

BROADSHEET

Magazine of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Society



Stour Aqueduct Stourton

Photo by Ian Cowdale



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BROADSHEET

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CONTENTS

Page

5	<i>Editorial.</i>
6	<i>2020 A Year for Decision</i>
7	<i>Spring Cruise</i>
8	<i>Storm Dennis at Stourton and Hyde</i>
9	<i>Membership Renewal 2020 Vacant Society Position - Advertising</i>
10	<i>Rishi Sunak Budget: Chancellor to cut Red Diesel Subsidy</i>
11	<i>Late Victorian Ambition</i>
15	<i>A Statement from Julie Sharman our Chief Operating Officer</i>
16	<i>Environment Agency River Thames Waterways Team</i>
17	<i>New Chair appointed by the All Party Group for The Waterways</i>
18	<i>Boaters Elect their Council Reps</i>
19	<i>Restoring Todbrook Reservoir</i>
20	<i>Oil Covered swans rescued after latest Black Country fuel spill</i>
21	<i>West Midlands canals to help heat hospitals in renewable energy drive</i>

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Editorial

Well we have weathered Ciara and Dennis and probably have escaped the worst of Jorge. Hopefully that is it now, as winter works on the Staffs and Worcs must have been affected by the weather, though fortunately there hasn't been any reported damage to the canal. Unfortunately the blighted Macclesfield has been closed again, this time between Marple Junction and Bridge No.4 to investigate possible instability of the embankment. Perhaps by chance the older contour canals are more robust by design.

Bearing in mind that the main canal activity commences at Easter, all stoppages on the Staffs and Worcs will hopefully be cleared by then and very soon our Spring Cruise will be with us and we will be visiting the Anchor Inn at Coven. If you want to come along and join in with the meal on Easter Sunday please contact Mary and Derek Overton. Further details inside.

Colin Beard has put a timely reminder in this issue that March is the time to renew your membership of the Society. Make life easy for him, fill in the form, send the money by post or pay at the next Bradmore. For yet another year, the subscription rate remains the same, which is an absolute bargain, because to my knowledge, it has stayed the same for at least ten years.

A couple of the Society's posts are also flagged up in this issue. Following on from his announcement at the last Bradmore meeting, Chris Dyche, as promised has put into writing his intentions about continuing as Treasurer, giving us food for thought well before the next AGM. In addition, we are looking for someone to take on the role of managing the Broadsheet/Website advertising role from Colin Cartwright.

I can't agree more with Phil Clayton's comment at the beginning of an article he sent me for publication, that it would certainly have altered the southern half of the Staffs & Worcs if it had come about! It is a real stretch of the imagination to envisage a transhipment basin at Aldersley Junction and water space to handle 400 ton barges.

When I heard about how the combined emergency services dealt with the boats found on fire in Teddington Lock in the early hours, (and actually why they were there) I considered that what we know so far should be recounted in Broadsheet, as clearly it was dealt with in a professional way and no doubt prevented much more substantial damage. So credit and recognition where it is due.

I was interested to hear who has been recently elected into the eleven posts on the CRT Governing Council, following the 14th February elections. I was also fascinated with the how many nominations and voters were involved for each category of post. Have a look at the results inside and see what conclusions you can draw from them.

A note for your diary...You will see that there is no April Bradmore meeting advertised on the back page. This is because the 13th April is Easter Monday and we thought it would be prudent to miss it out as we guess many of our membership will be elsewhere.

Ian Cowdale

2020: A Year For Decision

Those of you who were at our February Bradmore meeting will know that I spoke briefly regarding the serious need for us to review our Society's future at the coming A.G.M in June.

June's A.G.M. will mark 41 years since I was elected to the post of Treasurer of our Society. During these years, I also served as Chairman for four years; served a term as Society President; and organised the Society's Summer Outings for fifteen years. Time and circumstances march on, and I have decided that now is the right time for us all to take a hard look at the Society's current situation, with a view to making important decisions regarding our future.

You all know that when Graham Fisher ended his term as Society Chairman, he was unable to find anyone willing to fill the posts of either Chairman or Vice Chairman, and despite pleas at all A.G.M.'s, this has remained the case.

Therefore, to ensure that the Society continued to function successfully our Secretary, Ann, and I have continued to undertake all the commitments that these roles require. Representing the Society at meetings and functions, and commenting on situations that have arisen. We have also expedited important matters of concern to the Society, and between us, we have achieved a number of successes

During the past few years a number of other committee posts have also become vacant, with the result that we have been unable to fully represent our Society, and its members, as well as we would have liked.

