

Chairman's Update

May 2022

We're getting into holiday season now and I'm pleased to relate that I'm typing this on my shareboat as we cruise the Ashby. It's a good reminder of what we are all working for as our emphasis turns back to stretches of canal from the cottages restoration. I can remember the time when I'd have to find a pub and plug in the laptop to be able to send and receive messages. Now things have moved on and I can do it all via wifi on the boat. This is the benefit of having a group with differing skills working to a common purpose.

Cottages

At last! Yes the café is now open and early business has been brisk. For those looking to visit they are open until 4pm every day and opening at 8am on weekdays, 9am on Saturday and 10am on Sunday. All the fitting out is now complete in the kitchen and the café itself looks great—as many of you will already know.

We had a trial run by welcoming 40 people from restorations across the north of England—the Northern Canals Association. It was a beautiful day and so attendees were able to make the most of the extra outdoor seating as you can see. We were also able to show other restorations what we had achieved and we received a lot of compliments and congratulations. Our next members' meeting on 24th May covers the restoration of the Beeston Lock cottages, so we'll be able to compare the approach and see if we can learn from them. Having visited them in the past they seem to have developed a "community garden" type of approach, with allotment style plots and beekeeping as well as a café and heritage display. Should be an interesting meeting—details are below.



So with the normal frantic last minute rush we achieved the opening on 7th May as planned. The mayor of Erewash, Donna Briggs, attended to formally open the café at 10am. It was very well attended so it was fortunate we put on extra parking on site. We also got some excellent publicity from Radio Derby and Central ITV News, who turned up with a camera and reporter. We had an excellent feature on the evening news, which showed the result of about 14,000 hours of volunteer effort over more than four years. It is such a visible achievement that it helps us to sell the restoration to all the people we



need to help us.

So the painting is done, the mini kitchen installed in the meeting room and the rooms are starting to be let to groups. Even the museum area is moving on with plasterers now starting earlier than planned, later this month, and we hope to complete the fit out by the end of June. So if you have any items you think may be displayed please let me know.

The Derby Riverboat

I have to report some progress on getting the riverboat operational. We are currently working on a phase 1 limited service, which will see able bodied passengers using a limited service from Causey Bridge. The good news is that we have a promised date for installation of a 32 Amp recharging electric point of early June. This earlier than we expected! We are also expecting security fencing and bollards to be installed in June, which will mean we have the physical requirements for Phase 1.

The focus is now moving to a legal licence to use the land at Causey Bridge, which is owned by the Council and to get the licences in place. At present we need to licence the boat and each registered boatman. Each boatman needs to be RYA trained (already done), DBS checked and complete a medical health check. As the power to recharge the boat is imminent we can start training runs in earnest and get these aspects cleared. At last we seem to be getting close to a real launch.

However, the planning permission has not yet progressed as we are still waiting final designs for the boarding platform, but this and the necessary surveys and assessments for the planning application are moving forward gradually. We hope the application can be submitted in early June with a decision due 8 weeks later and construction a few weeks after that. Fingers crossed!

Riverside Study

Our first review of progress on the Atkins report on river development in Derby was positive, with a great deal of support being recognised. As part of this development we have been working with a group driven by Sir Tim Smit—founder of the Eden Project in Cornwall—and expect to get extra traction from the connection of “blue and green” developments in the city and beyond.

Working Parties

David has been organising teams across the line and ensuring our responsibilities to maintain the canal path are met. Mowing and tidying has taken place at Borrowash, Spondon, Draycott and Breaston and the results are evident to all. The picture shows the tractor and mower in operation between Station Road, Borrowash and Spondon Bourne.



We've also taken the opportunity to extend the wing walls at Borrowash Lock so that everything is ready for the relocation of the sewer there.

With the next major push planned for **Sandiacre** we have continued to prepare for Severn Trent works there.

We have undertaken the CCTV survey of the pipes, and surveys of existing manholes, with a surprise or two, but no shocks. The trial pits have been dug in three locations to accommodate new manholes where the new sewer changes direction. This shows undisturbed ground as expected and no contamination in the soil samples analysed. We've also undertaken a habitat survey with no dangers to the environment identified due to the works. As I write this we are waiting to see if we need to do a DNA test of the water in the lock chamber for Greater Crested Newts. We are also awaiting an arboricultural survey to make sure no trees will be harmed by the works.

Once these are complete we expect to get a more detailed design and costing to move the sewer by Severn Trent. Watch this space.



While we wait for these surveys, etc. at Sandiacre the working party team have been undertaking the challenge of removing the tree stump alongside the lock chamber. It's no easy task to do this with picks, shovels and a handsaw!

Chellaston

No further progress has been made at Chellaston, but the Trust is now looking to re-establish contacts within Derby City Council following the main supporter—Ross McCrystal—losing his seat in the local elections. Of course South Derbyshire District Council continue to be supportive.

Members Meetings

It was a case of "after the Lord Mayor's Show" with our last meeting. Having entertained 40 members for the first meeting we had only a dozen at our last one. I am concerned that we get sufficient numbers to make meetings viable. Now the café is operational we plan to open the café for service (probably on a licensed basis) each month. However it is important that we get the support of members so that we can justify staff wages and pay the speaker.

I've canvassed some feedback after the last meeting and we are looking again at speaker topics to make them more relevant. I'd like to get further feedback at the 24th May meeting so we can make it as appealing as possible. It may be that we look to replace June's topic with a presentation on the cottages construction?

Meetings start at 7.30pm.

Tues 24th May	Michael Crane, Stewart Craven	Beeston Lock Cottages
Tues 28th June	Rodney Hall	The coldest place on earth
Tues 26th July	Annual Walk	Derby, plans for development of the river and visiting the Riverboat

Can you help?

I'd like to repeat the request from last month as I've had no feedback to date.

We are looking for the assistance of any member, who can join us at the events below to welcome the public at our stands, either by promoting fun games or by talking about what we are doing. You don't need lots of knowledge, just a desire to help and a friendly demeanour. Even an hour over lunch (and particularly during the three day August event at Shobnal Meadow) would be most welcome. Training is available and visitors are always fascinated by the "story so far"!

Spirit of Chellaston—18th June

National IWA Festival at Burton 27-29th August

Shardlow Inland Port Festival—10th September.

Take care and I hope to see you soon.

Chris Madge

