

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd

Subject: Work-party at Purdy's Marsh area and Royston Bridge

Date: Sunday 9th January 2017.

From: Chris Black, NW&DCT.

THE PLAN:

- To continue the clearance of the remaining detritus from the west side of the east back-soke.
- To clear the area around Royston Bridge.
- To burn the brash.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT: The weather was overcast but dry with a mild south westerly breeze which was ideal for burning the brash. Laurie arrived just as the volunteers were assembling, but he was far from well having spent several days shivering beside his wood-burner – clearly he was in no state to be outside. So our planned work had to be postponed and replaced by something useful, otherwise the 15 volunteers who turned out would have just been twiddling their thumbs.

Fortunately there is always work to do on the Canal so it was decided to split the party into two, some to work on the remaining clearance of detritus from the east soke on Purdy's Marsh and the remainder to clear the banks beside Royston Bridge.

A couple of the Purdy's marsh team set about re-lighting the old bonfire and clearing up the detritus left from the last work-party, the rest concentrating on clearing the remaining obstructions and detritus from the soke. Fortunately the shallow depth of water in the soke allowed Alan to cross to the far bank to cut away the remaining branches and a dense thicket of vicious wild rose.

The Royston Bridge clearance team set about cutting back the re-growth on an old tree stump beside the bridge. Meanwhile two of us walked down to our store to pick up rakes, slash hooks, a fork and pruners which were brought back in a couple of wheelbarrows. The bank was muddy and the clay soil very slippery which did not seem to deter the several walkers who we met during the day – all of whom had nothing but praise for the restoration work on the Canal! The sides of the bridge were covered in brambles and growth however the team soon had a fire lit to burn the brash as it was cut back.

All volunteers working beside the road wore safety hi-vis vests as the speed of the traffic along this stretch of road is excessive, especially as there are blind bends on the approach to the bridge.

Lunch was taken at approximately 12.30

After lunch it was decided that we should cease work a bit earlier than usual. Some of the work-party had left at lunch-time so our party was somewhat depleted and the bridge clearance was nearing completion. We had cleared the back-soke, and apart from Alan's continuing investigation into the blockage of the upstream culvert taking the soke water under the Canal, we were ready to call it a day. The tools were taken back to the lock-up and the area checked that it was left in a safe condition.

Work ceased at approx. 15.00

Chris Black, Work Party Leader