

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **BASINGSTOKE CANAL JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at Mytchett Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett, Surrey, GU16 6DD on 15 July 2022.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting 3 November 2022.

<b>Hampshire County Council</b> Councillor Jonathan Glen* Councillor Rod Cooper* Councillor Stephen Parker* Councillor Timothy Davies*	<b>Surrey County Council</b> Councillor Marisa Heath* Councillor Riasat Khan Councillor Paul Deach Councillor Saj Hussain*
<b>Hart District Council</b> Unconfirmed at time of meeting Unconfirmed at time of meeting	<b>Guildford Borough Council</b> Councillor Angela Gunning*
<b>Rushmoor Borough Council</b> Councillor John Marsh* Councillor Paul Taylor*	<b>Runnymede Borough Council</b> Councillor Scott Lewis*
<b>Fleet Town Council</b> Councillor Ellie May*	<b>Surrey Heath Borough Council</b> Councillor Helen Whitcroft
<b>Special Interest Groups</b> <b>Basingstoke Canal Society</b> Mr Ian Moore/Mr Tony Balch*	<b>Woking Borough Council</b> Councillor Kevin Davis* Councillor Rob Leach*
<b>Hart District Association of Parish Councils</b> Mr David Jackson*	<b>Natural England</b> Mr Adam Bates
<b>Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council</b> Cllr Kate Tuck	<b>Inland Waterways Association</b> Mrs Verna Smith*
	<b>Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club</b> Mr Bill Hansell
	<b>Galleon Marine</b> Mr Arthur McCaffrey

\*= in attendance

**122 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from Kate Tuck, Arthur McCaffrey, Bill Hansell, Ian Moore, Paul Deach and Riasat Khan.

John Ranson acted as a substitute for Arthur McCaffrey.

**222 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 26 NOVEMBER 2021 [Item 2]**

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

**322 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

Rod Cooper declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was a member of the Basingstoke Canal Society.

## **422 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]**

There were 5 member questions. The questions and replies were published in a supplementary agenda on 15 July 2022. There were no supplementary questions.

## **522 ACTION TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 5]**

### **Actions/ further information to be provided:**

None.

### **Resolved:**

The Joint Management Committee noted the Actions Tracker and Forward Work Programme.

## **622 VERBAL REPORT ON DREDGING [Item 6]**

### **Officers:**

James Taylor, Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal

### **Key points raised during the discussion following the presentation:**

1. The Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal made a presentation on Dredging, which is attached as Appendix 1 to the minutes.
2. The working group made up of senior officers and the Canal Society had agreed to meet on a six-monthly basis starting in September, but could meet more frequently if required.
3. Whilst a dredging reserve would ideally be built up, much of the reserves had been depleted and only the minimum amount was being maintained in the reserve.
4. That it was essential to prioritise work that ensured public safety, but dredging was not essential for safety. The necessary dredging could be done through using capital funds from either Hampshire or Surrey.
5. It cost between £75k - £130k per km to dredge the canal properly.
6. The Chair commented that the biodiversity or environmental angle in raising funds could be used to carry out a full channel dredge - a once in a generation activity.
7. A new dredger would cost approximately £250k, but the possibility of replacing the hydraulics on the old one was being investigated.
8. Whilst spot dredging could be programmed from the dredging reserve, this would not enable dredging to be done along the whole length of canal.
9. The Canal Society offered to assist with fundraising for a dredging fund.

### **Resolved:**

The JMC noted the verbal report.

