



# BASINGSTOKE CANAL NEWS

No. 236 Winter 2012





The contract with the company, Dyer & Butler, is drawing to a close and a lot of very necessary repairs have been made to the canal.

Some of the work, however, has drawn criticism for the methods employed. Sheet metal piling or concrete-filled bags have replaced brickwork when wing walls have been repaired and gabion baskets

have been used to prevent scouring where the Society's volunteers have used concrete. Stop-plank grooves have been added using bolted on angle iron rather than cutting channels in the brick.

More recently complaints were made about the rather stark look of the new brickwork repairs to Poulter's Bridge in Crookham, although I am told that a mixture of yoghurt and cowpat will soon restore an authentic patina!

The motive is presumably cost and it is hard to argue with this, particularly since much of it will be underwater.

However, it does raise a question about what should be preserved of the canal's heritage.

The Society took a lot of trouble to do this during the restoration years. Typical of this was the rebuilding of Cowshot Manor Bridge using the same 100 foot line technique to describe its profile that was used 200 years previously. Specially made capping stones completed the job.

Perhaps we need a heritage standards manual that describes best practice, defines what should and should not be done and lists those structures that must be preserved.

I fear that otherwise those features of the canal that give it its character will slowly be eroded. Such a document could be complementary to the Planning Guidance document that is being considered, akin to the excellent one produced for the River Wey.

The canal is last beginning to look like a navigation again. The rangers did a very efficient job of offside bank clearance in Brookwood, using their work boat with a wood chipper on board to make short work of overhanging and fallen trees. They also set about the weed growth in the dry pounds at Deepcut (*see cover photo*).

We very much hope to see the canal open to through navigation early next year. As a first step, the Byfleet Boat Club have permission to bring a number of boats up to Brookwood between Christmas and the New Year.

Next year will also see the launch of the "re-branded" Canal Society, so the next issue of the Basingstoke Canal News will look somewhat different. It would be very good if the new look BCN could also have a new editor, but so far my appeals for a volunteer to take on this job have not produced any response.

I'm not fed up with the job and even if I'm approaching 71, I hope I'm not about to peg out, but I feel as if I'm getting a bit stale and running out of things to say.

I've been on the Canal Society's Committee for about 30 years and it's time for the new generation to take over! How about it?

**Cover Picture :** BCA Ranger Andy Foster getting stuck in with some serious weed cutting at Deepcut..  
Photo: Roger Cansdale

## ***Annual General Meetings - Advance notice***

The Canal Society's AGM will be held at 2pm on Saturday 18th May 2013. The venue will probably be the same hall in Pirbright that we used last year.

The Boat Company's AGM will be at 7.30pm on 8th March 2013 at the Canal Centre.

Further details of both meetings in the Spring issue of the BC News and in the Bulletin.

# Chairman's report

The other day I was reading a book written by Robert Aickman, probably in the late 1940s, about the inland waterways of England and Wales. In it Aickman, who is generally regarded as one of the founders of the movement which led to the safeguarding and restoration of our priceless inland waterways network, made a brief reference to the Basingstoke Canal.

He commenced his remarks by saying that “the Basingstoke Canal is a waterway of mystery. This is unfortunate, as there is no surviving waterway about which the lecturer on rivers and canals can be more sure of receiving enquiries in all parts of the country.” Aickman went on to say that there are today (and remember he was referring to the 1940s) very few boats on the canal. He referred to the company that owned the canal at the time and mentioned “the great hopes that were entertained by a wide public that this much loved canal would .....at last be more widely used. Unfortunately those hopes have so far been disappointed.”

I began to wonder how Robert Aickman would feel today if he came back to the Basingstoke. He would obviously see a canal in much better condition than it would have appeared over 60 years ago. Despite some inappropriate development, the beauty of the canal is still largely undiminished. Aickman remarked that the distinctive quality of the canal “lies largely in the circumstance that for miles on end the waterway runs through delightful woodlands. There are also high embankments and large lakes; and a substantial surrounding population.”

Aickman was clearly very perceptive and he encapsulated in a few short sentences, the essential value of the canal and the impediments to its use as a navigable waterway. As we all know, the canal has been closed for over 4 years and the pounds above Brookwood are isolated from the main canal network. We are also painfully aware that the number of boats on the canal has continued to decline as boat-owners have voted with their feet and moved to adjacent waterways where their considerable investment can be used to better effect.

The Canal Society has always made the point that it does not speak solely for the boat-owning community. Indeed, many members of the Society (including me) do not own boats. What draws us to the canal and motivates us to work to secure its future is our passion for the waterways and our strong belief that the canal is a highly valued local amenity which should be protected and enhanced as a working navigation. We will continue to press home this message to the Canal Partnership and stress to its members, and to the wider community, the vital importance of bringing the canal back into full use early next year.

As reported elsewhere in this edition of the BC News, in October we concluded our lengthy negotiations with the builders over the contract for our new trip boat to replace the John Pinkerton. This is a very exciting project and one which will give us an excellent platform on which to promote our commitment to the canal and our expectations for the move towards a more inclusive Canal Partnership. The team responsible for the new boat is led by Pete Phillips with the support of Nigel Bird and John Abbott. They have a formidable task ahead of them in ensuring that the new boat fulfils our requirements and becomes a worthy flagship for the Society. As the project develops, I am sure that Pete and his team will be calling on the support of many members to assist in dealing with the myriad issues that will arise in the course of the build and commissioning. Please give the team your full support.

As I write this report, the work at Deepcut is well advanced but we still do not have a commitment to re-open the canal in the next few months. We will continue to work hard to make sure that the Basingstoke will be re-connected to the network in time for the 2013 season – an objective that Robert Aickman would have earnestly supported.

My best wishes to you and your families for Christmas and the coming year.

Philip Riley  
Chairman

# New Canal Manager

Following Ian Brown's retirement as Canal Manager, there has been some re-organisation of the Canal's management structure. Phil Allen (Hampshire County Council) and James Taylor (Surrey County Council) now have responsibility for strategic planning, leaving the new Canal Operations Manager to deal with day-to-day running of the canal.



The new post was advertised nationally and drew a fair number of applicants, from whom seven were short-listed for interview after an introductory trip on the *John Pinkerton*.

