

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd

Subject: Work-party at the Paston Way length of the canal.
Date: Sunday 6th Dec 2015
From: C.J.B. Black, NW&DCT and EAWA

THE PLAN:

- To clear the banks of canal from the Paston Way old rail bridge upstream to the road bridge in Swafield.
- To sort and stack the useful timber from the brash laying on the right hand bank.
- To burn the large quantity of ivy and brash.
- To remove the large quantity of ivy from the SW face of the old railway bridge.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT: The weather forecast was for a mainly dry and sunny day, with the occasional shower late in the afternoon. The wind was light and in a good direction for fires. Laurie had negotiated parking on land belonging to the local farmer which saved us a long walk to the canal work-party site.

A good turnout of 16 volunteers meant that I could split the work-party into two groups – one party to tackle the ivy blocking access past the SW face of the old railway bridge and the others to set about starting a fire and sorting out the brash and useful timber from the bank clearance carried out by the OCC.

The canal is partially in water here but is shallow, and as for past work further downstream it did not require safety throwing lines. The party working at the bridge were reminded to be aware of the adjacent canal water as the bank is relatively narrow beside the SW side of the bridge.

Sorting the larger timber from the dense ivy growing on it was difficult. This made progress much slower than normal brash sorting but with a good size fire lit the ivy and smaller branches were soon disposed of.

The 'bridge party' made a good start on removing the large quantity of ivy from the bridge but eventually found it difficult to cut the ivy at track bed level.

At approximately 11.00 Mary put down the pruners to dispense the now traditional mulled wine and mince pies – a welcome break from the ivy! Work soon recommenced until lunch, which was taken at approx. 12.30.

After lunch we carried on working our way upstream and on the bridge ivy, however it soon became obvious that we wouldn't complete the bank clearance or remove all the ivy from the bridge without a long ladder. Yet again a heavy shower put an end to the work-party – so much for weather forecast.

Work ceased at approx. 15.00
Chris Black, Work Party Leader.