## **722 FINAL ACCOUNTS 2021/22 [Item 7]**

**Officers:**

Jenny Wadham, Honorary Treasurer

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Honorary Treasurer introduced the report and made the following comments:
  - a. Capital expenditure was currently funded by Hampshire and Surrey County Councils for specific repairs and improvements.
  - b. The draw from reserves of £31 650 represented a significant improvement on the £145 000 budgeted draw, which was partly due to planned works which would be undertaken in the 2022/23 financial year.
  - c. On the positive side, there was a cost saving of £29 000 on principal surveys and an increase of income of £30 000 in boat licences.
  - d. There was significant cost related to the clean-up following the storms in February, although this was offset by a decrease in maintenance costs.
  - e. The works to create the Holland Moorings at Farnborough were slower than anticipated, and this had pressured the rental income budget. The moorings are now being gradually filled.
  - f. Whilst the Rosebud Cruise sales were impacted by Covid restrictions, this shortfall was partly offset by increased Santa cruises later in the year.
  - g. The balance on the unallocated reserve as at 31 March 2022 was £697 852, which equated to just under nine months of budgeted expenditure.
  - h. The final outturn for 2021/2022 was better than budgeted and forecast, however, a sizeable part of the improvement was due to expenditure that had slipped into the following year.
2. Whilst the total partnership contributions made up the majority of the Canal's income, there were still some partners who did not pay their share.
3. This was an historical issue and certain partners had taken unilateral decisions to reduce or cease their contributions.
4. The biodiversity and environmental benefits could be used to persuade members to pay their contributions.
5. There had also not been an increase in member contributions whilst the cost to maintain the canal had increased substantially.
6. Whilst this matter was discussed every year by the committee, ways had to be found to convince members to pay their agreed contributions.

**Actions/ further information to be provided:**

1. An information sheet on the different benefits of the canal to be compiled, which could be used as a lever by members during discussions on funding/membership fees. – Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal

**Resolved:**

The final accounts for the 2021/22 financial year were approved by the committee.

**822 CANAL MANAGEMENT REPORT [Item 8]****Officers:**

Fiona Shipp, Canal Manager

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Canal Manager provided a summary of Operations and Maintenance; Staffing; Events/Visitor Services; Conservation and Volunteers. Full details can be found in the report.
2. The Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal provided a summary of Partnership Finance. Full details can be found in the report.
3. The decision by Rushmoor Borough Council to almost halve their contribution and not notifying the Basingstoke Canal Authority(BCA) partnership 12 months in advance as per agreement, was very disappointing and everything possible should be done to get them to reverse their decision. The Rushmoor Executive should be publicly questioned on why they took this decision and what the negative effect on the canal would be.
4. The committee discussed various ways on how the non-payment of membership fees should be addressed, which included press releases and lodging formal complaints.
5. Rhododendron cutting was normally done by the BCA, but because of staff shortages this had not been done for a number of years. Any control had to be agreed with the relevant landowners. The Canal Society had assisted in doing some cutting in certain areas.

**Actions/ further information to be provided:**

1. A formal question be put to or a formal complaint be lodged with the Rushmoor Borough Council Executive on their decision to decrease their membership fees to the BCA – Chairman / Vice-Chairman
2. Angling Societies/Fishing Associations to be asked to make presentations to the committee on how they police their areas – Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal

**Resolved:**

The Committee noted the content of the report, and authorised the Strategic Manager and Treasurer to:

- a) authorise additional expenditure over the budgeted amount of up to £24,000 on spot dredging to be funded from the allocated Dredging Reserve;
- b) authorise additional expenditure over the budgeted amount of £28,000 for the purchase of an Asset and Issue Management system for the BCA to be drawn from the Unallocated Reserve; and
- c) Allocate the outstanding membership fees of Rushmoor Borough Council to Reserves if they were recovered.

**922 POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES FOR THE CANAL PARTNERSHIP [Item 9]**

**Officers:**

James Taylor, Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. James Taylor provided a summary of the paper and noted that a wide variety of ideas and responsible persons were proposed.
2. Cllr Glen noted that he was concerned about the long- term strategy for funding sources. Members on constituent councils changed and there was often no continuity on ideas and strategies. He referenced an example in the Thames Basin Heaths Partnership where developers had to make ongoing contributions in an area where a certain bird species had been threatened and asked if something similar could not be done for the long-term care of the canal. Counties, districts and boroughs could not continue their long-term funding; a possibility could be to put statutory legislation in place by lobbying the appropriate persons. There were organisations with similar assets and it was certainly worth giving this idea a go.
3. It was noted that Section 106 funds could only be used for capital items associated with a particular development.
4. A template letter from the BCA, which could be used as guidance when lobbying was done, should be drafted.
5. The leadership in the counties, boroughs and districts should lobby the Secretary of State directly to get the necessary traction.