The final choice was Fiona Shipp, an experienced country park manager, probably reflecting the Counties' view that for the great majority of its users, the canal is, to all intents and purposes, a country park. There is plenty of canal expertise around but management skills are harder to find.

Anyway, Fiona showed an immediate interest in the canal by turning up in the audience for a talk about its history that I did in Basingstoke Library in November, much to my surprise! She spared another hour the next day to talk to me over a cup of tea in the Canal Centre café.

Fiona comes from Suffolk and her background is environmental science, in which she took a degree at Hatfield polytechnic some 20 years ago. She had a number of environmental jobs, including 2 years VSO work in Thailand before finding herself on Teesside. She spent 8 years working to re-create an ex-industrial site as the Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park.

After this, she moved to Cumbria to manage the Talkin Tarn Country Park. This included a large lake

used by rowing, sailing and canoeing clubs. After 6 years she decided to move on and took up an opportunity with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust in Leeds. This, however, was not really the direction she wanted her career to go, and when the Basingstoke Canal job appeared, she went for it.

Fiona emphasises that managing a country park is at least as much about people as the wildlife, and that the real skill lies in balancing the demands of all the interested parties.

Her background experience includes dealing with grant applications for funding and coping with the sometime frustration of working with councils. She also has experience of the benefits and problems of working with volunteers, and this is seen as having increasing importance on the canal.

I think it could be a refreshing change working with Fiona and I hope that she will get the support from all sides that she will need. She may not be a canal expert, but there are plenty of teachers and I suspect that she is a fast learner and that her real talent is the necessary one of dealing with people.

Good luck, Fiona!

# BCA rangers report

Thanks to BCA Ranger James Emmett for the following update on recent work on the canal.

The Deepcut flight of locks has been strimmed and re-watering started (*Below*).



Brookwood offside cut is now complete and we are moving down through Surrey to continue on the Hermitage section.



*Above:* The BCA work boat at Sheet's Heath Bridge.

The term contractor still has to fit two sets of uppers (24 and 25) and the ranger team will be fitting a further two sets of uppers (16 and 23) in the New Year. (*Below: Lock 24*)

The usual report of trees down:- A massive oak split at the bottom of Ash Embankment ending up straddling the toe ditch and the crown in a neighbour's garden (*Below*). *Continued page 6*



*Below:* New gates and balance beams at Lock 25.



# BCA rangers report

It was a two day job for 3 rangers to clear it.

At the Swing Bridge, a large oak came down from the offside blocking navigation just before half-term... a real issue for hire company Galleon Marine (*Below*).



The dredger arrived on site just as main hydraulic pipe burst, thankfully an easy and reasonably cheap repair was carried out the next day. The tree was removed, but during the unloading of the wood from the hopper, the main-pin on the boom sheered. So, once again we are without a vital piece of kit, until such time that a repair is carried out... it's 30 years old now so if anyone wants to buy us a new machine please get in touch... oohh £100,000 should do it and we'll gladly name it after you! (*The Canal Society paid about £1,200 last year for hydraulic pipes and fluid to get the BCA's dredger going again after it was previously out of action for about a year.*)

The bottom locks have been used at least once a week since the end of August. We were told several times by visiting boaters that they were informed by River Wey boaters not to bother as the Basingstoke Canal is closed. Thankfully they ignored the advice!

The impact of using two rangers from a reduced team to caulk up at least one day week, was having an effect on routine maintenance and our ability to respond to urgent jobs (such as the large oak blocking the navigation). The practice of walking

out on balance beams to caulk up has now been banned, until such time that a safer system can be put in place. Any caulking up must now be done from the bankside only. As a result only one ranger will now be required to caulk-up after lock usage, which greatly helps our reduced team, but the jury is out as to whether we can effectively caulk-up from the side.

With that in mind, Andy Loader is trailing a new rubber seal at Lock 2 following the failure of the first trail at Brookwood Lock 12. It was unfortunate this didn't work but as it caused no damage to the gates, it was worth trying. At Lock 2 we are attaching the rubber to the cill as opposed to the gate as well as using a softer compound. Hopefully it will work.

Walking inspections of the entire canal have just been carried out again and our weekly inspections continue. Repairs to leaking embankments have been carried out by the term contractor at Crookham and Odiham. At the time of writing the canal is dammed at Pondtail in order to enable stop-plank groove installation.

The duty ranger needs to be very mindful of water levels during these times as the risk of over-topping during heavy weather is greatly increased as the sluice at North Warnborough becomes the only place where we can dump water if needed. The water levels last week (second week Nov) went to 150mm over weir very quickly, which with reduced sluice capacity means prompt action is need to dump water as required. To give a greater safety margin the water levels are therefore currently being kept at around -175mm to allow for sudden input.

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The BCA rangers have also improved things for boaters using the Zebon Copse swing bridge in Crookham by installing some Nicospan bank protection to make life easier for boats to moor temporarily on either side while the bridge is being opened or closed. (*Opposite*)

# Events

## CHOBHAM SOCIAL MEETINGS

Programme for the winter season is shown below:

The meetings are held at the usual venue at the Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, near Woking, GU24 8AZ (See map for exact location). Meetings will commence at 8pm on the third Wednesday of the month. Coffee/tea and biscuits will be available during the interval. Non members and friends are very welcome to come along.

19th December 2012

### **Roger Squires - 'Passage to Astrakhan'**

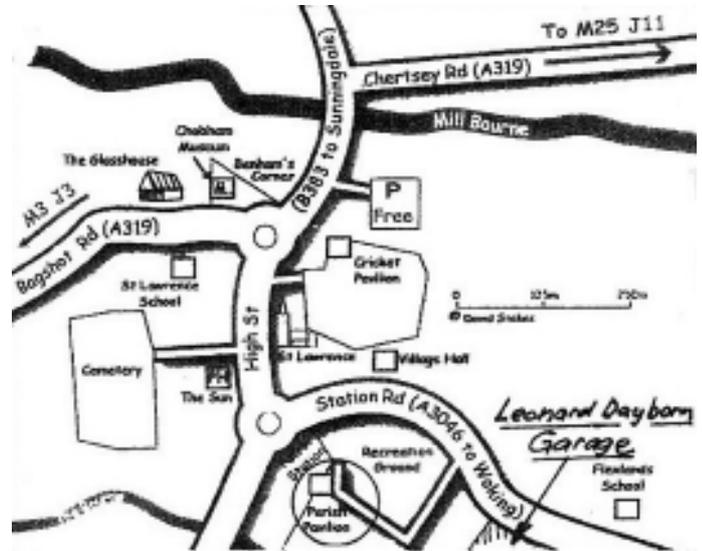
Roger returns to tell us about a 4702km cruise he made along the Russian waterways from the Baltic to the Caspian Sea and then on to the Black Sea. The epic 3 week voyage along the Baltic Volga Canal, the River Volga and the Volga Black Sea Canal took him through the heart of rural Russia, stopping at some formerly 'closed' towns en route.

