

Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee – 15 July 2022

PROCEDURAL MATTERS – MEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Question submitted by Galleon Marine & Accessible Boating Association

Can the canal officers inform as to when a detailed timed and costed plan will be available for the completion of the works at Crookham Deeps to get the canal back to its usual operating condition?

Reply:

Now that the contract with the original contractor has ended legally a temporary solution can now be tendered. Tenders are being sought from alternative suppliers with an expected-on site time of 4-6 weeks' time, and an expected build time of around 2 weeks. Tendering contractors are being asked to provide a schedule to fit with this timetable.

2. Question submitted by Galleon Marine & Accessible Boating Association

Will the JMC direct the working group to meet more frequently to oversee progress and manage the short-term situation? The initial meeting to be within one month.

Reply:

The working group made up of Senior Officers and Canal Society agreed to meet on a 6 monthly basis and will next meet in September.

3. Question submitted by Galleon Marine & Accessible Boating Association

Can the canal officers provide an update on the progress regarding the dredging and repair of restrictions that now prevent some vessels from cruising through Swan cutting and when dredging activity will commence on the canal?

Reply:

As previously advised, engineers have advised that the issues at Swan "cutting" are not relating to dredging but to the narrowing of the channel due to land movement, and that dredging the channel here is likely to cause the issues to get worse, not better. The Swan "cutting" project is a live project which is currently in detailed design with Hampshire Engineering, before further discussions commence with the affected landowners. It is not anticipated that there will be any works at Swan "cutting" until the 2023/24 financial year.

A spot dredging programme aimed at clearing shallows in the navigation channel in the Hampshire Pound was agreed in principle by the Conservation Management Steering Group in April and is programmed for the autumn/winter (dredging works can only be undertaken in winter for conservation reasons). Providing Members approve the request for a draw on reserves (see Canal Management Report) it can go ahead as planned.

4. Question submitted by Galleon Marine & Accessible Boating Association

What steps has the BCA taken to mitigate the legal situation by appointing a new contractor to complete Crookham Deeps work and suing the original contractor?

Reply:

Officers have been working closely with Hampshire County Council's legal department and following their specific advice. As this is still a live matter, officers cannot comment any further at this stage.

5. Question submitted by Galleon Marine & Accessible Boating Association

Will the JMC reconfirm its commitment to the constitution that all parties signed up to originally which clearly states that the canal will not only be kept in a safe condition but will also be maintained as a navigable waterway.

Reply:

A great deal of the BCA officer's time and their budget is spent on maintaining the canal as a navigation – indeed far greater than conservation, which is a statutory duty. The BCA and officers are fully committed to keeping the canal navigable where that is also compatible with the statutory obligations of public safety, quiet public recreation (including persons in small boats) and conservation, as resources allow.

James Taylor

Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal, Hampshire County Council & Surrey County Council

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