

## Chairman's Update

July 2022

Phew—What a scorcher! We've certainly seen the temperatures rise over the last month. I spent the hottest afternoon training volunteer Riverboat drivers. I wasn't sure whether it was the best place to be in the heat, but it was very pleasant and of course we had taken the necessary precautions.

### Working Parties

Despite the heat our working parties have continued to work across the area with recent activity being at Draycott, Sandiacre, where a vehicle barrier post has been constructed and at Anglers Lane, Spondon where the weeds have taken over in earnest. We are also working at Borrowash and Breaston as usual. The absence of rain may have slowed the growth, but the teams are keen to keep on top of it.



As part of our programme the Trust has been asked to provide clear guidance in the form of a policy as to how we manage maintenance of paths, etc. We are all aware that Council and

Highways policies are changing to allow less frequent mowing and therefore the encouragement of native plants to seed and spread. As an amateur beekeeper I know how important it is to have native flowers available throughout the year. However we don't want to encourage non native or invasive species and we need to promote our cause by actively looking after the canal path where we are in control. The public expects to be able to use the path and we could lose their support if this is jeopardised. If you have a view please let me know and it will feed into our deliberations.

Currently we are looking to identify areas where wildlife needs protection (such as Draycott) and amend our practises to give the wildlife more of a chance.



Anglers Lane after clearing the pathway

### Cottages

I'm delighted that the Trust was able to say thank you to all the volunteers who helped with the Cottages over the 5 years of restoration. What better way than to enjoy a "High Tea" at the Café to discuss the challenges, disappointments and above all the fun and camaraderie we had over that time. It went very well, although not particularly good for our figures as the clotted cream and chocolate cake demonstrated. It was particularly pleasing to invite Joyce Ollivant, who has been delivering snacks as encouragement (ice cream in summer, sausage rolls in winter) to volunteers every day of the restoration.







There's very little work to do there now. We just need to equip the "museum" with artefacts and the storyboards. Thanks to Chris RFP for organising the defibrillator grant, which sees a new machine in place and fully grant funded. We're still working on the EV charging, but that takes a bit longer.



We have some work to do on the canal line by the Cottages to make it tidier.

We've hired a mini digger to smooth the overflow car parking area and in readiness for the horses hitching

rail.

We're also tidying up the hole at the end of the cottages waste water culvert so that there is a safe lid on it. Don and Brian have been building it up ready for a sleeper capping. That will allow us to remove the fencing, etc.

We are making progress at **Sandiacre Lock**, but this is with regard to the movement of the sewer. We've undertaken the tree survey, which with protected trees is giving us a problem accommodating the inlet from the cottages between our lock and the Erewash. A positive meeting with STW contractors has charted a way forward, but it requires Dave Savidge to undertake a levels survey to allow a detailed design to go forward. The most positive thing is the desire of STW to get this done and to work with us to find practical solutions. We edge slowly, but surely to a solution.

At **Draycott** we have located a key land drain—easier with so little water—and can progress the design of the canal length and hopefully get that going again. We are also looking at working on growth in the "receptor area" to make sure it will accommodate lots of voles next year. Looks like a need for some gardening.



No, it's not the Great Escape!

## The Derby Riverboat

Progress continues with the launch of an able bodied passenger service. The bollards have been installed—probably sufficient to hold an ocean liner, but the fencing and ladder access is now expected in the first week of August.

We've also installed a cover for the foredeck. With so many trees around our moorings it has been a challenge keeping the guano at bay—hopefully this will help. It certainly improves the look and we also have a promise of sponsored printing of boards to protect the windows.





The sooner we can establish a mooring under Causey Bridge the better. During a warm holiday Saturday in July we were cast adrift by unhelpful persons unknown. Thanks to the report by a member of the public and a couple of paddle boarders we were able to retrieve the boat and get it back to the mooring—thankfully without any damage. It appears that nettles, brambles and a very high security wall were not sufficient, so the sooner we are in secure moorings, chained to the bollards the better.

Planning permission for the Phase 2 pontoon has been submitted and seems to be progressing well, with a decision expected in late August.

### Riverside Study

We have a meeting for a review of the final report in late July and the report is looking optimistic. In advance of a decision to apply for second round Levelling Up Funds, we have been updating MPs in the area, who have all expressed support for the project.

### Events

We attended the “Urban Forest” event in Derby city centre in late July. This gave environmental organisations a chance to demonstrate their projects. We demonstrated our Artemis remote controlled plastic recovery boat that is evident in the photo. We got a lot of support and interest in the Riverboat and our aims, but the limited footfall these days meant we were not overbusy.

Future events this year are:

National IWA Festival at Burton 27-29th August

Shardlow Inland Port Festival—10/11th September.

### Members Meetings

The portrayal of challenges faced in the Canal cottages restoration was well supported. Our next meeting will be the last before the August break and will be a tour of the city centre outlining the current plans to enhance the water offering worked through with Council support. These developments will be a mix of Derby sponsored flood defence measures and our own developments which are the subject of the Atkins report. We have been working with the CGI department of the University to create visuals for this work and will share it with those who attend. These changes will involve taking down buildings and creating activities for the public within the flood defences and will transform how we see the city centre.

If you want to join us just meet at 7pm on Tues 26th July outside the Silk Mill—Museum of Making. I will be leading the short tour and we will end at the Riverboat at causeway Bridge opposite the Silk Mill. I expect the tour to last an hour.

Indoor Meetings at the Draycott Cottages, First Floor

September	7.30pm	AGM
Tues 27th Sept	7.30pm	including Dave Savidge talking on WRG work camps
Tues 25th Oct	7.30pm	Brian Dale      Railway Accidents
Tues 22nd Nov	7.30pm	Barry Watson    Operating Canal Hotel Boats

Take care and I hope to see you soon.

Chris Madge