16th January 2013

### **Peter Halman 'Thames from Oxford to Windsor'**

The River Thames has many stories from the past to the present to be told and Peter will be visiting us to share his knowledge of the history of this beautiful waterway through the centuries.

20th February 2013



### **Ron and Myra Glover - 'Down the Rhine and Up the Neckar'**

Having explored the waterways of western Europe, Ron and Myra decided to venture further east. One barrier they had to cross was the mighty River Rhine and for their boat 'Elsa' this meant "going with the flow". For this reason they joined the Rhine near the top in France and travelled downstream venturing into the rivers joining on the German side. The first is the Neckar.

20th March 2013

### **David Saady - 'The Ribble Link and the Lancaster Canal'**

David will be visiting us to describe the history of the Ribble Link and the Lancaster Canal and recount his cruise along the waterways, including the seven mile crossing between the two, one of the riskiest water crossings for narrow boats in the country.

*Further information from David Millett on 01252 617364 or email [d.millett7@ntlworld.com](mailto:d.millett7@ntlworld.com)*

*David and Rosemary Millett and Peter and Maureen Coxhead were all absent from the November meeting because of medical problems and we wish them a speedy recovery.*



# Lock 12 work

While the BCA rangers have been busy, the contractors, Dyer & Butler, have also continued with their programme.

Much of this has been the ongoing work at Deepcut, which is still not finished. As James Taylor of SCC mentions on page 12, upper gates have still go be fitted to Locks 24 and 25, and the need for other work may become apparent as the flight of locks is filled.

A lot of time was spent at Lock 12, initially struggling to fit the new lower gates, which needed a lot of adjustment, clearing many months' worth of accumulated silt and rubbish from the lock chamber, and fitting stop-plank grooves below the lock.

It has to be said that the protruding design of these has received a less than enthusiastic response from the boating community and it remains to be seen whether they will cause problems. Will the dredgers be able to pass through the reduced width and did anyone measure them first?



Lock 12 with stop planks (*above*) and a dam (*below*) to allow work to take place.

*Below:* More than a foot's depth of mud and rubbish to be cleared from the bottom of the lock.



# Events

## ***Basingstoke Canal Boating Club Fox & Hounds Rally***

Postponement of this annual event until the beginning of October sadly did not see the canal fully reopened to navigation, but at least the weather was good.

### **This year's winners:**

Best Presented Boat

***Athai***

**Peter & Freddie Dawson**



Best Presented Steamboat

***Lizzzee***

**Trevor & Gina Jenkins**



Furthest Travelled Boat

***Lady Selsey* (46 miles)**

**Richard & Evelyn Mitchell**



# Letters

In the October 2012 issue of *Waterways World*, Richard Fairhurst reviews an early 20<sup>th</sup> century waterways guide by George Westall, entitled *Inland Cruising on the Rivers and Canals of England and Wales*, published in 1908, which included the Basingstoke Canal.

The entry for the Basingstoke reads:-

## **Basingstoke Canal**

At the moment of writing (1908) the Canal is classified as Derelict by the Board of Trade Department, and the navigation is certainly in a most defective condition. The large number of locks acts as a deterrent to the use of what is really a thoroughly interesting aquatic course, easy of approach from the Thames for motor-boats and other small craft, and there is no reason, except for a too liberal growth of rank weed, why the summit pool should not be availed of for pleasure boating.

Except as a “playground”, the Canal, so to speak, “beginning nowhere and ending nowhere” is, and is likely to remain, absolutely useless.

So what's changed?

Here's living in hope if not expectation!

Dieter Jebens

*(A copy of this book sold recently on eBay for £27)*

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Dear Philip,

Thank you for your letter offering me life membership of the Canal Society, which I am most happy to accept. The BC News will keep me in touch and I hope to come to the events sometimes.

I still have a lot of photos of the canal taken by Dick Snell, which should go to archives eventually (must talk to Dick).

Once again, thank you and hope to see you sometime.

Best wishes  
Les Harris

Hello Roger,

Having walked from Ash Vale to Brookwood a week after the date of the Chairman's Report in the Autumn 2012 News, I too was horrified at the deterioration in the canal channel.

When the Society was successful in its campaign to get the County Councils to acquire the canal, it was undoubtedly its salvation, but we now live in a different era. Now the C&RT is in business and there is the aspiration to bring the EA navigations under its control, is it not the time for the JMC to consider the acquisition of the Basingstoke Canal by C&RT? The National Trust should also be approached as to whether they would be amenable to the takeover of the River Wey.

With Thames, Wey and Basingstoke under unified management, there must be scope for economies of scale in maintenance and administration, not to mention that a national licence would then be valid on all three, thereby encouraging use.

This might be a long process and ultimately prove fruitless but we owe it all the volunteers, both past and present, to explore all avenues to put our canal on a firm financial footing, otherwise it will moulder away to the point of no return.

Best wishes

Alan Smith

*Alan's suggestion is very much in tune with the thinking of the Society's Committee, but as he says, it is likely to be a long process. CART has a lot on its plate already and would require a very substantial endowment to cover future maintenance costs of the canal, just as the Wey Navigation had when the national Trust took it on. Nevertheless, integration into the national waterways management looks to us like the best way of assuring the future of the Basingstoke Canal and, in the long term, it could be the cheapest and least difficult option for the current owners.*

# Letters

Dear Editor,

The TowPath Telegraph tells me that BCA are thinking about making stop Plank grooves under Pondtail Bridge, I thought the following might be helpful and possibly save some finance.

When restoration was getting under way it was decided to renew old stop plank grooves, where they existed, and to make new in those places where they did not exist.

We started at Double Bridge and the work was easy as the canal was bone dry; when we finished we installed a set of planks so that we could see what to do and photograph it so that we had a record. (there should be a copy somewhere, but I have my own copy if it is needed). Over the next few years work proceeded when opportunities arose. As restoration got going with the Odiham end becoming rewatered we decided to do a dummy run in a bridge hole full of water.