**Actions/ further information to be provided:**

1. To revisit the Planning Guidance document with support from Planning Officers at Hampshire County Council / Surrey County Council, to assist in gaining Section 106/ Community Infrastructure Levy funds from developers – Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal
2. That a guidance template be drafted with details on how future funding of organisations, similar to the Basingstoke Canal Authority, could be ensured and possibly be entrenched in statute. That the leadership at county, borough and district level be lobbied once the guidance has been drafted – Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

**1022 UPDATE: LOCK COTTAGE, DEEPCUT [Item 10]**

The Chair thanked James Taylor for the update report.

**1122 BASINGSTOKE CANAL SOCIETY UPDATE REPORT [Item 11]**

**Report presenter:**

Tony Balch, Basingstoke Canal Society

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The representative from the Basingstoke Canal Society provided a summary of the report and highlighted some key issues:
  - a. As an organisation, the BCS had experienced directors and team members who were able to assist the BCA. They had two

former planners who scoured planning applications on a daily basis and looked for opportunities for funding (e.g. section 106 funding), objections to applications, etc. It took some of the responsibility off BCA officers by trawling through the documents.

- b. Trip boat operations were very important to the BCS, which in non-Covid years represented approximately two-thirds of the Society's annual income. This introduced thousands of people to the canal each year.
  - c. With reference to earlier mention about an information sheet on the benefits of the canal, the Society had a social media team which reached a large number of followers and their expertise could be used.
  - d. Important projects included the installation of electric charging points, and the trip boat Kitty would be replaced with an all-electric trip boat.
  - e. The funding structure for the canal had to be revisited. The BCS was willing to assist with fundraising projects. It also provided over 28 000 hours of volunteer labour in 2021, but could not provide money for dredging boats and other projects at will.
2. In response to Cllr Glen, who expressed his gratitude for the good co-operation between the BCA and the BCS and who asked if ideas for new projects were discussed between the organisations, Tony Balch noted that there were regular meetings between various teams of the two organisations.

**Actions/ further information to be provided:**

The full presentation by the BCS to be circulated to all committee members and be attached to the minutes as Appendix 2. – Committee Manager

**Resolved:**

The JMC noted the report.

**1222 REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE: NAMED SUBSTITUTES [Item 12]**

The Chair introduced the report, which recommended that the committee approved the revised terms of reference to require members to appoint named deputies.

**Resolved:**

The recommendation was approved.

**1322 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 13]**

The committee noted that its next meeting would be on 3 November 2022.

Meeting ended at: 3.50 pm

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**Chairman**

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# Dredging

A brief overview

**“dredge -**  
to remove mud, stones, etc. from the bottom of a river, canal, etc.”  
- *Oxford English Dictionary*

# Why dredge ...

- Allow depth for navigation
- Prevent waterbodies silting up – marsh > woodland
- Allow more water to be stored
- Generates material for re-use (eg: bank repairs, soil improvement)
- Remove harmful substances and invasive species from the aquatic environment



# Why not dredge ...

- Destructive (short to medium term) to the aquatic environment, especially plants and invertebrates
- Creates extensive turbidity
- Releases stored carbon
- Adding to landfill – especially where contaminated



# Types of canal dredging ...

- *Mechanical* – use of an excavator or dredger to dig material out
- *Suction* – liquified slurry and water pumped into a lagoon
- **Spot dredging** – regular small scale dredging to win materials or clear a channel
- **Main channel or systematic dredging** – once in a generation major maintenance (once every 25+ years)
- **Restoration dredging** – to recreate / restore a heavily silted waterbody





