and last year from Colston Bridge 23 to Spencers Bridge 24. Volunteers from both Friday and the Saturday teams will be involved working in tandem with Greenfields with the chippings from the woodchipper being gratefully received by Belvoir Vale Riding for the Disabled.

Bringing back to life the Weigh House down at Muston Gorse Bridge 57 is now a project that will be funded by a Crowd Funding exercise. This is on-going where just under £1,500 has been donated by the general public with match funding being sought by way of an application to AVIVA from their charitable

giving page. We are now in the planning stages for the work with the site fenced off and with the agreement of the farmer, Keith Challon, will be starting the work in the near future. As the work was featured in our newsletter in the Spring we have been approached by Jason Wright of Wright Roofing who has offered his company's services to provide materials and labour free of charge to complete the roofing work. Many thanks to Jason and his company Wright Roofing.

Our Reed boat *Otter* has again been through a period of inactivity due to structural water leakages that penetrated the hydraulics on the boat. We have employed a professional welder to complete the repairs and replacement of the hydraulic oil is ongoing as I write this piece. Hopefully it will be back in the water soon.

Our three new dredging boats *Betty*, *Heron* and *Peter Pan* have been put to use around Lock 16 bottom gates moving silt downstream to the offside bank. Training on the use of these boats has been carried out by John Robinson and Colin Bryan with the main silt-removal exercise being planned for next winter in the summit pound when the bird nesting and fish spawning season has finished.



Don't pay for mud masks – you can get one for free by joining a GCS workparty! (21 July)

Workparty & Construction continued

Construction work on Lock 13 has stopped as CRT have now produced a Restoration Delivery Plan (RDP) that has been circulated to all restoration societies for comment. As it stands, works that aim to reopen sections of the network or specific structures or buildings that the Trust have no obligation that the will not feature in the resources offered by CRT.

GCS need to have the right support in place to adhere to the principles of the Construction Design and Management 2015 regulations (CDM) to manage and supervise construction activities being carried out by the Society.

In the intervening period design work on Lock 13 is in its infancy as we will be in control of appointing a Principal Designer. We have approached JBA Consulting of Peterborough to carry out this exercise with CRT being the Client and approver of the design. As it stands at the moment, we are awaiting CRT notification that CRT Heritage are in favour of the initial thoughts of replacing the existing brick design with a reinforced concrete structure.

In the meantime we are putting two of our site managers through the SMSTS (Site Managers Safety Training Scheme) and two of our Supervisors through the SSSTS (Site Supervisors Safety Training Scheme) so that we are ready for the start of construction activities on Lock 13.

Priority this financial year is to carry out urgent maintenance on Lock 16. Top gate paddles to be replaced together with lock gate cills and mitres to be refreshed. Bottom gate paddles, cills and mitres to be worked on with brickwork pointing in the lock chamber. Stop planks to be in place at the top and bottom gate positions. Work is on-going with our Construction Team.

Maintenance work on Lock 17 is being planned for the next financial year 26/27.

Still to be resolved by CRT and an action plan to be agreed is the leakage of water from the towpath side letterbox at Lock 18 into the adjacent field. Dye tests have been carried out and has confirmed that the letterbox is the



Removing the weeds in front of Lock 18 gates using the boom in our tried and tested trawling system (19 May)

problem. This work is on a long list (with CRT) with GCS to maintain a lower level of water in the lock chamber to temporarily stop the leakage. The balance beams on the bottom gates at Lock 18 are being looked at by GCS replacing the old timber beams using a steel fabrication with a concrete infill.

Work to the repairs of Culvert 12 are in abeyance. CRT have postponed this work again until financial year April 2026 to March 2027. Precise programme dates to be agreed nearer the time.

WeBCan – the Lady Bay action group – still continue to make progress on reed clearance in the Lady Bay/Gamston area making a considerable difference to the aspect of a canal in water.

Regarding the Trent Connection project, whilst having support from both Rushcliffe Borough Council and Notts County Council to our feasibility study, we have now had some positive communication with National Highways concerning a feasibility submission for the Gamston Lings Bar box culvert to get under the A52 ring road. National Highways are due to come back to us sometime soon whether the feasibility study can be completed during the financial year 25/26.

Finally we have been awarded funding from Notts County Council to provide information boards along the canal in the Rushcliffe area. Our funding team are now progressing this exercise to produce these boards with a target of getting them in place by the end of this financial year.