All the kit was brought to site and then the fun began, because after 2 or 3 planks were in the grooves we found that they had considerable buoyancy and as we piled on more rangers to sink those planks and get another in place more rangers balanced on the planks and so on; eventually we found that we could not overcome the natural buoyancy so we packed all the kit back on to the trailer and went back to Ash Lock for a conference, and to try to find a way forward.

I called BWB friends for advice and was told that they too had the same problem and that the only way forward was to use "planks" made of hollow aluminium sections, these were light enough for staff to handle and would sink. But the price was high (for the then Canal budget frighteningly high). Also the scrap metal specialists had realised that there was good pocket money lying out in the countryside and the new planks quickly disappeared.

Members will have seen stocks of wooden planks stored near bridges around the system but on the Basingstoke we could only afford one set, and could only keep it at Ash where it was reasonably secure. So it was decided not to put in any more grooves under bridges, at least for the time being. When only one set of planks can be afforded then it is essential that the distance between the back

of the grooves at all the bridges is the same.

When the 2 halves of the canal were brought under one management it was found that the Surrey section had no planks and, from memory, few if any grooves. But as the problems associated with the use of planks had caused the Hampshire team to stop further work it was decided that grooves would not be installed in Surrey pending a solution to the problem

With increasing interest in Health and Safety, and disaster management, Surrey CC decided that they would stage a dummy emergency and test the staff's effectiveness at dealing with it. We had been primed that it was coming, but not when. When we got to site, under Ash bridge, we found that HCC stop planks were not long enough and we attempted to put on a good show at being super efficient. The inspectors said we had done well but the staff knew that we had failed. SCC did not like talking to HCC about technical details during restoration and certainly not about stop plank grooves.

What the public see is not the whole story, because below the water on the bed of the canal where the stop planks are to be fitted there has to be a sill for the planks to lie on and that sill must have piling driven into the canal bed to prevent the water from blowing under the planks when they are installed. So installing new grooves involves the canal being empty and at Pondtail that would mean damming both sides of the bridge and pumping out the bridge hole. To be effective the sills on the canal bed must be maintained in a sound condition and free from refuse (shopping trolleys and the like) and silt. There are sockets on both side of the sill to take a king post and stop the planks from bending or even breaking under load, cleaning them in an emergency is not going to be easy. There are other ways of dealing with damming the canal in an emergency, but I left the canal before we were able to think these through and carry out tests to prove their suitability.

BCA have not got enough staff today to sink stop planks.

Regards to all my old friends,

David Gerry.

# Update from Surrey CC

## Engineering update

Many of you will be aware that there have been engineering works going on at the Canal over the last couple of years. Since taking over as the Surrey County Council Countryside client officer in April I have become increasingly aware that there has been very limited information available about these works, and so this is to set the record straight.

Despite the difficult times, Surrey and Hampshire County Councils are investing in the future of the Canal, catching up with a backlog of major maintenance works which have arisen since the restoration phase in the 1970s and 80s. You may have seen our contractors, Dyer & Butler, working along sections of the Canal, and we apologise for any inconvenience caused during these works when their equipment is on the Canal towpath.

The work is primarily aimed at improving safety; reducing immediate and potential risks to Canal users (whether on foot, cycle, canoe or narrow boat), but also to residents and neighbours. Maintaining large engineering structures such as embankments and locks is a costly exercise, so we have needed to take a phased approach – the present “rapid improvement project” is phase 1 of this approach.

## Rapid Improvement Project – phase 1 works

In Surrey we have replaced life expired lock gates at 9 locks, carried out “hard” bank protection to seal leaks, done “soft” bank protection to improve stability and reduce the risk of flooding on embankments, as well as carrying out structural repairs throughout the Deepcut flight of locks whilst it was drained of water.

In Hampshire the concentration has been on improving embankment safety by repairing banks and sealing small leaks, carrying out a thorough investigation of culverts passing under the Canal, along with having the ability to isolate sections of the long lock-less Hampshire pound in an emergency through the provision of stop-plank installations.



*Above:* The canal dammed at Pondtail in Fleet to facilitate work on the stop plank installation.

The first phase of the works in Surrey is now drawing to a close, whilst significant works remain to be done in Hampshire before the end of the present contract in 2013.

## Significant progress

The term contractor has nearly completed the works at Brookwood (Lock 12) (*see page 8*), which will enable the Canal Rangers to do some maintenance works on the remaining Brookwood locks and Brookwood Mile pound - it is hoped this section of the Canal can re-open to navigation by the end of October.

Whilst there are some remaining works to be done in the Deepcut flight of locks (especially at Locks 18, 24 & 25), we have taken the decision to fill as many of the pounds with water as possible; this will help us to check the works done have cured the structural problems we needed to address. There will need to be a period of monitoring before we can consider whether the Deepcut flight is safe to re-open to navigation.

James Taylor, Surrey CC

# Out and about



*Above:* Leaks in the chamber wall of Lock 20 indicate the presence of a void behind the wall. Pressure-grouting with foam concrete was being talked about as a solution to such problems a few years ago.



*Above:* Repairs to the brickwork of Poulter's Bridge. New bricks should be good for the structure but look a bit out of place at the moment.



*Above:* John Wharf and Pete Phillips working on the BCA's weedcutter. Hopes were raised recently that after months of effort, the machine was working again. Sadly, these were dashed when the hydraulics again mysteriously died, and the Society's hydraulic man has unfortunately been posted to Afghanistan with his squadron.

What we need is someone familiar with the hydraulic systems of civil engineering or agricultural machinery. Does anyone know a man (or woman) who might be able to help? Please contact Pete Phillips on 01189 326373.



*Above:* Local volunteers working under the guidance of BCA rangers have cleared the embankment at Mytchett Lake in preparation for the work to be undertaken next year. Jon Green (Senior Canal Ranger) sent his thanks to them all for doing such a good job.

The lake is classified as a reservoir and to bring it up to the standards required for such bodies of water, Surrey County Council have set aside £750,000.

