



BASINGSTOKE CANAL BULLETIN

No. 3 January 2011

Trip from Fleet to Odiham...



The Basingstoke Canal Society's recently launched workboat, the Alan Flight, with Society member Duncan Paine at the tiller.

The boat was recently moved from Fleet to Colt Hill, Odiham ready for bank clearance work in the area. Such is the pace of canal travel that this trip lasted nearly 3 hours, [but with some video wizardry you can do the same trip in less than 9 minutes \(or at around 60 mph\)!](#)

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Peter Redway

Some of you may be aware that Peter Redway, the Society chairman, was recently taken ill, and has been admitted to the St Helier University Hospital near Sutton, which is of course inconveniently miles away from his home at Redway Cottages in Woking. At the time of writing, he is still undergoing treatment but is already wishing he were out of there and back at home, probably so he can organise the next Canal work party. On behalf of all Society members, we wish Pete a speedy recovery.

Structural repairs

The heavy snow, the freeze and the intervening holiday season have recently limited the amount of work to Canal structures. As reported in the [last bulletin](#), the entire Hampshire pound has been lowered by around 150 mm (6") because of a leaking bank near Poulter's Bridge at Crookham. A contract to repair the bank will be tendered and remedial work will start as soon as possible. Fortunately, a closure of the Canal between Chequers and Poulter's bridges should not be necessary during these repairs.

Reopening of the Deepcut flight of locks (15 to 28) is now planned for early 2012. A significant amount of work here has to be done this year, including lock chamber and wing wall repairs (*wing walls are those walls on the outside of the lock gates – Ed*), lock gate replacement and bank protection. Under the recently agreed Surrey County Council interim capital programme, the gates in locks 12 and 17 are being replaced (as are those in locks 1, 4, 5 and 6 further down the Canal). The Canal Society work party has very nearly completed the Lock 17 upper wing wall reconstruction, although the lock chamber brickwork repointing still needs to be done at a later time with agreement with the BCA and SCC. Replacement of the lower wing walls at locks 19 and 20 will now be done under the HCC/SCC Term Contract that comes into effect from April 2011, under the management of Hampshire County Council.

For more about the work underway and recently completed, please see the [Winter 2010 Basingstoke Canal News](#).

Volunteering News

Brookwood Clean-up

Since raising concerns about the overgrown state of the Basingstoke Canal in the Brookwood area last summer, Society committee member Kathryn Dodington decided to do something about it. With the support of the Society and the Canal authority, she rounded up a group of local residents who, with the help of a couple of Canal rangers, recently cleared a section of bank near Heath Drive (between the A322 and Sheets Heath Bridge) of rubbish and overhanging trees. "It was quite amazing how much willow and alder we managed to move" said Kathryn. "I am most grateful to all those who helped in making Brookwood look that much tidier. We plan to do more of this work in future". A local newspaper [recorded the event](#).

If you would like help in future Brookwood work parties, then please contact Kathryn at brookwood.cleanup@gmail.com



A much improved section of the Brookwood pound after a day's hard work by local volunteers

Newbury Working Party Group at Odiham

A small group of members of the [Newbury Working Party group](#) recently gathered at Odiham over a weekend to help with bank clearance there, with Duncan Paine acting as Society host in Peter Redway's absence. A 250 metre section from the Water Witch pub was cleared of hawthorn and brambles and the cuttings burned. "The Canal looks quite wide there now" says Duncan. Our thanks go to NWPG for their support.

SHCS on Radio Surrey

Roger Cansdale, who edits the [Basingstoke Canal News](#), the quarterly newsletter of the Canal Society, was recently interviewed twice by Nick Wallis on the BBC Radio Surrey Breakfast programme. The programme had picked up on a [BCN editorial](#) that had expressed surprise and some dismay at an instruction from Hampshire County Council to stop work on Deepcut lock 17, where volunteers had nearly finished repairing the upper wing walls. Roger explained the Canal Society's concern that volunteers might lose their enthusiasm for working on the canal if they felt that bureaucracy was being heavy handed and unsympathetic to their cause.

After the first interview, a meeting took place between the Canal Society and the County Council owners of the Canal, at which the problems were aired. During a second radio piece on the Canal, Rod Edbrooke of Surrey County Council explained that the problems had largely arisen because of the absence due to sickness of critical personnel and Roger was able to confirm that the matter appeared to have been resolved and that hopefully a way forward had been found to avoid this happening again.

Working Party Dates

The regular SHCS working party meets every second and fourth weekend of the month (ie every two weeks mostly). We would be more certain of the forthcoming schedule had Peter Redway (who is also the work party organiser) not been taken ill, however it will be probably something like this:

- 22nd/23rd January – Lock 17 finishing off and bank clearing at Odiham
- 22nd/23rd January – Back clearing at Odiham by visiting group "[Bit In The Middle](#)" WRG
- 12th/13th February – Bank clearing or Runway's End permanent mooring
- 26th/27th February – Runway's End permanent mooring

We continue to need more working party volunteers. Do please come and join us! In particular, we urgently need a team leader to run a second regular working party, to share the load with our existing volunteers and to carry out a variety of essential tasks on the Canal.

If you think you have what it takes, then please call David Junkisen (in Peter's absence) on 0208 941 0685.

Other News

Petition to support increased funding of the Basingstoke Canal

The Canal Society was pleased to hear that Kevin Daley of the Mytchett, Frimley Green and Deepcut Society has recently raised a [petition](#) in support of increased funding for the Canal. The petition, lodged with Surrey Heath Borough Council states: “We the undersigned urge Surrey Heath Borough Council to fully meet the funding requirements requested by the Basingstoke Canal Authority... For many years SHBC have failed to meet their funding requirements, and this has contributed to a degradation of the canal environment.” Philip Riley, vice-chairman of the Canal Society says “This is an admirable initiative, and I urge members and others to sign the petition.” To read the petition in full and to sign it please go to the [SHBC petition web page](#) (*You must live, work or study within the Surrey Heath area in order to sign – Ed*)

Canal-side Redevelopments

There are some significant redevelopments planned for areas adjacent to the Basingstoke Canal in which the Society is taking a keen interest. In addition to the [Aldershot Urban Extension](#) reported on in the [last bulletin](#), (which proposes building 4500 houses on military land) there are two others which the Society believes could bring the Canal distinct benefits, and are lobbying interested groups accordingly.

The first is the [Deepcut redevelopment](#), which proposes an additional 1200 houses on military land that borders the Canal, and where the BCA’s dry dock facility and lock keeper’s cottage are located. The Society believes that this development is an excellent opportunity for the provision of improved boating and recreational facilities on the Canal side, and also for additional water supplies to the Canal. A public exhibition of the Deepcut redevelopment has taken place, and the public consultation period has recently closed.

The second is the proposed redevelopment of the [Brewery Road car park](#) (and adjacent [footbridge replacement](#)) in Woking that will provide office space for a World Wildlife Fund headquarters, with a publicly accessible learning resource centre and a garden Piazza among other works. The Society again regards this as a good opportunity for improved mooring and other boating facilities to be provided.

The outcome of the Society’s campaigns will be reported in future bulletins and [Basingstoke Canal News](#).

New John Pinkerton Winter Maintenance Team Leader

As reported in the last Bulletin, the Society trip boat [John Pinkerton](#) is going through its winter maintenance programme. The leader of the maintenance team for the last few years, Peter Phillips, has decided to step down, but he is helping his successor, John Wharf (who is very knowledgeable about the JP), to find his feet in this important role. For those that don’t know, the maintenance team leader is pivotal in identifying what work needs to be done, organising the team to do it, and procuring (generally obscure) services and parts (anything from gas-leak sensors to rubber feet for chairs, for example); all to ensure that the boat meets the increasingly stringent requirements of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), the regulatory body for public vessels. If the appropriate maintenance standards are not met, then the boat simply cannot be used for public cruises. We thank John for being brave enough to step up to the plate, and Pete for his contribution.

Forthcoming events

Here are some dates for your diary:

- Chobham Social Meetings at The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, take place at **8pm** on the **third Wednesday** of the month. Non members and friends are very welcome. Please call David Millett on 01252 617364 for more information. For a map and for more details about the talks, please refer to the [BCN](#)
 - **19th January 2011** - Liam D’Arcy Brown - ‘The Grand Canal of China’
 - **16th February 2011** – Roger Squires - ‘The Suez Canal - Past and Present’
 - **16th March 2011** – Roger Clay – ‘The Hidden Avon’

Have your say..

Please send any feedback you may have about this bulletin to the [bulletin editor](#). The copy date for bulletin articles is the **last day of each month**. Publication (if it occurs) will take place approximately in the middle of the following month.