On-going work at Lock 17 (5 May)

Events

Louise Cooper

Summer has most definitely arrived (three heatwaves already) and the Events Team are enjoying getting out and about attending numerous outside community events – our weekends are very busy! It's good talking to people who are interested in the canal and low water levels have certainly been a common theme recently. It's great when our members pop by for a chat. We find that the trip boat is of particular interest, especially when we mention the new cruise and dine option.



Rosemary continues to be appreciated by local groups when she gives her very interesting historical 'performance' on the history of the Grantham Canal. She deserves a medal for wearing her costume even when the temperature is soaring.

We hosted a Sea Shanty evening at the Gamston Lock pub in May with music by the Stormy Weather Boys which was very well attended and got the word out about our plans for the Nottingham end of the canal.



We tapped into the talents of one of our volunteers, who is a member of the Ceilidh band Bellows, Scratchitt and Pluckitt, who entertained us in fine style at Kinoulton Village hall where we were very well fed by 'The Catering 4 You'.



The Events team successfully hosted a group of motorcycle enthusiasts from the Velocette Owners Club and a group of Australians touring in the UK. Both groups thoroughly enjoyed their day and we raised some money.



Look out for our next Open Day on 31st August at the Woolsthorpe Depot where there will be craft stalls, boat trips, games, a tasty barbecue as well as our ever popular home made cakes!

Thank you for your support during the year – we couldn't do it without the help of numerous volunteers but we could always do with more!

Finally, we would welcome any ideas you might have for events next year and feedback on events this year ... email me on gcsevents@granthamcanal.org

Events Events Events Events Events Events Events

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PRODUCE FAIR

Volunteers from The Grantham Canal Society very much look forward to welcoming you to our Woolsthorpe depot, on Sunday 31st August, where we are holding our annual Produce Fair. If you tend to have a glut of garden produce around this time of year, why not bring it along to our Bring and Buy stall?

We have our fingers crossed that the weather gods are feeling in a sunny disposition on this particular day so that you can take a saunter around the wonderful stalls, enjoy a cuppa and delicious slice of homemade cake or even grab a tasty burger from the BBQ.

Our lovely trip boat 'The Three Shires' will be running 30-minute cruises during the day on a turn up and ride basis. If you have not joined us before, I highly recommend taking a trip – top tip though is, get your ticket as soon as you arrive, because the trips are very popular. You never know, you might be smitten with the boat and book a longer trip for another day! (Check out our Trip Advisor reviews).

Why not bring your dog and enjoy a stroll along the towpath – maybe even spot a kingfisher? Soak up the quiet and reconnect with nature. You will find that the miles slip past effortlessly.

'The Duck' pub is right next door so after your walk you could enjoy a well-deserved drink.

We would love to see you on the 31st August, and we particularly enjoy having a chat, so do say hello! For stall enquires email gcsevents@granthamcanal.org

SELECTION OF DONATIONS RECENTLY RECEIVED

JA	£40	AL	£25	GF	£20
TB	£40	HM	£5	IC	£20
PB	£30	MN	£25	JG	£40
RC	£30	TO	£60	ML	£40
JD	£60	PS	£30	MA	£5
RG	£295	IW	£20	PM	£63
JH	£5	BB	£20	PO	£5
AH	£20	CH	£100		

Some of these donations come by way of monthly Standing Orders, while others were one-off donations - all gratefully received

Do you like to sit down on the job?

Then we have volunteering opportunities for you!

If you thought that volunteering with the Grantham Canal Society meant getting your hands dirty, then we would like to change your mind – we have several volunteering posts that have needed filling for some time – which means you could take them in hand and make what you (and we) need of them:

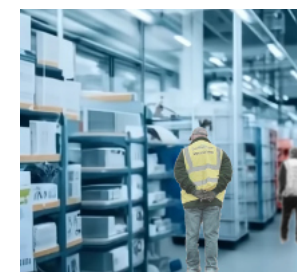
- PRESS OFFICER**

Research lists of local press (paper and on line), contact details and publication dates/lead times. Liaise with them and ensure articles about GCS go in as often as they will allow. Negotiate cheap/free advertising for GCS. Liaise with senior volunteers for publicity.



- MERCHANDISE**

Research merchandise for sale both at our events and on line, choose a selection and report back to the committee with costs and expected income. Be responsible for designing, ordering and keeping on top of stock levels.