# Water Strategy Group

*There is a group of volunteers working actively to identify possible additional sources of water for the Basingstoke Canal. Inevitably, these efforts are speculative and it should be said that there are no guarantees of success, but progress is being made. Here, John How, the leader of the team, sets out the current state of play:*

The Basingstoke Canal 'Water Strategy Group' (WSG), was established in November 2011 and consists of Martin Leech and myself, with contributions from Tony Clark. Ideally, our objective is to help the Basingstoke Canal return to year-round, through navigation by finding additional water supplies that can replenish the canal during the Summer months.

We have produced a 'water balance' model (*See opposite page*) that indicates that in dry weather seasons we require an extra 4.5MI (million litres) or around 20 lock-fills of water daily to maintain navigation, and more with increased boat movements. This estimate is based on a large number of assumptions and hypotheses, such as:

- The rate of flow into the Canal during the dry seasons. We believe this is around a third of the flow in the Whitewater River, which is itself measured by the Environment Agency (EA) who supply the data to us, together with the rainfall on a monthly basis.
- The rate at which pumping facilities discharge into the Canal. These include the Frimley pump which generally produces about 1.0MI/day dewatering the railway embankments to prevent local flooding; and the Woodham back-pumping facility, which returns water from below Lock 1 to above Lock 6 and operates at the defined daily maximum abstraction rate as set by the EA.
- The rate of rainwater seepage through to the aquifers/springs that feed both the Whitewater River and the Basingstoke Canal
- The rate of losses due to evaporation, transpiration by adjacent trees, and seepage.

The WSG have several different investigations in progress, and all at different stages.

Three major positive steps are:-

## **Woodham Abstraction Licence**

An application has been made to the Environment Agency to double the abstraction limit at Woodham to 3.4MI/d from the existing 1.7MI/d. This has taken the WSG nearly 10 months to progress and we are hopeful of a favourable response by December. The effect will be to allow more boat movements onto and off the Canal.

## **Investigations into Boreholes**

An order has now been placed with the British Geological Survey (BGS), for a 'Water Prognosis Report' at key locations along the canal upstream of the Canal centre with a view to determining their suitability as potential sites for one or more boreholes. Hampshire and Surrey County Councils are funding this order.

## **University Support**

Evaluation of the validity of our water balance model and associated assumptions will now be a project for four final year degree students, under the close supervision of Dr Derek Clarke, all from Southampton University. These students are to operate as a 'Consultancy Team', and will produce their Project Report by next May, which accounts for 40% of their final year marks on this prestigious four year degree course.

**If anyone wishes to help Martin Leech and me with this work, we will welcome your support. Please contact Martin if you are interested. (Contact details on Page 23)**

**John How, IWA Reading & Guildford Branch**

# Archives

Thanks to the efforts of David Tonkinson, our archivist, the job of cataloguing the collection of photos and slides, taken by Dieter Jebens during his time as Newsletter Editor, is nearing completion.

This has taken many sessions with Dieter, David Millett and myself peering at long forgotten scenes and trying to remember who, what, when and where. In the end, very few remained completely unidentified although, of course, some of our guesses may be wrong.

Anyway right or wrong, it is all now on a database on David's computer. The next step, if it can be achieved, will be to digitise the collection so that the images can be stored electronically as well.

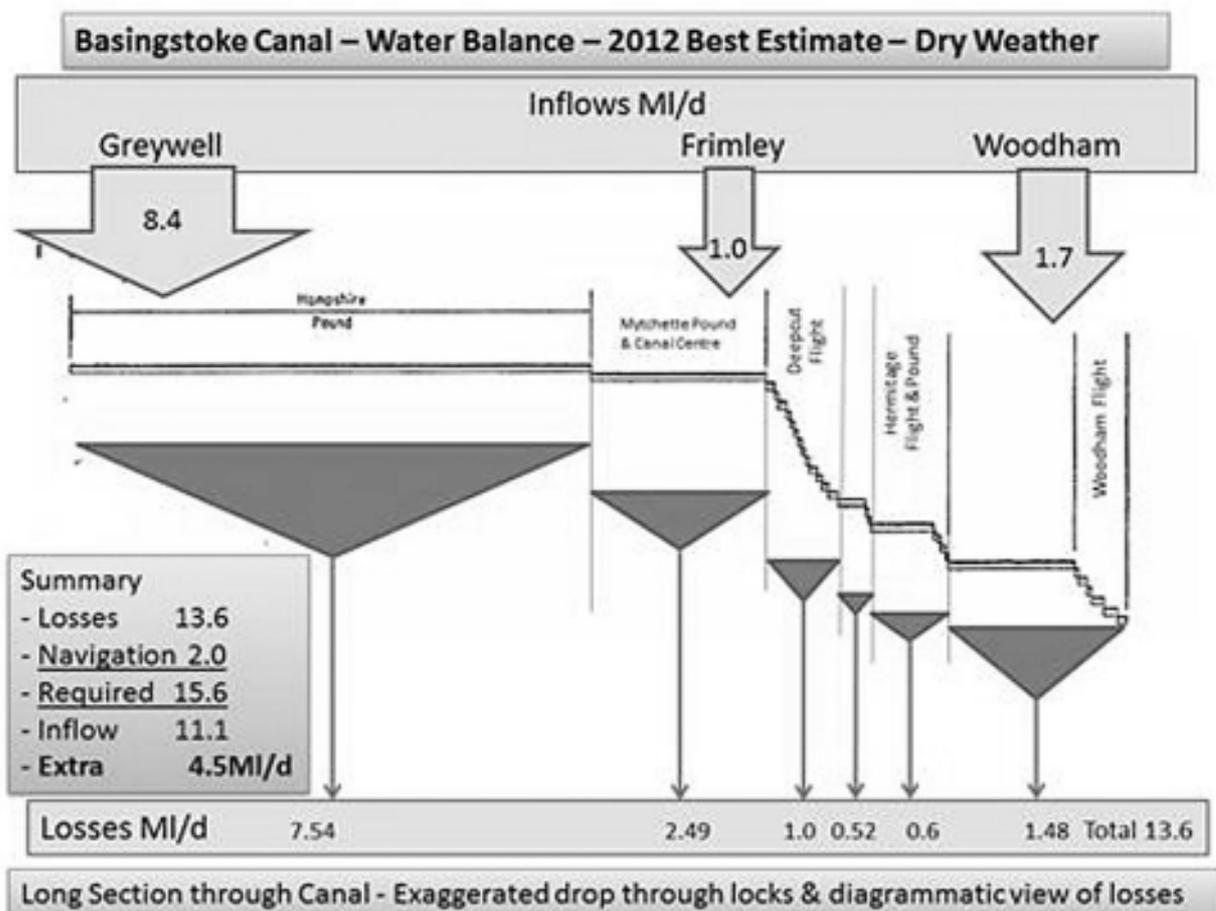
Dieter has about 1500 35mm slides that need

scanning. The great majority are well exposed and in good condition on Kodachrome, and will probably not need any "PhotoShopping" before being stored.

