

## BASINGSTOKE CANAL JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

### SURREY AND HAMPSHIRE CANAL SOCIETY REPORT – APRIL 2009

#### INTRODUCTION

The recent weather conditions has disrupted lock construction work and alternative project work has been brought forward in the programme, rather than cancelling any working parties.

#### WORKING PARTIES

##### LOCK 22 DEEPCUT

Our working parties have concentrated on the reconstruction and underpinning of the lower walls at Lock 22 Deepcut.

Extensive voids under the flank and return walls had been exposed when excavating the wing walls of the lock.

Ground conditions require the provision of steel trench sheets to support the excavations, groundwater plus variable water levels due to drainage systems entering the canal, require almost continual pumping when working.

The offside lower wing wall and bye wash channel has been reconstructed up to coping stone level.

The flank and return wall voids have been underpinned, with considerable quantities of concrete required on both walls,

The original towpath side wing wall foundations had eroded from under the wall, the wall remaining intact but not supported, this has been under pinned with a more robust foundation.

The foundations for an extended towpath side wall have been excavated, progress on this section is a casualty of the severe conditions, rain frost and snow have prevented delivery of pre-mix concrete on two occasions,

The improved conditions has allowed resumption of work on the lock with the brickwork completed, reinforcement and shuttering in place ready for concrete backfill.

Our target is for completion of all underwater repairs before Easter, final site reinstatement will not affect navigation.

##### HERMITAGE / BROOKWOOD

Two visiting groups, NWPG and KESCRG, planned to work at Lock 22 and the Hermitage / Brookwood section of the canal, were combined to work on the event site preparation at Brookwood Park. The canal was frozen with the work boats iced in, result no dredging work. Both groups combined to clear bank side growth and commence work on a water supply for boats, the Jetty at Brookwood park has been selected for a water point.

Good progress was achieved in very cold conditions.

The length of the north bank of the canal was coppiced and 200 mtrs of water pipe installed, a thank you to Graham and Eddie for your teams efforts.

Society volunteers were again frozen out of lock 22 and continued with the water pipe at Brookwood, another 200 mtrs, installed, only 130 mtrs to go.

## 2.0 RESOURCES

Volunteer support for the period March 2008 to February 2009 includes a work camp and visiting groups for some weekends, the support for period is;

SHCS WORK PARTIES	414 days
VISITING GROUPS	139 days
WORK CAMP	220 days
TOTAL VOLUNTEER INPUT	773 days

## 3.0 FINANCE

### 3.1 CONTRIBUTIONS

Society contributions for Jan 2008 to Dec 2008

Fuel	£ 1,300 )	
Work Parties / Camp	£10,037 )	
Insurance	£ 1,200 )	subject to audit
Maintenance	£ 2,888 )	
Projects - Lock 22	£ 7,160 )	
Brookwood	£ 2,038 )	

Contribution in kind for 2008

773 Volunteer days at £50 per day	£ 38,650
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<b>Total contributions year 2008</b>	<b>£63,273</b>
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## 4.0 BACKPUMPING

Design and Technical Reports for back pumping the Brookwood Locks had been prepared during 2007. The project has not progressed as the Water Resources Report has indicated a number of alternatives that could provide enhanced water supplies. A key factor in deciding alternatives is the capacity available from the Frimley pump, due to structural failures of the Frimley Pump supports this information is not available. The BCA and Society are consulting on repairs and re-commissioning of the pump.

## 5.0 NAVIGATION ISSUES

### 5.1 LOCK 15

The canal was closed to navigation for considerable periods in 2007, and all of 2008. Almost a year after receiving assurances in March 2008 that repairs at Lock 15 would be carried out in the financial year 2008/09 repairs have at last commenced.

Initial progress by the contractor is good with every reason to anticipate completion as promised

We look forward to lock 15 re-opening, a joint press release on this milestone in the re-opening of the canal would be appropriate.

### 5.2 EVENTS

Based on the assurances given at the last JMC a boating event will take place in May 2009 at Brookwood Country Park, followed by cruising the length of the canal to Odiham.

The IWA National Chairman has accepted an invitation to visit the Odiham venue on Saturday 30th May, we are arranging a short cruise on the canal as he has not yet been able to enjoy the Basingstoke at first hand.

We have received a considerable number of entries for the event which provides publicity for the canal and demonstrates commitment by all partners that the canal is a navigation and open throughout.

The society is now past the point of no return on these arrangements, an alternative to cruising the canal is a high profile protest at lock 15 with maximum publicity. Such action would undoubtedly damage the reputation of the navigation and is to be avoided if at all possible.

### 5.3 STRUCTURE SURVEY

First reports on the findings of the Structure Survey teams indicate that repairs will be required, the Capital Funding bid, by Surrey County Council for canal repairs during 2009/10 should be fully supported. If approved the £250K should enable a start on priority repairs identified.

The report by the survey team will require analysis, any decision on the use, or closure of the locks should only be made after full consideration of Safety and practical issues.

If at all possible I would advocate use of the canal for our event, possibly with additional supervision for passage through designated locks.

Design and Contract specification for identified repairs during 2009/10 can be completed and any closure of the canal implemented prior to contract start date.

I strongly emphasise the need to improve the public perception of the canal and establish credibility with users. Activity on site is a prime factor in achieving this.

I recommend that members fully support the Capital investment required for the Canal in 2009/10 and any subsequent years

Peter Redway  
March 2009