Our waterways are changing rapidly, both in their management and priorities. I consider it imperative therefore that our Society is able to go forward, representing the aims, views and requirements of its members, and at the same time championing our nation's waterways; they are a priceless asset.

Decisions to be made at our A.G.M. in June are therefore vital for the future of our Society. We need a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, and a strong new committee, fully able to take our Society forward. Our Canal, together with all other waterways across the country, will face many new challenges during the next few years, and it is imperative that our Society's future **MUST** be secured, so that we can continue to safeguard and promote our waterways, and also maintain the legacy that so many have worked hard to secure during the past 61 years of our Society.

For me personally, the time has come to consider my domestic commitments and plan ahead. I have decided therefore that, if elected, I will serve as your Treasurer for one more year, but *I WILL* step down at the 2021 A.G.M. I will complete the accounts for the 2020/21 financial year and also commence the accounts for the first three months of 2021. Our accounts will therefore be in good order for handing over to a new treasurer.

A sad decision for me in many ways; the Society has been a part of my life for so many years. But time and circumstances move on!

Chris Dyche.

Spring Cruise Notice Easter Weekend

Meal at the Anchor at Coven

Easter Sunday, 12th April 2020

This year's Spring Cruise has been arranged for us to meet at Coven. An evening meal has been booked at the adjacent Anchor Pub for 5.00p.m and is open to any Society member whether attending by boat or car etc.

If you would like to attend the meal would you please ring Mary or Derek Overton on 01746 718 571.

THE ANCHOR INN
Brewwood Road,
Cross Green, Wolverhampton, West Midlands,



Image from
The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal as it was
Alan T Smith MBE

27.000

1904

'The Anchor Inn' at Cross Green, here on the canal and the main road from Wolverhampton to Stafford, now by-passed by the A449.

A selection from the menu

Sunday Roasts

All of our meat roasts are served with yorkshire puddings, smoky beef dripping roast potatoes, thyme-roasted carrots, roasted parsnips, beetroot, butternut squash, broccoli and as much gravy as you like.

Sirloin of Beef aged 21 days £13.50

Marinated Lamb Rump with rosemary and mint £13.95

Hand-carved breast of turkey with a pancetta crumb and a lemon and thyme stuffing wrapped in bacon £11.95

Slow roasted tomato & almond bake with green beans, tomato sauce, roasted seeds, ruffled roast potatoes, thyme roasted carrots, red onion & roasted butternut (V) 11.95

Roast trio - for one

Sirloin of beef, breast of turkey and pork belly and crackling wrapped in bacon £14.50

Mains

Hunter's chicken* chargrilled chicken breast, topped with smoked Cheddar and streaky bacon, with roasted Portobello mushrooms in a smoky tomato sauce, served with triple-cooked chips and a barbecue sauce £12.75

Spiced squash coconut curry with red peppers & black beans in a Jerk seasoning, topped with roasted chilli and served with turmeric rice (VE) £11.50

Fish and chips*beer-battered cod, served with triple-cooked chips, mushy peas and tartare sauce £13.25

Seared fillet of sea bass* with a pea & smoked pancetta veloute', broccoli and spring onion mash £16.95

Chicken & mushroom pie* in a chardonnay, woodland mushroom & leek sauce, topped with puff pastry, served with spring onion mash, roasted carrots and green vegetables £11.75

Slow-cooked beef & porcini bourguignon* with parsley mash potato, roasted carrots and a Wyke farm Cheddar & thyme dumpling £14.95

Storm Dennis at Hyde and Stourton

As the editor has commented there have been no reports of serious damage on the Staffs and Worcs, it was perhaps more by luck and good fortune.

Ian has been active with his camera again and captured a fallen tree at Stourton,

By chance I happen to be a facebook friend of the current custodian of the lock cottage at Hyde. After Storm Dennis had passed he posted some pictures of his underwater back garden

Fortunately the interior was not flooded to the same extent and I understand that it has not suffered extensive damage.

It was also reported that the canal above Stewponey had overtopped and was running around the lock.

The Cottages at Whittington also suffered flooding,

The lower two photographs are from the Kinver Past and Present: Uncensored Facebook page



Membership Renewal 2020

Once again, it's that time of year when I remind you that the society membership is due for renewal on 1st April 2020. Our membership subscription again remains unchanged, as follows:-

SINGLE MEMBERSHIP £13.00

COMBINED MEMBERSHIP £13.50
(e.g. Husband & Wife)

JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP £1.00
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You will find a renewal form enclosed with this copy of Broadsheet. I look forward seeing you at Bradmore on 9th March, or to receiving your remittance in the post addressed to:

14 White Harte Park, Kinver, South Staffs, DY7 6HN.

Thank you:- *Colin Beard, Membership Secretary*

Vacant Society Position - Advertising

Following on from Colin Cartwright having to reluctantly relinquish the post of organising our Broadsheet and Website advertising, we are looking for someone to take over this role. Advertising income is a significant amount for the Society and contributes to the publishing of Broadsheet, which in turn keeps down the cost of membership of the Society.

As you can imagine all Colin's files are complete and up to date. Apart from accommodating any changes during the year, the substantive part of the role is concentrated over a couple of months of the year.

If you are interested in assisting with this post, please speak to me; Chris Dyche.

Thank you

Chris Dyche

IWA campaign success eases passage restrictions at Frankton Locks

Oswestry Life - 21 February 2020

Following a 10-month campaign by the Shrewsbury District & North Wales Branch of the Inland Waterways Association (IWA), Canal & River Trust has agreed to extend the opening times of Frankton Locks for the summer 2020 season starting on 30th March 2020. The extension, from the current 12am-2pm daily opening to 9am-1pm daily, should improve boater access to the Montgomery Canal.

Particularly in view of the extensive restoration work on the Montgomery Canal to extend the limit of navigation for powered craft beyond Gronwen Wharf, IWA is keen to help more boats use the rural waterway. The current Montgomery Canal Conservation Strategy allows for 2500 boat visitors a year onto the canal; however, it is thought that the actual number of visitors is only between 1100 and 1200 per annum.

Michael Haig, chairman of IWA Shrewsbury District & North Wales Branch, said, "Canal & River Trust's agreement to double the opening hours at Frankton locks should make things considerably easier for boaters wishing to explore the tranquility of the Montgomery Canal, and perhaps more boaters will be encouraged to visit the IWA Silver Propeller Challenge destination at Gronwen Wharf."

"Additional advantages of the revised opening times are that boaters will not have to moor above or below the locks waiting for a noon opening, and the additional hours should spread water demand over a longer period, reducing the problems of low water at the top lock."

For the foreseeable future, the requirement for both advance bookings and for a minimum stay of one night with a maximum of 14 nights will remain in force. Boaters wishing to book passage through Frankton Locks should contact CRT no later than 10am on the day of passage. Boaters can do this via CRT's website at <https://licensing.canalrivertrust.org.uk> or by calling 03030 404040.

Rishi Sunak budget: Chancellor to cut red diesel subsidy

carbonbrief.org - 26 February 2020

There is some speculation in the UK press about the contents of the upcoming budget, soon to be announced by the recently appointed chancellor Rishi Sunak. The Times says he is "preparing new environment taxes" including restrictions on the "red diesel" used by some off-road vehicles and machinery, for which the chancellor is expected to cut subsidies. The paper reports that according to "allies" of the chancellor he "is shifting more of the cost of meeting climate change targets from consumers to business as he finalises the budget". It also notes Sunak is considering backing off from ending the 10-year freeze on fuel duty "amid a mounting backlash from Tory MPs". The [Financial Times](#), on the other hand, reports that the chancellor will delay "some of the government's biggest decisions", including fuel duties, until the autumn budget.

Meanwhile, ahead of Brexit negotiations starting next week, [Reuters](#) reports that the EU will say the UK must uphold EU climate change targets and environmental standards following the transition period. While both the UK and the EU have launched ambitious climate targets, there have been consistent concerns from environmental groups that the UK will be forced to accept lower standards in order to agree post-Brexit trade deals, the newswire notes.

Late Victorian Ambition

While researching another topic recently, I came across this article in the 'Gloucestershire Chronicle' of 1st May, 1897, which I thought might be of interest to readers of 'Broadsheet'. A late-Victorian scheme to try and improve trade along the waterways between Bristol and Wolverhampton. Evidently it came to nothing but would certainly have altered the southern half of the Staffs & Worcs if it had come about!

Phil Clayton

CANAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

At a meeting of Wolverhampton Traders, a short time ago, held to consider suggestions for the improvement of the water communicating between the Midlands and Bristol, a resolution was passed instructing Mr. E. D. Marten M. I.C. E., (engineer to the Severn Commissioners) to report upon the practicability of a scheme for widening the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal between Aldersley Junction, near Wolverhampton and Stourport-on-Severn, so as admit small sea going vessels. Mr. Marten has now presented a full report on the subject.