Is there a Canal Society member out there, preferably living not too far from Church Crookham where the collection lives, who has a scanner capable of doing, say, at least 2500 dots per inch, who would like a project for those long boring winter evenings?

If so, please let me know.

Roger Cansdale (Telephone 01252 678608 or email [roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com](mailto:roger.cansdale@ntlworld.com))



# Out and about

## Colt Hill mooring and barn now owned by Canal Society

After a rather prolonged transaction, the Canal Society has finally bought from Hampshire County Council the piece of land at Colt Hill where the *John Pinkerton* is moored. Included in the deal is the half of the barn there nearer the canal, which may be used for storage.

The purchase was assisted by a grant of £5352 from Hart District Council. The cheque was presented by Cllr Ken Crookes, Leader of the Council, during a trip on the *John Pinkerton*. Philip Riley is seen receiving it below.



Philip duly presented a cheque from the Society to Hampshire County Council at the mooring. He is seen right with Karen Murray, HCC's Director of Culture, Communities & Business Services, and Cllr Keith Chapman, Executive Member for Culture & Recreation. They too enjoyed a trip on the *Pinkerton* to King John's Castle.

There is a certain amount of work to be done on the barn, including removal of trees that are leaning on it and replacement of a fair number of roof tiles.

If anyone knows of a supply of second-hand red clay tiles measuring about 10in x 6in, Duncan Paine would like to know (01252 614125). He would also like to hear from anyone who would like to help with the job. Some internal work is also needed on one of the beams, but the survey that was done before purchase indicated that the condition of the building is basically sound.

Some piling will probably also be done to extend the mooring and make life safer and easier for the crews.

The barn is believed to be some 200 years old and was reputedly used at one time as a cheese store, presumably produced locally and awaiting shipment to London.

Purchase of the barn means that for the first time in the *John Pinkerton's* 34 year history, the Canal Society owns not only a secure mooring but also storage space at Colt Hill. This will increase the operating flexibility of the new boat because surplus chairs or tables can be left in the barn rather than having to be stacked up on board. The barn also has an electrical supply that can potentially be used to power equipment such as a refrigerator on the new boat.



# Out and about

## Repairs to Lock 27

Like many of the Deepcut locks, No 27 has suffered from collapsing wing walls. The offside lower wall has now been repaired by the contractors, Dyer & Butler. Not perhaps the most elegant job, but most of it should be under water soon.

Before  
&  
after



*Thanks to Nigel Searle for the photos.*

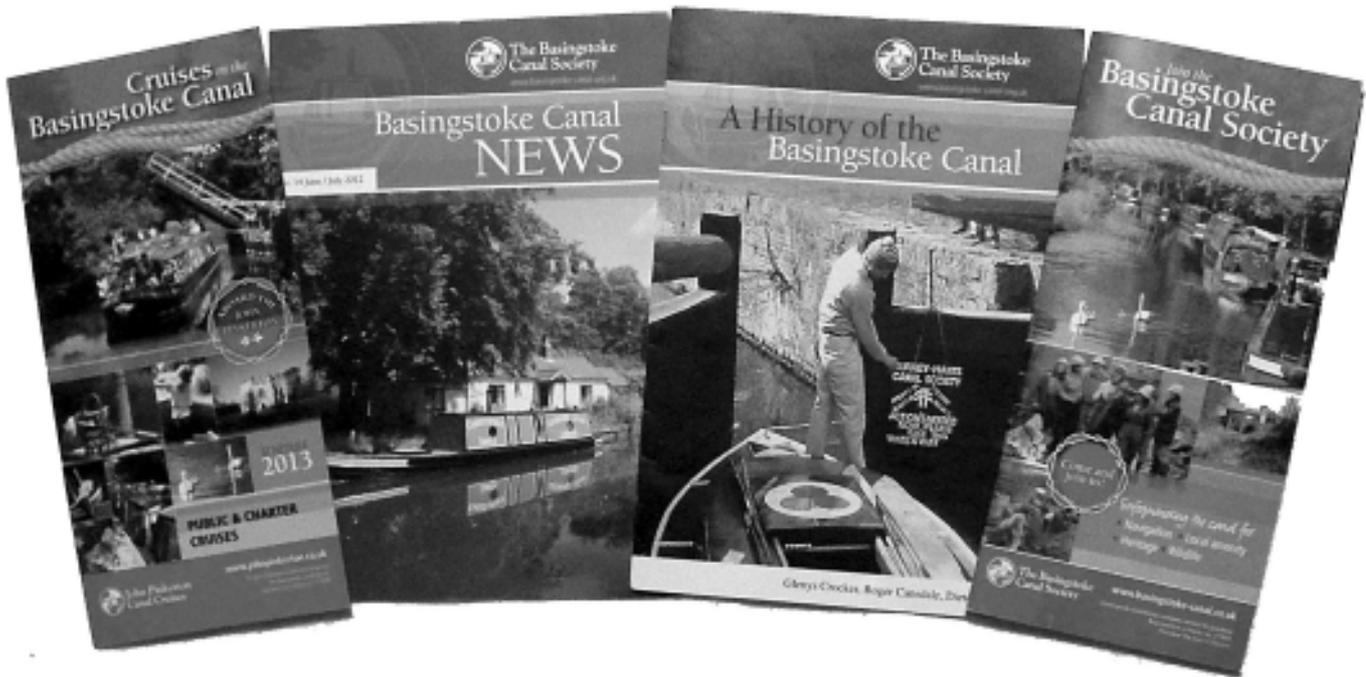
## ***New guide to exploring the Wey & Arun Canal***

“Visiting the Wey & Arun Canal” is a new guidebook from the Wey & Arun Canal Trust (WACT) that aims to make it easier for visitors to use the canal for leisure activities and to also find out more about the canal’s history and route.

