

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd

Subject: Work-party at Ebridge Reach.
Date: Sunday 12th June 2016.
From: Ivan Cane and Darren Cooke.

THE PLAN:

Bushing

WORK ACHIEVEMENT

Ten volunteers, plus John Parker and video camera were all eagerly ready at 9.30. Briefing including the tasks for the day, H&S concerns using the workboats. *Sue B*, the pontoon, was loaded with 2 barrows of relevant tools, plus lunches and rainwear, having listened to the forecast. *Sue B* then towed the smaller workboat (on a V line tow) down to the final section to be bushed. As the group arrived the engine died.

The smaller workboat worked up canal from the end of the bushing site, with two workers on board and two on the bank to trim and stack, likewise, the 'Sue B' started from where the last WP had finished. Here usually three bushing and two on the bank, trimming and stacking, was the order of the day. Despite no power tools being used, the intrepid sawers tackled some quite large fallen boughs. What was noticed was the way that the stumps, last cut back two years ago, had thrust out numerous and thick stems, others had re-rooted in the canal bed. A couple of rain storms encouraged the waterproofs to be donned, followed by discardment, as it was too hot, and the workers preferred to get wet and dry off! A break was taken at 12.30 for lunch, and around 3pm the two work boats met, the bushing had been completed. Any further cutting back of overhanging or fallen boughs would need mechanical aids.

Having reloaded the two boats for the trip back, and the fuel topped up, all awaited the engine to start. It did, loudly backfired and then resisted any further attempts to start again. So, plan B came into effect. The smaller workboat was paddled, whilst the pontoon was haled from the newly opened footpath on the non-towpath side of the canal. The haled boat soon overtook the paddlers, then waited at the millstream – where the paddlers took over, to tow the pontoon through the bridge to the moorings.

A dedicated hard working team, who achieved a considerable amount of work, as evidenced by the long pile of material awaiting the Old Canal Company to chip and log.

Our Thanks to everyone.

Ivan Cane & Darren Cooke