Describing first of all the existing waterway, he says the waterway from the Avonmouth Dock at Bristol to Wolverhampton is 102 miles in length, and is a very direct navigation. The course from Avonmouth to Gloucester - 35 miles - is along the tidal portion of the River Severn as far as Sharpness, where there are large and important docks, and thence along the Gloucester and Berkeley Ship Canal, the length of river between Sharpness and Gloucester having been abandoned many years ago owing to the difficulty of its navigation.

At Gloucester there are docks which accommodate vessels up to about 600 tons burden which trade between that city and continental ports. Thence the canalised portion of the Severn which is under the control of the Severn Commissioners is entered, and for the next 30 miles to Worcester Bridge it has a minimum depth of 10 feet, and is capable of accommodating sea-going steamers of 300 tons, or barges of 400 tons burden. From Worcester Bridge to Stourport -12 miles - the canalisation is continued by means of three sets of locks and weirs, and has a navigable depth of seven feet at low summer level.

From Stourport to Aldersley Junction near Wolverhampton-a distance of 25 miles, the route is by way of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, and on this Canal only the narrow canal boat, carrying from 25 - 35 tons, is capable of passing. The Severn at Stourport to the summit pound on which Aldersley is

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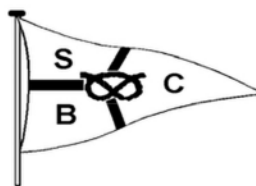
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situated has a total rise is 287 feet, which is overcome by 31 locks. At Aldersley there is the junction of the Birmingham Canal, and thence by a flight of 21 locks and rise of $132\frac{1}{2}$ feet in about two miles the Wolverhampton pound of the Birmingham Canal is reached. This is connected with the whole system of that navigation as it ramifies through the manufacturing district of the Black Country.

The existing locks on the Severn above Worcester are capable of accommodating barges of from 170 to 200 tons, but are only used by trows carrying from 70 to 90 tons. The explanation of this is that all traffic between Wolverhampton and the Severn ports must traverse the canal in the narrow canal boat, but for the purpose of navigating the Severn tideway below Sharpness it must be carried in the trow of 70 to 90 ton. The above described narrow canal boat is not suited for use in the tideway.

Consequently transshipment must necessarily take place every journey between Wolverhampton and Bristol. This transshipment cannot be done in open river, and is carried out, therefore, in a basin situated between the Severn and the entrance proper to the canal, and it is the restricted lock entrance from the Severn to this basin, which is only half the size of the locks on the Severn. This prevents a larger class of vessel being used upon the Severn.

The Severn locks themselves between Worcester and Stourport are 100 feet long from gate to gate, with a minimum depth over sills of six feet. Their width is 20 feet at water surface and 16 feet at bottom. By a simple and comparatively inexpensive engineering operation the bottoms of these locks may readily be widened to about $19\frac{1}{2}$ feet, thus enabling the vessel passing through to be built on the best lines for carrying cargo, and to have a beam of least 19 feet. There is a question as to whether such steamer would be sufficiently seaworthy to go to London, Liverpool, Glasgow, but so far as Bristol is concerned, both the steamer and the barges would make the voyage without difficulty.

Mr Marten recommends, this scheme for adoption : -

- (a) The widening of the bottoms of the three locks on the Severn to $19\frac{1}{2}$ feet.
- (b) The improvement of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal from Stourport to the junction the Birmingham Canal at Aldersley, near Wolverhampton, so as to accommodate the class of vessel above described; and
- (c) the construction of a transshipping basin or dock at Aldersley Junction, so that goods collected at the various works lining the Birmingham Canal in Wolverhampton and the surrounding district, and brought thence down the latter canal in small boats, may there be transhipped into the large-sized vessels, which would then convey them along the improved navigation to Bristol or elsewhere.

Mr. Marten estimates the total cost of such a scheme (including the transshipping basin, the small alteration of the Severn locks referred to, and also an ample

provision for all ordinary Parliamentary proceedings) at £360,000. The estimate is for a double-line canal, where large vessels can pass one another at any point except in one or two places in the town of Kidderminster. If the single line canal with frequent passing places after the model of the Suez Canal should be considered sufficient, a material reduction of the above estimate would be possible.

He estimates the time necessary for the completion of the work at two-and-a-half years, a period which must include three summers. He is strongly of opinion that it would be futile to attempt any scheme for smaller vessels, and any larger scheme would involve the construction of new locks on the Severn, and the deepening of the channel of that river.