The 72-page guide includes colour photographs of the canal, as well as maps and details of how to access parts of the canal by road and by public transport.

The new guidebook is priced at £5 and can be bought from the Loxwood Canal Centre (situated behind the “Onslow Arms” pub, on the B2133 in Loxwood, West Sussex, opening hours 12-3pm Wednesdays, Fridays and weekends, telephone 01403 753999 [canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk)) or available by mail order (plus £1.50 P&P) from the WACT office, The Granary, Fritchfold Farm, Loxwood, RH14 0RH [email office@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:office@weyandarun.co.uk) or by calling 01403 752403 between 9am and 1pm on weekdays.

# Re-branding the Society



Memories of “New Labour” and some of the dafter marketing exercises by British Airways and others make many people wary of the concept of re-branding something like the Canal Society.

In this context, I think it is significant that the move to do this has come from the newer members of the Committee. It is hard for people such as me, who have been on the Committee for decades, to have a fresh perspective, but when newcomers think that a make-over is needed, it is sensible to take notice.

Martin Leech already had experience of the process with another organisation that he was involved with and had been impressed by the results. The company concerned, Lawrence and Beavan design and marketing consultants, made a very good value offer to do the work for the Canal Society (compared to the cost of similar jobs), so they were engaged to develop the new branding and artwork.

At last year’s AGM, the idea of changing the Society’s name to the Basingstoke Canal Society met with approval, but a majority wanted to retain the old Society logo. Nevertheless, after discussion with Hilly Beavan, the Committee decided to give her a free hand to consider a new logo.

The thinking behind this is that the prime function of a logo is to say something appealing and relevant to potential new members, as well as being an identifier for existing ones. The existing logo is undoubtedly very stylish, but new members of the Committee were totally baffled by its connection with the canal until this was explained. A stylized square-rigged sailing boat does not say “canal”!

A set of draft publications was shown to the Committee in October. These included leaflets for the John Pinkerton and the Society, a format for publications such as the newsletter, bulletin, and other booklets, two alternative letterhead designs and four possible new logos.

One of these was the clear choice, but a number of changes were requested. The general impression was very favourable. The leaflets in particular looked very modern and attractive.

We intend to launch “The Basingstoke Canal Society” formally in the New Year. The John Pinkerton leaflet will probably be the lead item and the other publications will follow.

Look out for a new look BCN next time!

# John Pinkerton II

**I have been asked to write a few words on the progress of the new boat which will replace the *John Pinkerton*, so here goes.**

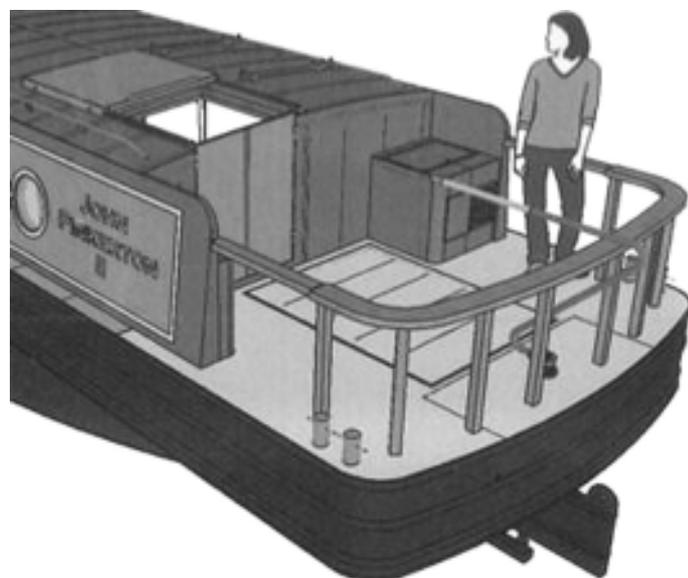
It is hard to believe that this process started back in October 2009 when six of us met at Nigel Bird's house to consider replacing the *John Pinkerton*, which after (at that time) 30 years in service was starting to show its age. The choice was to buy a new boat or completely renovate the present boat. Neither option was cheap but the lucky gift of money to the Society has allowed us to consider both options. So, as they say in all story telling: "if you are sitting comfortable I will begin"....

Initially we had to consider what was wrong with the current JP design and the crew's moans about it. The present design is still quite good, but the beam of the boat meant that with 50 passengers it seemed a bit cramped. Although the canal in theory can take a boat of up to 13ft 6ins beam, we considered that in some places this was not possible, and with that in mind we settled on a new boat with a beam of 3metres (10ft) just to be safe. Because crew members did not like walking along the outside to get to the galley or the steersman position, it was decided that all areas of the boat should be accessible from the inside. Due to the limit of some of the winding holes it was also decided to keep the length the same as the JP, which is 68 feet.

A number of layout plans were considered, but finally a layout was chosen where the toilet was behind the galley on the starboard side and passengers enter the boat over the semi traditional rear deck along a gangway on the port side and so into the passenger cabin. This gangway will also be used as an entrance to both the toilet and the galley. At the front of the boat there will be two French door style doors opening onto a small well deck. So you can see that there will now be no more need to walk on the outside. This is how it will look:

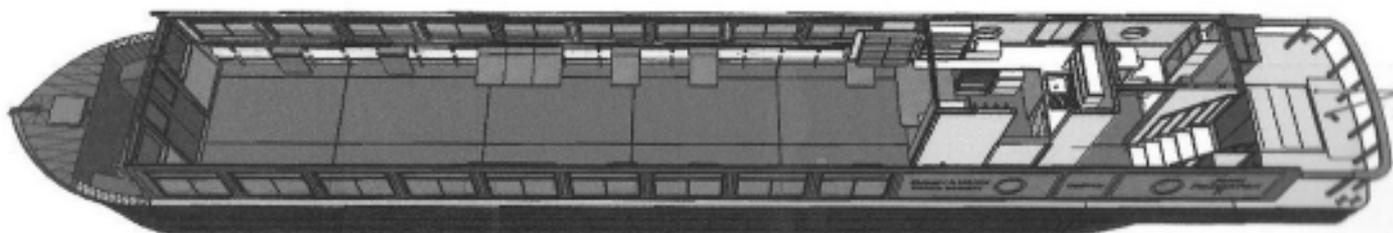
From a systems point of view we have stuck with a Beta Marine engine due to our good experience with the Beta engine that is in the current JP. Due to the ongoing difficulty in getting the JP gas system approved every year, it was decided not to have a gas system on the new boat. This will also do away with the requirement to lift heavy gas bottles on board. Instead the boat will now use an electric urn to heat the water for the all-important tea. Electrical power will be still 12 volts for most of the services, but the galley equipment will run off 240 volt system supplied by inverters. So I am afraid that cooking bacon butties will be a thing of the past. For the convenience of the galley slaves, there will be a sink, with hot and cold water and a glass washer. There will also be a bottle cooler which will operate via a mains connection when the boat is moored.

