

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association.

Subject: Work Party at Swafield Locks

Date : Sunday 27th October 2013

From : D Revill, NW&DCT and EAWA

THE PLAN. To meet and liaise with the owner of this part of the canal and assist him in any way we are able.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The morning started off with heavy rain and strong winds. Because it was Work Party Day I just knew that the weather would turn out to be OK and so it did! There were 9 (nine) volunteers on site and we set about the continuation of clearing down the structure of the lower lock at the head of navigation on the North Walsham & Dilham Canal. The 'head of navigation' is really at the upper lock but a person or persons unknown at some time diverted the water away from between the locks. Above the upper lock is the **only** part of this canal that has officially been abandoned. Chris and I were shown where operatives had recently (their plant is still in the field) been working on the canal bank between the lock and Swafield Bridge, cutting and removing reeds. Whence they came was not known as permission had not been given for them to be on site. A location post, showing that there is a gas pipeline crossing under the canal, had been knocked down and now the position of the gas pipe is unknown, the sign having been found covered in dead reeds. It is of interest as to when the organisation who ordered the operatives to be there will order them back to clear the opposite bank? A number of trees growing out of the brickwork were removed and the brash subsequently burned nearby. The weather was so pleasant that we sat on the lock bank in the sunshine to partake of our luncheons – with the added pleasant bonus of a cup of hot soup being especially made and brought along for us by Ann. It is interesting that one of the original quoins is still in situ. Where are the other three? We all left site at about 15.00hrs following a very pleasant and highly productive work schedule. There is, of course, still a lot to be done here to make the lock structure suitable for future generations to be able to see, showing a little bit of their county history.

The thanks of the owners, who were present the whole time, together with mine, go to our loyal volunteers – who appear to be getting fitter with each work party!

David E Revill
Work Party Organiser
North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust