

North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust **Work Party Report**
In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd

Date 17th June 2018

Objective

Commence work on repair of Ebridge lock wall – initial survey. Start on Balsam bashing – Purdy's marsh.

The Plan

Take work boat and ladders to Ebridge, clear vegetation in lock chamber and assess state of wall.
Go to Royston Bridge and work south to clear balsam.

Work Achievement

There were seven work party volunteers on the day but quite a few man hours had been put in earlier in the week to clear a path and make start on the balsam on Purdy's Marsh.

On the day work was undertaken at three locations – Purdy's Marsh, Spa Common and Ebridge Lock. It was decided not to move the work boat to the lock because of security issues but to use the steel scaffold and boards to give relatively secure access from the south end of the lock to the west wall without the use of the boat and/or ladders.

Two member of the team went to the north end of Purdy's Marsh to start pulling balsam and were joined by a third. A temporary repair was undertaken to the steps on the west back of the canal but a more substantial landing stage will be required in due course. Two further volunteers commenced on the recovering, cleaning and painting the steel scaffold.

The remaining two volunteers took two pieces of the scaffold to Ebridge to test them out in the lock and also ladders /fixings to get access to the lock and install mooring points accessible from the pontoon.

The balsam team worked through to mid afternoon and cleared an area at the north end of the Marsh as well as some plants to the north of Royston Bridge. Still a large area to clear.

The majority of the steel scaffolding was cleaned and some of it painted. Some volunteers will return to complete this task before the next work party.

The first job on arrival at Ebridge was to clear the cut reed from above the lock to help the trip boat operation. Some reed was also removed from the back soke at the spillway.

The pontoon was accessed by ladder and vegetation removed from the lock walls (carefully) and the bottom of the lock. Mooring points were put in the west lock wall. It was just possible to move the pontoon over the length of the damaged wall, quite a lot of silt at the south end. The scaffold was temporarily placed towards the north end of the lock in about 800mm of water – should be good to use as access to the pontoon from the south end along the west wall. Quite a lot of debris in the bottom of the lock including a lock beam at the north end. The bottom is good to walk on (with chest waders) over most of this area. There is a lot of silt at the south end which can be walked on/in but difficult going.

Damage to the west wall is quite extensive and the method of repair (including any propping) needs an experienced eye before the main repairs can be started. Vegetation on the east wall was left untouched as birds nesting.

Although holding a work party during the World Cup on Father's day in the holiday season might have been ambitious a fair amount was achieved both on the day and beforehand

C B (Ebridge); A B (Purdy's Marsh); D W(Spa Common)
Work party leaders