He has made a careful estimate of the cost involved in constructing a navigation to bring a three-hundred ton sea-going steamer to Wolverhampton, but the expenditure would be very considerable. The through toll on Class A and Class B goods from any point on the Birmingham Canal within four miles of Aldersley via the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and the Severn to Gloucester under existing agreement is 1s 6d, which is apportioned as under :-

To the Birmingham Canal Company, 2d ; to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Company, 7d ; the Severn Commissioners, 9d - 1s 6d. To this must be added the toll on the Gloucester and Berkeley Canal, and Bristol and other port dues - 1s 3d, thus making total tolls payable from any part on the Birmingham Canal within four miles of Aldersley to ship side at

Bristol. London, Liverpool, Glasgow, &c, 2s 9d, with 1-3d per ton per mile for any further distance on the Birmingham Canal.

A statement from Julie Sharman, our chief operating officer

Canal River Trust News - 21 February 2020

Our chief operating officer sends out a statement about the flooding across the UK. Please read through our safety advice for walkers and boaters during the heavy rains this week

Julie Sharman, chief operating officer of the Trust says, "Some parts of the UK are currently facing some of the worst flooding the country has seen. Across our waterways we are working hard with our partners at the Environment Agency in their efforts to ensure people's safety and minimise risk of damage to properties and businesses.

"Our teams are conducting inspections across the canals and river navigations we look after to identify and respond to the impact of the storms. Our priority is to ensure our waterways are safe for people to use, including towpaths, bridges, locks and other structures, and we have put closures in place where necessary for public safety until we can make the necessary repairs.

"With more adverse weather forecast over the coming days, please continue to let us know about any problems you see on our waterways by contacting the customer services team on 0303 040 4040 or by Twitter @CRTcontactus.

In an emergency contact the emergency services/Environment Agency's Flood-line 0345 988 1188."

Environment Agency River Thames Waterways Team

SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT: Emergency closure of Teddington Lock

February 26 2020

In the early hours of this morning (Wednesday 26 February) three boats moored downstream of Teddington Lock caught fire, two of which came loose from their moorings. These were pushed upstream by the tide towards our lock where London Fire and Rescue Service attended and managed the incident. The remains of two vessels are now preventing use of the lock which is closed until further notice. We are controlling the pollution risk and working with the boat owners and moorings operator to ensure the boats are removed as soon as river conditions make it safe to do so. We apologise for any inconvenience caused as a result of this incident.

The background of the incident was recounted by **Teddington RNLI who assisted: Teddington RNLI were paged at 0139 this morning (26 February 2020). Deputy Launch Authority Paul Roach says: ‘The coastguard tasked us to reports of two boats on fire in the vicinity of Teddington Lock and we were asked to ensure that there were no casualties in the water.’**

Fourteen volunteer crew arrived within 2-3 minutes of the pager and the D class lifeboat D785 *Peter Saw* was immediately launched. London Fire Brigade were already on scene and were attempting to douse the flames of the larger of the two boats, approximately 10 metres in length, which was in the downstream end of the larger of the two locks. They were also tackling a smaller fire on another boat aflame at the mouth of the smaller launch lock.

The second lifeboat, D743 *Olwen and Tom*, under the command of Teddington RNLI helm, Angus Prentice, was subsequently launched and conducted a comprehensive search downstream of the lock to ensure no one had been swept towards Swan Island in the strong flow. Jon Chapman, helm of the *Peter Saw*, confirmed with London Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade and London Coastguard that there were no casualties in the water and both boats returned to the lifeboat station at 0240.

Volunteer crew Samantha Armatage drove the tractor used to launch both boats. She says: ‘The scene was quite dramatic as there were two very large fires in the locks directly opposite the lifeboat station. There was a loud explosion shortly after the second boat was launched into the Thames and obviously your concern is for the crew, but I knew they would have kept to a safe distance.’

As helm Jon Chapman explained, ‘We kept a safe distance throughout and left the fire control to the experts. While checking there were no other boats on fire, we discovered another smaller vessel on fire some 100 metres upstream from the other incidents. This fire was reported and dealt with by London Fire Brigade.

‘This is certainly one of the more unusual shouts I have experienced. We were able to play a very useful part by being out on the water and locating the third fire, thus ensuring it was dealt with before it became a major risk to the boat and others around it.’ Currently both locks have been closed by the Environment Agency as both boats sank in the locks.

New Chair appointed by the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways

28 February 2020

The All Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways, which held its inaugural meeting for the new Parliament on Tuesday 25th February, has appointed Michael Fabricant MP as its new Chair.

At the meeting held in Westminster the Group also agreed key topics that would be addressed over the coming months, including the importance of protecting waterways heritage, how waterway restoration can act as a catalyst for much wider regeneration, and encouraging access to the waterways for sport and leisure use.

Michael Fabricant is well known for his support of the waterways in his Lichfield constituency, particularly the work of the Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust of which he is a patron, and is a previous recipient of IWA's Parliamentarian of the Year Award.

Among the vice chairmen and officers of the Group are a number of newly elected MPs as well as some long standing waterway supporters, including: Lord German OBE, Simon Baynes MP (South Clwyd), John Cryer MP (Leyton), Bill Esterson MP (Sefton Central), Mark Garnier MP (Wyre Forest), Jason McCartney MP (Colne Valley) and Craig Williams MP (Montgomeryshire).

Paul Rodgers, IWA National Chairman, said "IWA wholeheartedly welcomes Michael's appointment as Chair of the APPGW. He fully understands the importance of the UK's inland waterways and the ongoing need for adequate funding of the publicly owned waterways, and we look forward to working with him over the coming months and years."

Michael Fabricant MP said "It is not just boaters who make use of our canals and inland waterways, it is also those who enjoy exercising along towpaths, those who enjoy the tranquillity of our waterways whether they be in the countryside or city, and it is the wildlife that our waterways so encourage. I am looking forward to chairing this influential All Party Group and highlighting both in Parliament and elsewhere the importance of waterways to the economy and environment of our nation."

Boaters elect their Council Reps

Towpath Talk February 25, 2020

ELEVEN newly elected members of the Canal & River Trust's governing council will take up their seats later this month following the ballot which closed on February 14. The first meeting of the new council will take place on March 26, with successful candidates serving a four-year term.

There were 34 nominations for the four private boating representatives; 2040 valid votes were cast and the successful candidates were (in alphabetical order) Tim Allen, Helen Hutt, Dave Mendes da Costa and Phil Prettyman. From five nominations for the two business boating representatives, Heather Duncan and Carl Onens were successful; 117 votes were cast.

Volunteers will be represented by Ian McCarthy and David Williams who were elected from eight nominees with 498 votes cast. John Ellis will fill the single employees' post having been elected following four nominations; 490 votes were cast. David Kent was returned unopposed to the angling/fisheries post and Stella Ridgeway will represent the Friends of the Canal & River Trust.

CRT chairman Allan Leighton said: "I would like to thank all those who put themselves forward for election, and all those who voted for them. I'd also like to thank the outgoing Council members who have contributed to the success of the Trust these past years.

"The Council plays an important part in the governance of the Trust and brings new voices, ideas and perspectives to our work. As we continue our work to bring to life our 2000 miles of waterways, I very much look forward to working with the new representatives when they join us in March."

The Council is made up of elected and independently nominated members including the chairs of the six regional advisory boards. Together they reflect the wide appeal of the waterways from boating and angling through to walking and conservation. The Council is responsible for the appointment of trustees. It debates important points of principle to provide guidance and perspective from different stakeholders, suggesting issues of concern for the trustees to pursue, and acts as a sounding board for the trustees in relation to the development of proposals and strategy.

Review into dam collapse at Toddbrook Reservoir in Whaley Bridge due to be published soon

Buxton Advertiser – 26 February 2020

The Environment Secretary has confirmed the inquiry into the Toddbrook Reservoir dam collapse last summer has been concluded and a report will be released 'at the earliest possible opportunity'.

In August, about 1,500 people were evacuated from their Whaley Bridge homes when the dam partially collapsed - raising fears that millions of tonnes of water might flood the area. Engineers pumped water from the 300-million-gallon reservoir amid fears it could burst and swamp the town.

The review into the failing dam wall - announced in October - was led by former president of the Institution of Civil Engineers Professor David Balmforth. Approximately 1,500 residents of the town's 6,500 population were forced to leave their homes.

Restoring Toddbrook Reservoir

Canal & River Trust Update on repair project

We're currently working to enhance the resilience of the Toddbrook dam wall and spillway following damage caused in August 2019 after heavy rainfall.

The temporary works to the dam will be followed by improvements to the Todd Brook inlet channel at the head of the reservoir. This will provide greater control over how much water flows from the brook into the reservoir or around it via a bypass channel. The project includes installing a new footbridge across the inlet weir.

As the charity that cares for Toddbrook Reservoir and 2,000 miles of waterways across England and Wales, we're working closely with contractors Kier to keep the reservoir drained as preparations are made for its longterm repair – a process that is likely to take several years and cost around £10 million.

Works to the dam wall and auxiliary spillway. On Monday 6 January 2020, temporary works commenced on the dam's auxiliary spillway, which was damaged in the summer of 2019. A protective, waterproof nib (short wall) will be inserted all along the spillway crest which will reach down into the dam's clay core.

