



REPORT TO THE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MAY 2015

1. Work parties

Since the last JMC report in February, the Society's work parties have been concentrating on the maintenance at the western end of the canal in preparation for the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta. The work has included:

- Completing the renovation of the eastern portal of Greywell Tunnel including the clearance of vegetation as far back as Lock 30, the replacement of the fence over the tunnel entrance and the relaying of the steps and path down to the tunnel mouth.
- Trimming of the hedge between the lift bridge and King Johns Castle to open up the views of the castle from the tow path
- The completion of the work at Colt Hill which included the re-surfacing of the car park and 100m of towpath between Colt Hill and the by-pass bridges, tree pruning, refurbishments of picnic benches and memorial seats and repairs to the water point and pump-out facility.





Further volunteer work has included the clearance, by a visiting Waterways Recovery Group, of over-hanging rhododendrons on a section of canal near the Barley Mow and further work on the refurbishing of the BCA's patrol boat by the Society Engineering team.



Since the last report the Society has provided **200 man-days** of effort, equivalent to **£15,000 equivalent value in kind**.

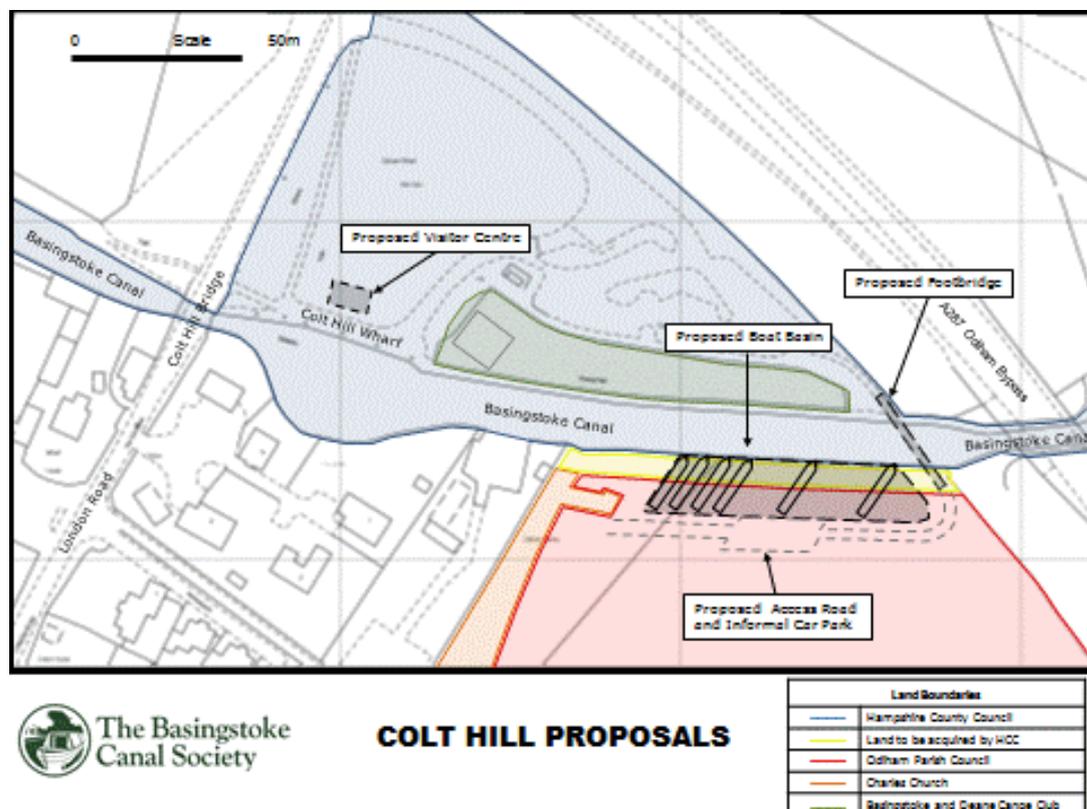
2. Work camps

The Society will be organizing further work camps this summer for visiting groups of volunteers. These will be arranged over weekends, and will include further overhanging rhododendron removal. It had been hoped to organize a week-long work camp in July to tackle the renovation of Ash Wharf but this has not proved possible because the planning of the work is not sufficiently advanced for the Society to be confident that the project would be ‘spade ready’ by July. It is hoped that this project can be undertaken by a summer work camp next year.

3. Projects

The Society continues to promote a number of projects aimed at promoting the canal and improving the facilities it offers. These projects include the following;

- Colt Hill, Odiham – The Society’s proposal for a boat basin, visitor centre and footbridge has received welcome support from the local community and it is hoped that Hart DC will shortly be convening a meeting of interested parties to discuss the next steps. Funding is a key issue although it is possible that some of the work can be carried out by volunteers.



- Ash Wharf – Previous reports have mentioned that the Society, working closely with the BCA, Surrey CC, Ash Parish Council and Guildford BC has put forward proposals to repair and upgrade Ash Wharf which is currently in a very neglected state. Our vision of what Ash Wharf could look like is shown below. We are hopeful that the Canal partnership will provide both practical and political support for this project.



- Woking - There is clearly a need to improve the appearance of the canal in Woking town centre to make it more attractive to the local community and to improve its attractiveness to visiting boat owners. Several projects are under discussion with Woking BC including the upgrading to Woking wharf and, in conjunction with The Lightbox, the creation of an educational and heritage centre using a restored barge of the type that once used the canal.

4. Events

The boat rally at Colt Hill will have taken place before the June meeting of the JMC. The rally has proved very popular and over 20 boats are expected to attend. A verbal report will be provided at the meeting. In 2016 the Society will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of its formation and an event to mark this important milestone is being planned. The likely venue is Brookwood Country Park where a joint event with the Historic Narrowboat Club (which is also celebrating its 50th anniversary next year) may be held in August.

Philip Riley
Chairman
The Basingstoke Canal Society

18.05.15