

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd.

Subject: Work-party at Pigneys Wood area of the canal.

Date: Sunday 30th August 2015

From: C.J.B. Black, NW&DCT and EAWA

THE PLAN:

- To move the footbridge over the NNE soke dyke to allow machinery access to the canal.
- To make the bridge safe, and secure the wire fencing to the bridge in its new position.
- To clear the bank of weed growth and brash upstream of the footbridge.
- To clear fallen branches and a large tree from the south bank.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT: The weather was not favourable with the possibility of significant rain forecast. Fortunately it remained dry until the afternoon. The volunteers were marshalled to the parking area on the lower area of the Pigneys Wood nature reserve, and when all of us were assembled I told them what work was to be carried out today. For some, it was their first visit to this section of the canal. The canal is shallow here so safety throwing lines were not required but all were aware of the possible hazard with a big machine on site.

We walked down to the canal to find Laurie there with his large digger. He decided, with our help, to move the footbridge today. The machine made light work of lifting the heavy bridge and it was re-positioned nearer towards Pigneys Wood. It was made secure and settled in its new position and the pre-existing wire netting was carefully re-attached. The canal bank end of the bridge was made level to avoid any trip hazard.

With the bridge moved it is now possible to get machinery access upstream, however the bank is relatively narrow at this point.

We set about removing brash and dead branches upstream of the footbridge and lit a couple of fires to burn the detritus. Progress was slow as there were tree stumps to cut off, small trees to remove and piles of dead wood to find in the undergrowth. Two volunteers removed some smaller branches which had fallen across the south bank plus a much larger tree which had blown over, making it difficult to cut the grass bank. This was cut up and removed. Still without any rain, we carried on until approx. 13.30 to make the most of our good fortune before stopping for lunch. Work resumed but we did not progress much more than 50 yards upstream of the footbridge - then it rained heavily.

Work ceased at approx. 15.30.

Chris Black, Work Party Leader.