The spillway crest will be increased in height by just over one metre at either end and sturdy concrete waterproof barriers will be installed on the spillway slope to channel any overflowing water into the central undamaged section – which will be lined for extra protection. (*see image below*) The new features will ensure that the dam is secure in any extreme weather events. They will remain in place until permanent reconstruction of the dam is undertaken.

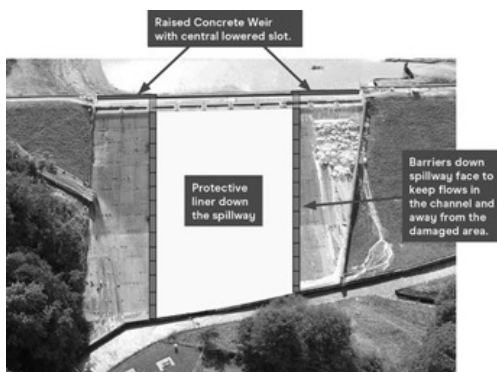
Improving the Todd Brook inlet and bypass channel. Toddbrook Reservoir is fed by a stream, Todd Brook, which is diverted at the head of the reservoir to either feed into the reservoir or along a bypass channel. The bypass channel runs along the north-west edge of the reservoir before feeding directly into the River Goyt.

After the emergency in August 2019, the masonry weir at the inlet channel was raised with the installation of mesh baskets filled with sandbags. In 2020, these will be replaced by a footbridge incorporating sluice gates, to provide a higher degree of control over water flows.

The Trust will continue to monitor the bypass channel closely, with expert hydrologists having carried out extensive modelling to assess the topography and the maximum capacity at all points along its course. During normal weather conditions, while the reservoir remains drained, all flow is sent down the bypass channel ie, none into the reservoir.

Long term plan and inquiry update. The Trust has commissioned an independent inquiry into what caused the damage to the dam's auxiliary spillway. It is also assisting with an independent review commissioned by government. Both these reports are due to be published early in 2020 and will guide the long-term repair of the dam.

Simon Bamford, our asset improvement director, explains: "We are keen to hear the findings of the independent inquiries so we can move forward and decide how best to fix the dam for the long term. Once we know what caused the damage to the dam we will be able to work out a detailed plan for repairing it, including a precise timetable and costings. In the meantime, we're doing some work to protect the reservoir and further improve its resilience against any extreme weather events.



Oil-covered swans rescued after latest Black Country fuel spillage

Express and Star - Feb 24, 2020

A family of four swans were left covered in oil after a drum fell into the Stourbridge Canal, near the Ruskin Glass Centre, on Sunday morning. It was the second type of incident to happen in the Black Country within a week - after 38 birds were rescued and two died in Wednesbury. The RSPCA launched a rescue operation after quick-thinking residents alerted the authorities upon discovering the spillage. It is not clear how the oil drum entered the water. The RSPCA believes it may have been dumped by the canal bank. Deputy chief inspector Vicki Taylor, from the RSPCA, said: "There was a drum of oil with the cap off which had leaked into the water. There was oil everywhere in one part, it's really bad for birds because it affects their plumage and they can ingest it when they are preening.

"We were pleased we were able to rescue them and get them to the wildlife centre for cleaning. "There was a lot of rubbish along the banks, so it's possible the drum had been dumped. It's another sad example of how litter is damaging the natural habitats and affecting wildlife."

The swans were taken to the RSPCA's Stapeley Grange wildlife centre in Nantwich, Cheshire, to be cleaned. There, they will be checked over before being released back into the wild.

Stourbridge and Wollaston Councillor Nicholas Barlow believes the incident was deliberate. He said: "I just can't understand the mentality of these people that would want to cause harm to wildlife. It is just heartbreaking, dreadful. "This was undoubtedly a deliberate act to throw an oil drum into the canal. "I would urge anyone who sees someone acting suspiciously to report this to police on 101."

RSPCA officers used inflatable boats to catch the swans while the Canal and River Trust used absorbent sheets to soak up the oil.

West Midlands canals to help heat hospitals in renewable energy drive

The Guardian – 17 February 2020

The canals of the West Midlands may seem an unlikely source of warmth, but these waterways could soon be used to heat hospitals and tower blocks under a plan to harness Britain's hidden heating sources.

The government has promised to spend more than £20m on nine schemes across the country to exploit cheap, renewable heat from canals, old mineshafts and in London tube lines. It will spend another £70m to build some of Europe's first plants to generate green hydrogen gas for homes and factories, including a project in Grimsby that will use the clean electricity generated by offshore wind turbines to make the low-carbon alternative gas from water.

Kwasi Kwarteng, the minister for business, energy and clean growth, said cleaning up emissions from industry and housing was a big challenge, and an important part of "eliminating our contribution to climate change by 2050 while also growing our economy".

The government's hunt for alternative renewable sources of heat has gained pace after ministers pledged to ban gas-fired boilers from newbuild homes from 2025. Officials estimate that the latest funding could provide a local renewable energy resource to 250,000 people by 2030, which would cut their energy bills by half while helping the UK to meet its climate targets.

Birmingham's canals have been picked to play a role in the UK's green heating revolution by GreenSCIES, which is also working on a proposal that uses "waste heat" from the London underground to warm hundreds of homes in Islington, north London. The consortium, led by London South Bank University, plans to use the government funding to grow the GreenSCIES project and install water source heat pumps in the canal, which runs through Sandwell near Birmingham. The heat pumps work like a refrigerator in reverse, using a coolant gas to transfer heat from the water to be piped into a council tower block of 1,200 residents, many of whom are fuel poor. An extension of the project could be used to warm Birmingham City hospital. Heat pumps will also be used at another government-backed project in Rugeley, north of Birmingham, where a defunct coal-fired power plant is to be turned into a sustainable village of 2,300 homes, warmed by local canals and geothermal heat from disused mineshaft.

Once at full scale, the Islington project will provide heat to an estimated 33,000 residents and nearly 70 local businesses. It will also help to reduce carbon emissions by an estimated 80% compared with traditional gas-fuelled heating systems while also addressing fuel poverty.

Government officials also plan to throw their support behind two schemes, on the banks of the Mersey and near Aberdeen, to produce low-carbon hydrogen by splitting traditional heating gas and capturing the carbon dioxide that is released before it can contribute to global heating. Hydrogen was injected directly into a private gas network for the first time this year. A 20% blend of hydrogen in the national gas grid could reduce carbon dioxide emissions by about 6m tonnes a year – the equivalent of taking 2.5m cars off the road.

Membership Renewal

Just a reminder about Membership Subscriptions:

Membership renewals have come in well this year so far, but there are still some outstanding. Renewals were due on 1st April 2020. Our membership subscription again remains unchanged, as follows:-

SINGLE MEMBERSHIP £13.00

COMBINED MEMBERSHIP £13.50
(e.g. Husband & Wife)

JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP £1.00
(up to 18yrs of age)
& those in full time education

Remittance in the post should be addressed to:
14 White Harte Park, Kinver, South Staffs, DY7 6HN.
or passed to a Committee member at Bradmore

Thank you
Colin Beard
Membership Secretary

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Mr Colin Beard, Membership Secretary
14 White Harte Park
Kinver
Staffs
DY7 6HN



YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION (1st April-31st March)

Please tick appropriate option

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|--------------------------|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Single Membership | £13.00 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Junior (up to 18 years of age) and those in full time education | £1.00 |

- New members joining 1st April to 31st August pay the full rate
- New members joining between 1st September & 31st January pay half the above fees.
- New members joining between 1st February & 31st March pay the full rate for up to 14 months membership.

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GIFT AID DECLARATION

☐ I am a UK tax payer. I would like the Society to treat all membership subscriptions and donations I make as Gift Aid Donations until I notify you otherwise.

Note: You must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax equal to the amount we reclaim on your subscriptions & donations. Remember to notify us if you no longer pay tax or wish to cancel this declaration

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|----------------------------------|---|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Boating | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Archaeology | <input type="checkbox"/> Walking |
| Boat Name | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Work | |

Registered Charity No 243702

Diary Dates

Bradmore Meetings

A series of talks and presentations, usually waterways orientated but with occasional eclectic contributions on a variety of other subjects - open to the public free of charge.

Meetings held at the Bradmore Community Centre, Birches Barn Road, Wolverhampton starting at 7:45pm,

Monday 9th March
The Stourport Ring Continued
Glyn and Rosemary Philips

Monday 13th April
Easter Monday
No Monthly Meeting

Monday 11th May
The Worcester Birmingham and Droitwich Canals

Events
Spring Cruise 2020
10th -13th April
To the Anchor at Coven

Electronic Broadsheet

We are now making all future copies of Broadsheet and loose inserts available electronically. This would be by "opting-in" for those members who choose to receive Broadsheet electronically.

There is no intention of discontinuing the sending out of "hard copies" of Broadsheet to other members.

Please contact Steve Gray with your name and e-mail address if you wish to "opt-in" to receive Broadsheet electronically in future.

Email wharfinger@blueyonder.co.uk

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