- HISTORIC ARCHIVING**

There is a large pile of historical information, both paper and online, which needs researching, ordering and archiving, perfect for someone with those skills.

Any of these float your boat? (pun intended!), please contact volunteer@granthamcanal.org



If the members wish the Society to continue to progress the restoration, it is essential that more individuals offer to participate in the very important activities that will ensure continuity of our success. Are you someone who could help contribute to one of these tasks? Please email: membership@granthamcanal.org

[Mike Stone]

VOLUNTEERS CAUGHT ON CAMERA



Out on Half-Mile pound (all photos on this spread by Alec Hampson)



Jim and Richard on *Centauri* wood clearing



Fallen tree removal on the Half-Mile pound



Mudlark reed clearing up towards Denton and below a serious log splitting session!



Hand hauling *Three Shires* and *Heron* at Lock 17

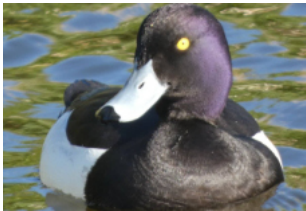
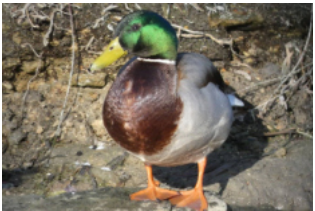




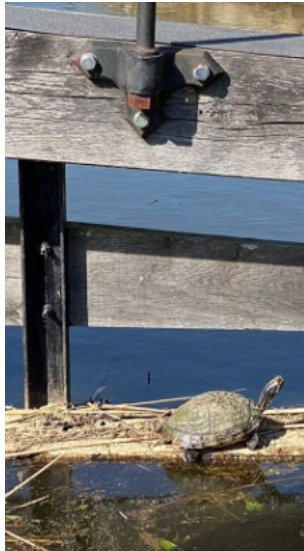
Early morning on 3 April at Kinoulton (Helen Burke)



Left, Spring boat trip and above, sheep and cattle canalside on 6 & 12 April (Julie Blyth)



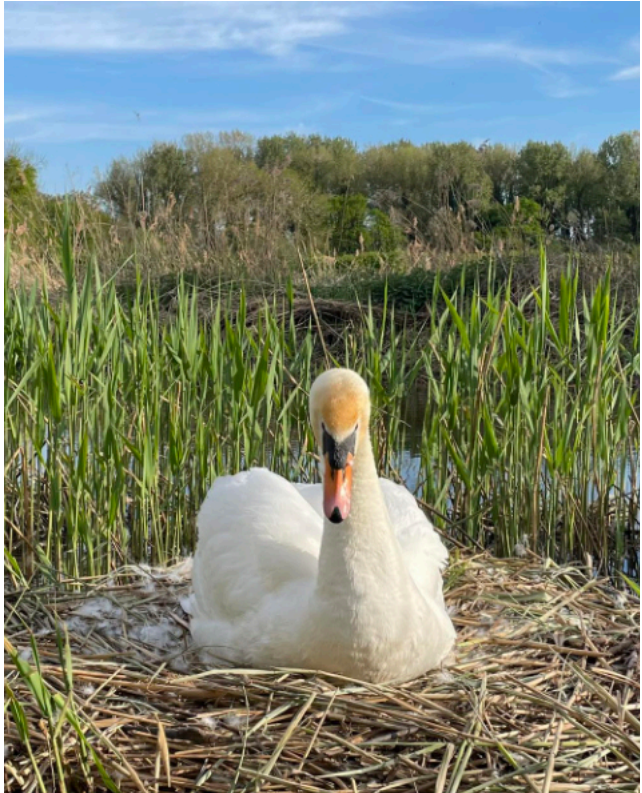
Photographed on a walk from Cropwell Bishop to Kinoulton 6 April (Helen Burke)



Not an not indigenous species!
27 April (Alan Williams)




Almost complete symmetry!
7 May (Sophie Kearney)



A female swan sunning herself on 28 April (Vicki Mitchell)



Stenwith 17 May (Geoff Curtis)



PRODUCE FAIR

SUNDAY 31 AUGUST

10am to 3pm

Woolsthorpe Depot(behind the Duck pub)
Woolsthorpe NG32 1NY

**Bring and Buy your excess
garden produce
boat trips • craft stalls • games
barbecue • home made cakes**



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