There will be no cosy engine room now as the engine is under the rear decking so I am sorry to say the steersman will be more exposed than at present.



So where are we now?

*Continued on page 20*



# John Pinkerton II

Well, after a number of setbacks in previous years we decided to adopt a plan where the builder would also design the boat and get his design approved by the MCA, at which time we would award that builder the contract to construct the boat completely.

Earlier this year we went and visited Lambons, a boat builder in Droitwich, and we were impressed with their standard of work and their enthusiasm for the task. After several additional meetings we signed an agreement with Lambons in late August 2012, to design the boat and get that design approved by the MCA.

As September drew to a close they got the design approved both by us and the MCA, and so on 1<sup>st</sup> October Nigel Bird and I journeyed to Droitwich to sign the agreement allowing them to proceed with building the boat (*Below*). We hope it will be ready for use by Easter 2013.



the MCA surveyors were there and gave the work the OK so far, and that is the welding completed.



*Above:* The bows



*Above:* Looking towards the stern.

*Below:* Looking forward from the galley area.

The work for us however is still not over, as colour schemes, interior and exterior, have still to be finalised, along with internal fit out details but getting the MCA approval we felt was a huge achievement on the path to getting a new boat.

Unaccustomed as I am to this typing thing I will bring this episode of the story to a close, but I will try to keep you updated on the progress during the winter months.

*PetePhillips*

*PS.* We visited Lambons today (15 November) and



# Trip boat

As we reported last time, Dick King, seen on the right crewing the *John Pinkerton* with his wife Brenda, has taken over as Chairman of the Boat Company.



One of his first actions has been to appoint a new Booking Manager. Hugh and Marion Gough, after many years of service, will be handing over to David Horwood. His address is

22 Middle Mead, Hook, RG27 9NX.

email: [jpbookings@ymail.com](mailto:jpbookings@ymail.com).

Telephone to be advised, as it will not be installed until early December.

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## Nostalgic Cruise

With the new boat due to arrive next year, this could be the end of the *John Pinkerton's* operations on the canal, so a "Nostalgic Cruise" was organised at the end of October. The boat left Colt Hill and went down to Blacksmith's Bridge with an almost full load of former crew members on board.

It was very nice to see Dick Abbott, one of the original gang, who had come all the way from Norfolk, and also Ron and Dorothy McLaughlin; Ron was a former Chairman of the Boat Company. Martin Bowers (*Right*) was also on hand to reprise his role as Captain on the first trip in 1978.



# SHCS notes

## ***New Treasurer and Lengthsmen Organiser***

Graham Hornsey has for several years been both the Society's Treasurer and the organiser of the volunteer lengthsmen who try to keep an eye on the state of the canal. Graham has now decided to give up both posts and, happily, we have found two replacements.

Guy Faller will be taking over as Treasurer in the New Year. He is a chartered accountant by profession, which is useful, and speaks Norwegian, which may not be. Nevertheless, he has acted as a charity trustee before and lives near the canal in Woking. Thanks very much to Guy for volunteering to take on this vital post.

Mike Gordon (*right*) has offered to take on the job of coordinating the lengthsmen.

*Mike writes:*

I have only been living in the area for just on 15 months finding myself in Ash Vale after unexpectedly relocating from working abroad. The Canal was a wonderful find and in many ways, my first local friend. I soon found the Canal Centre which led me to join the Society, become a lengthsmen and eventually join the crew of the John Pinkerton. Despite my best efforts, the JP survived this season relatively unscathed to retire gracefully.

The Canal gives me beautiful scenery, an ever changing wildlife display, keeps me fit and offers me a social circle, so I wish to give something in return. Once I have settled in to my new role I hope to meet every lengthsmen, organise new events and get the whole scheme perhaps more interactive with the Rangers and work parties.

May I take this opportunity to make two appeals.

Firstly I would really welcome any input from anyone with the experience and local knowledge that I lack and secondly, many more Lengthsmen are needed. So please, if you too enjoy the canal, get much more from your walks and cycles along the tow path and become a Lengthsman.

Looking forward to hearing from and meeting you soon.

Mike

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## ***200 Club***

Congratulations to winners of the 200 Club for the second half of 2012 - buy yourselves some nice Christmas presents. Sorry if you have not won but you have contributed £612 to SHCS this year, so thanks to you all. You should also find an application form to the 200 Club for 2013 in this issue of the newsletter. If anyone wants set up an annual standing order please send me an e-mail.

All the best for the New Year

Jim Johnstone

### **August**

Mr I Woodhead £52  
Mrs E Hawkins £26  
Mr J Carter £12  
Mrs V Ovington £12

### **December**

Mr D Barber £52  
Mr DA Smith £26  
Mr J Debenham £12  
Mr R Gunner £12

### **October**

Mr B Smith £52  
Mr J Debenham £26  
Mr R Gunner £12  
Mrs J Keep £12

# SHCS information



The Bulletin is now at Issue 15. If you would like to receive it, please send your e-mail address to [membership@basingstoke-canal.org.uk](mailto:membership@basingstoke-canal.org.uk)

Anyone interested in joining the Society should contact the Membership Secretary, Mrs Doreen Hornsey, whose contact details are below.

The annual subscription is Adults £10, Junior £3, OAP £5, Family £12, 2 OAP £7, and Group £15, payable on March 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

**Date for next copy 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013**

*Published by the Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society Ltd., a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee, registered as a Charity. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Society. Executive members of the Committee are shown in bold type and Directors of the Society have an asterisk (\*) after their name.*

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[www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk/directory.htm](http://www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk/directory.htm)

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01252-370073

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# Great job at Frimley



Identical views of the towpath at Frimley Lodge Park before and after treatment by the Society's Work Party. One of the final jobs was to install a new seat (below left).

