

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd

Subject: Work party at Ebridge Mill Pond

Date: Sunday 23rd February 2014

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

THE PLAN: To clear the weir/spillway of weeds, soil etc. and remove dead vegetation from the top of the bank in front of the brickwork.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT: The weather was kind, overcast but dry. Ten hardy souls put in an appearance armed with the usual variety of hand tools. Although the front of the weir is not adjacent to the canal, being separated by an earth bank at present, for health and safety reasons the high visibility rescue line was available as a safety precaution. The work party were reminded to take care on the weir as the slope is quite steep and slippery in places where water was running down.

Laurie Ashton arrived with his re-furbished weed cutting boat, looking very smart with its new hull. The initial launch was not a success but later in the morning it was on the water and Laurie demonstrated its capabilities. This vessel will be a great asset in keeping the weed in the canal and millpond under control.

Lunch was called at 12.15 – but again too cool to sit outside. After lunch we strimmed the west side of the lock and cleared some of the dead weeds from the banks of the ‘island’.

We have become very concerned about the narrowing of the canal upstream caused by silting on the west bank adjacent to Mr Bowles land. This silt build up has severely restricted this 30feet canal and has allowed willows and vegetation to grow in the canal channel making it virtually impassable, which if not remedied will eventually block the canal totally and result in flooding in Spa Common. We took the weed boat up to the constriction to ascertain the extent of the blockage. It was far worse than expected! A large willow tree growing from the west bank side stretched right across the canal and bent so low as to touch the water, making passage impossible. We took some photographs to show proof of the lack of (the claimed) riparian owners’ management from the west bank side. This will be reported once again to the EA as they denied that any problem existed when reported on the first occasion. It should be noted here that since the Ebridge Mill Pond was de-silted, there has been NO further flooding in North Walsham. Due to this willow restriction we could not view further upstream.

The weed boat was taken out of the water and we called it a day at 15.30.

Chris Black,
Work Party supervisor