

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd

Subject: Work-party on Ebridge pound.

Date: Sunday 15th May 2016.

From: Chris Black, NW&DCT.

THE PLAN:

- To trial the outboard motor on the Trust's pontoon.
- To take the pontoon to the area beside Muckle Hill Farm to remove overhanging brash.
- To close mow the large grassy area of canal land on the east side of Ebridge lock.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT: The weather was overcast at first but dry, and eventually warm, with sunny periods. 11 volunteers turned out for an interesting day's work.

Our first task was to fix the Trust's untried outboard onto our pontoon. I had been doing a bit of maintenance on the fuel tank at home and generally inspecting the outboard for corrosion etc. and had had it running in a large bucket of water.

The outboard just about fitted on the wooden transom which was about an inch too low making it difficult to clamp the outboard on to it. Cliffy and Daniel are going to raise the height by an inch.

The motor started first time so I took it upstream for a successful test run. The outboard moved the pontoon with plenty of power to spare.

John Parker was filming the whole thing and requested that he be taken downstream through the bridge for some film footage. Ivan obliged and on their return his crew loaded the pontoon with kit and duly set off downstream to the Muckle Hill Farm area. Laurie took the dumper down the NE bank to collect the brash for disposal and to pull roots from the canal bed using a rope.

Lunch was called at approx. 12.30 and was taken on Bacton Wood lock.

I had been mowing at Ebridge lock in the morning and had been stopped several times by walkers beside the canal. Everyone was excited by the opening up of a continuous path from Ebridge to Swafeld and wanted to hear more about the canal restoration. Some of Tom's maps were sold to aid access to the paths around the canal environs.

I just couldn't get away and consequently missed lunch with the volunteers!

All of us went back to the Muckle Hill area to remove more of the brash. We had several walkers pass us on the bank, which was great to see. Laurie's dumper ran out of fuel and it was suspected that fuel had been stolen yet again!

We worked on for a while with Peter Owen and I walked upstream to remove some of the alders which had started to grow in the NE bank. Some remain as they are by the water's edge so they will have to be removed using the pontoon.

It was decided to take a trip down to Ebridge on the pontoon. Eight of us were on board which didn't seem to be too much weight for it to carry. On the way back the outboard did a splendid job, powering it upstream effortlessly against the wind and the gentle flow of the canal water.

Work ceased at approx. 16.30

Chris Black, work-party leader.