

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd

Subject: Ebridge Spillway, Bacton Wood Lock and the east soke culvert under the Canal
Date: 8th October 2017
From: Chris Black

THE PLAN:

- To assist Laurie in taking more bricks to Ebridge spillway.
- To mow/strim grass around Bacton Wood Lock and help with raising soil level on west side of lock.
- To inspect the partial collapse of the upstream culvert carrying the east back-soke under the canal.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT:

The morning's weather was dry and with occasional sunny intervals. We had a late start due to the Poringland film show about the Canal held on Saturday evening, however soon after we arrived 4 of the 14 volunteers were sent to Ebridge to help Laurie unload more bricks for the spillway retaining walls and the remaining 10 volunteers set about clearing around Bacton Wood Lock. Due to the sheer amount of work re-building the spillways at Royston and Ebridge the surrounds of the lock had been neglected leaving it in a scruffy state.

The soil on the east side of the lock had been raised a few years ago to make it level with the capping of the lock walls and the top of the large brick buttresses. This was then grassed. The same needed to be carried out on the west side of the lock and free topsoil had become available which had been dumped adjacent to the west side wall.

As usual fire was lit to burn the cut brash and we set about clearing the bund below the lock and the east side of the lock. With the topsoil beside the west side we only needed to strim immediately beside the brickwork and the soil would cover it up anyway.

Mary had set up a small table with some Trust literature on it for passers-by to see.

Lunch was called at approx. 12.30.

Lunch was rather pleasant for a while – then it rained and we scuttled to find somewhere dry, grabbing the increasingly wet Trust literature on the way. The shower over we returned to work, which was more strimming and cutting down of brash on the east side of the lock and moving and consolidating (with the help of the small digger) the topsoil around the west wall. It will require at least the same quantity of topsoil again to raise the soil high enough to be level with the brickwork and extend outwards towards the access track on the east bank.

This raised grassed area is vital for the operation of the lock gates.

We didn't have time to inspect the culvert but had a discussion with Laurie as to how to approach the problem. It will need a digger to take away the bank above the pipe and will be our project for the next work-party. Steve and I put the heavy east side gate paddle back into its slots to prevent anyone falling into the open paddle chamber. We think it was removed by vandals as the ropes temporarily holding the bottom lock gates into the quoins had been cut. One rope was missing as was a strop tied to and consolidating the temporary bridge across the lock chamber. The ropes were replaced.

Work ceased at approx. 16.30

Chris Black, Work party leader.