## Dredging history under Councils' ownership

- Restoration dredge 1974-1993 led by the BCS steam dredger *Perseverance*
- Main channel dredge (sections) by contractors 1997 and 2001
- Spot dredging with *Unity* 1989-2013
- Spot dredging by contractors 2011- *present* - to win materials for bank repairs – on average £100k per annum
- Lock chambers and approaches cleared during Principal Inspections 2015-2018 and Lock 28 again in 2020

## What's involved in a dredging project

- Bathymetric survey, information from inspections and users to select targets
- Find source of funding
- Dredged material needs to be tested for content and contaminants
- Plan how to dispose of waste (more below)
- Planning consent may be required for deposits on land
- Planned main channel dredging needs to be agreed by the Conservation Management Steering Group or an individual Assent obtained from Natural England.
- Spot dredging in accordance with the Conservation Management Plan - inform CMSG, relies on D1 waste exemption
- Organise fish rescue, transplanting key species and silt curtains
- 12 month speed limits and no mooring for boats



Cost are significant – main channel dredge estimated at £75k - £130k per km (2016 prices)

Main issue is **waste** – dredging generates waste, lots of waste. Waste disposal is heavily regulated.

Routes to disposal include:

- D1 exemption – deposit to adjoining bank of waterway
- U1 exemption – use in construction
- U10 exemption – beneficial use on agricultural land
- U11 exemption – beneficial use on non-agricultural land
- Full Environmental Permit
- Deposit to controlled landfill (liquid waste no longer accepted)



*More info?* Canal & River Trust video about preparing a dredging project <https://youtu.be/T370ISgw0cc>

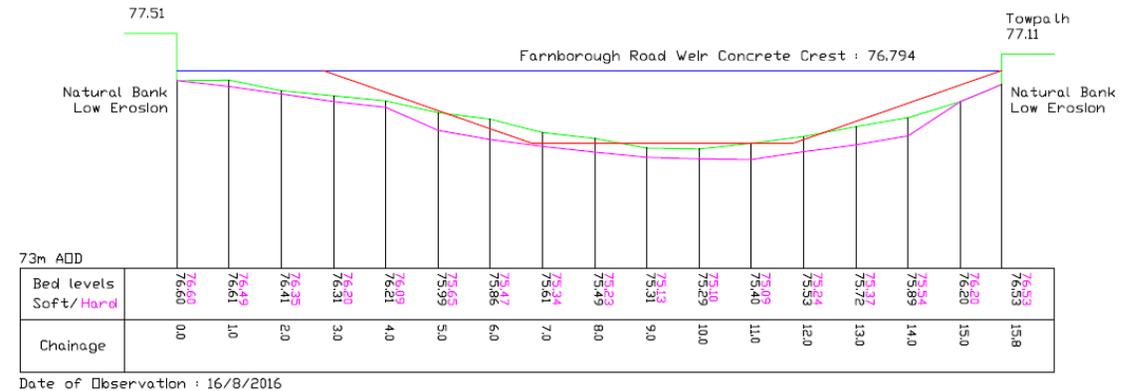
## Surveys and plans

### Bathometric survey 2016

- Bathometric survey of the whole channel
- Reveals channel is mostly not heavily silted against depth profiles
- BUT the canal is and always has been a shallow saucer shape - shallow at the edges
- Hampshire Pound constructed 300mm deeper than remainder of Canal
- Some longer sections are more out of gauge – which may become main channel dredging targets as funding allows
- Shallow areas around structures and inflows – as expected



### Basingstoke Canal BA-028-P0800



### Conservation analysis – out to tender

- Trend in botany is decline in diversity
- Causes not entirely clear although previous conservation advisors have suggested tree shade, siltation and boat use as key factors
- Test botanic data against various other datasets (boat use, siltation, turbidity) to prove or disprove correlations.
- IF there is a strong correlation between siltation and decline in diversity – then there is also a conservation reason to dredge

# Unity...

...the BCA maintenance dredger



- **Unity** is now more than 40 years old - although the hull and mechanics are in good order following extensive repair by volunteers, staff and contractors - the hydraulic system and propulsion unit are failing.



