

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd.

Subject: Work-party at Briggate mill-pond and lock.

Date: Sunday 7th December 2014

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

THE PLAN:

- To clear the SW bank of the mill-pond of weed growth.
- To cut and remove ivy from the trees in the SW bank area and remove dead ivy.
- To visually inspect the trees in the SW bank area.
- To inspect the state of the lock upper NE cheek wall and quoin post.
- To cut back the re-growing willows on the NE bank of the canal beside the road bridge.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT: The weather forecast improved as the week progressed. Initially forecast as wet all day, we enjoyed a cool but mostly sunny day.

11 volunteers turned out and following a chat about the tasks for the day and H&S we set to work. The majority worked to clear the SW bank, not cutting it too short. We lit a bonfire to dispose of the detritus but log piles were left for the wildlife. There is a considerable quantity of ivy on the large trees adjacent to the pill-box. We have, at previous visits, removed the ivy from the tree nearest to the pill-box and it is almost ivy free so we cut through ivy on the other trees, some ivy up to 5" in diameter. Large chunks were removed.

The area was inspected for hazardous branches and where found, were removed.

A break was called at approx. 11.15 for our now obligatory Christmas mulled wine and minced pies. I cannot believe how quickly the year has passed.

The remainder of the bank was cleared and as far as possible the reed growth in the mill-pond was cut. We discussed the possibility of cutting back the SW bank to make a temporary level access track for Tom Moore's digger. This would allow the clearance of some of the reed growth which is choking the pond with its low level of water. Village residents have commented to us on the lack of open water for the wading birds and kingfishers caused by the reed growth. Lunch was taken at 12.30 in the sunshine.

Alan volunteered to investigate the cheek wall and quoin. To do this myself and another work-party volunteer accompanied Alan from the lock side. A safety throw rope was used to ensure that Alan did not venture into the cill area. The cheek wall is heavily vegetated but enough was removed to see that it and the quoin are in good shape i.e. no further slippage was apparent.

Following this work we ventured over to the NE side of the bridge where all of the re-growing willows were cut back from the bank. The saplings were left to grow in the hedgerow and the cuttings were used to re-enforce the two-wire animal fence.

Work ceased at approx 15.15.

Chris Black, Work Party Leader