- **Unity** was designed as a maintenance dredger, useful for all sorts of tasks where floating plant affords the best access as well as dredging – bespoke design allowed to pass under the low bridges on the Canal

- A new **replacement** would cost more than £250k – used machines either won't fit our waterway or are in similar condition



- **Decision** – Officers need to decide to EITHER retire *Unity* and rely on contractors for all dredging and related tasks, OR spend further resources on stripping out and replacing the hydraulic system and training new staff to use it





## Key issues

- Statutory duties to maintain Canal for public safety, public access and nature conservation - no statutory duty to maintain for navigation, but some businesses now rely on it
- Funding and staffing levels currently allow main safety related tasks from statutory duties to be prioritised – this includes spot dredging for bank protection, but not main channel dredging
- No current certainty that main channel dredging will halt decline or enhance biodiversity
- Climate change – waterways are good carbon sequestrators unless disturbed





## Next steps

- Continue with spot dredging for bank protection – *public safety*
- Complete conservation analysis – *prove if there is also a conservation basis for main channel dredging*
- Use the BCA dredging reserve to spot dredge around bridges and inflows – particularly in the Hampshire pound – *aids navigation, but is a one-off action*
- Decide if *Unity* should be repaired or retired





# BCS Report to JMC July 2022



## Who are we?

- **Founded** – 1966 as the Surrey & Hampshire Canal Society
- **Original Purpose** – Save the Basingstoke Canal from dereliction
- **Current Mission** – Keeping the Canal *Alive and Vibrant*
- **Status** – Registered charity and company limited by guarantee
- **Trip Boat operation subsidiary** – two boats, *Kitty* (12 seater) in Woking, *John Pinkerton II* (50 seater) in Odiham
- **Directors** – 12 volunteers from various business backgrounds
- **Structure** –
  - Marketing, comms, membership
  - Finance
  - Lobbying
  - Projects, planning, fund raising
  - Boat company, bookings, maintenance, finance etc
  - Social Media
  - IT & website
  - Health & Well-being
  - Work Parties
  - Events
  - Governance
  - Environment
  - Archives



## Highlights

Workparty deployment and boat trip revenues impacted by Covid, nevertheless:

- 28,000 hours volunteer labour contributed, including on potential Colt Hill moorings site, maintenance, vegetation
- £25k contribution to new signage, training, hedgecutters etc
- 15 new information boards installed
- 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary/Jubilee event at Frimley Lodge Park
- Progress on £200k *Kitty II* replacement/electrification project
- Support of Surrey Police in Woking Canal Watch scheme





- A new information board (above)
- 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event at Frimley Lodge Park (upper left)
- Workparty at potential new Colt Hill mooring site (lower left)

## Other Achievements

- Promoting new positioning and new strapline
- Draft BCA/BCS Memo of Understanding under review
- Agreed new constitution, charitable Objects, formal name\*

Implementing 5 year plan, including:

- Promotion of Health and Well-being by dedicated team
- Online archive development progressing
- Local development/planning tracking for CIL opportunities
- Ongoing local events programme
- Ongoing boat trip operations

\* The Basingstoke Canal Society



The Basingstoke  
Canal Society



## The Year in Numbers

- Fee-paying members – 1044
- Total funds raised - £55k, of which £25k donated to BCA
- Regular Volunteers – 250; Active lengthsman - 82
- Volunteer hours – 28,000 (equivalent to £280k)
- Events attended – 9 (incl. Odiham Raft Race, 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary)
- Planning applications assisted with – 11
- Newsletters, bulletins mailed – 16 issues
- Boat trips undertaken – 240
- Social media posts – 150; followers – 10,000 per month
- Documents archived – 15,000

## Future Projects

- *Kitty II* electric trip boat construction
- Electric charging infrastructure installation in Woking
- Wellesley, Aldershot boat basin concept development (subject to Grainger feasibility)
- Potential new Colt Hill moorings (subject to securing long-term access)
- On-line historical archive

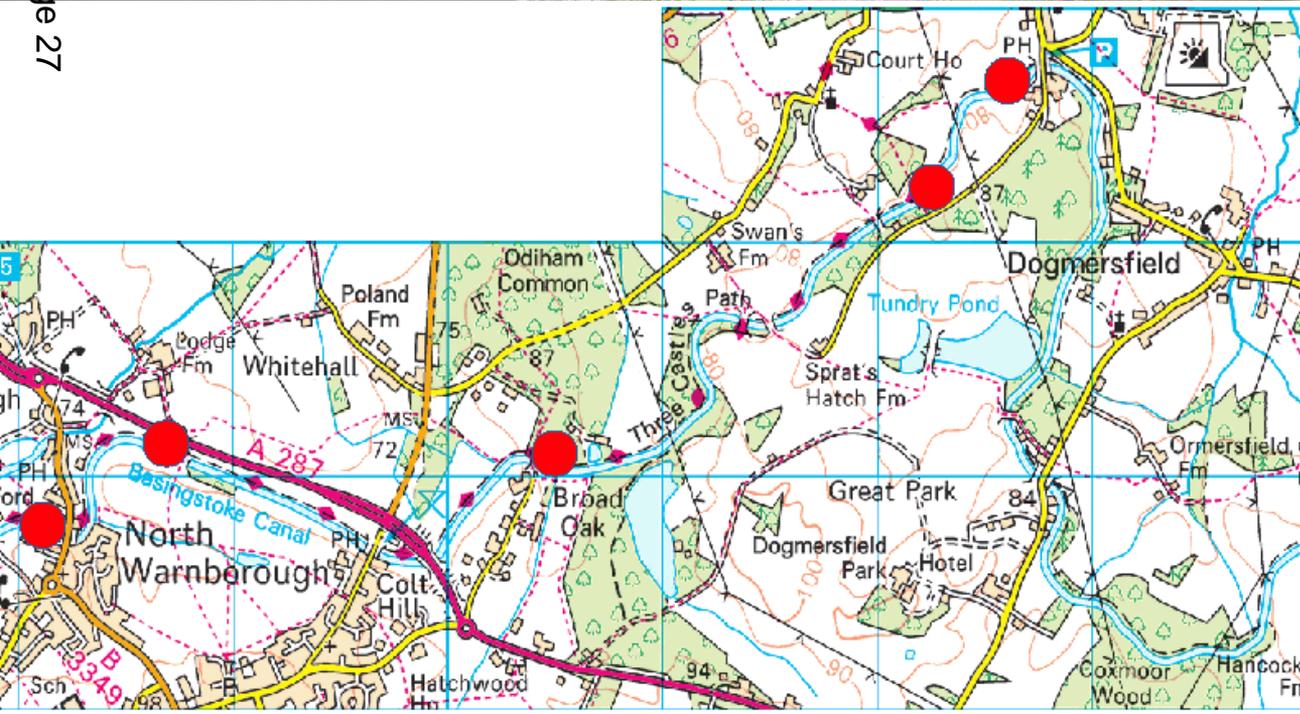


## Issues/Challenges, where help is needed

- Ongoing programme of dredging needed
- Improved *hydrocotyle* and *cabomba* weed removal
- Crookham Deeps repair and restoring water levels in Hampshire pound\*
- Plan/timescale for Swan Cutting repair\*
- Riparian Councils need to maintain/boost funding support to BCA (total shortfall from two councils totals £28k/annum)
- Cost per riparian resident - 50p/annum

\*Severe impact on *John Pinkerton II* trip boat operation





- Crookham Deeps (above)
- Swan Cutting (upper left)
- Shallow areas on JP II route needing spot dredging (lower left)

The Basingstoke Canal has been ranked  
**13th**  
in the World's Top 100 Waterways\*

Therefore it is a world-class asset and needs all the support from the community and their representatives in order to pass it onto future generations to enjoy.

\* #Paddle100 – Official Top 100 places to paddle in the World



The Basingstoke  
Canal Society



The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service



# The Basingstoke Canal Society

KEEPING THE CANAL

ALIVE AND VIBRANT

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