

Quagmire

The newsletter of the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust
Autumn 2017

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NW&DC Trust AGM August 2017

At the AGM Ivan Cane was elected as Chairman and all Trustees were re-elected en-mass.

Chairman's Report:

I would like to say a big thank you to Roy Medcalf, who had held the rein of the Trust Chair since 2011. He took over a fledgling Trust, and over the 6 years brought structure to the organisation during a time when it grew from strength to strength, working alongside the Old Canal Company's restoration of the Upper Canal. Roy also helped to bring fishing back to the Canal – something which had been missing from Ebridge for nearly a generation. Unfortunately, Roy's illness meant that he had to step down as Chair, and later as the Trust's Fishing Officer. Hence my being here, at the request of the Trustees, as Interim Chair today. So thank you Roy.

I'm pleased to say that Alan Faulkner, our President, following a period when he was extremely ill earlier in the year, is now starting to grow stronger, and continues to follow the Canal's restoration. Let us not forget that without all the early paper restoration Alan undertook in the 1990's, the Trust would not be here today.

Over the past year we have seen some substantial progress with the Canal's restoration, all down to Laurie and Julie's enthusiasm. The bottom lock gates for Bacton Wood, considerable bank raising from Bacton to Pigney's Wood, materials for Royston Spillway, repairs to the Ebridge reach banks, bushing and reed clearances. Add to this the Trust's work party involvement, under the guidance of David Revill and Chris Black, we have helped with the clearances of Purdy's Marsh, silt digging at Bacton Wood Lock, re-building of Royston Spillway, and even paddle replacements at Ebridge.

The work at Purdy's Marsh, combined with Perry's insatiable appetite for wildlife, his use of social media to publish his excellent pictures, that we've seen earlier today, has helped enormously to publicise the way that restoration and conservation are able to go hand-in-hand – and led to a new and welcome relationship with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

Three others, Mary, Julie and Alex have also been active on the publicity side, and our thanks to them. But that then brings me to the tricky part – do I say thanks to everyone on the team – for they all have undertaken a terrific part in the teamwork that is such a strength of the Trust – from minute writing, attending meetings, selling raffle tickets to painting containers. In which case this would become a longer speech than the Brit Awards! So thanks to those who write, e-mail, make tea, dig holes, pull balsam, fill in grant forms or have given talks over the last year – your team efforts have been the strength of the Trust.

Having said that, I must publicly thank Cliffy, Jane, Jeremy, Daniel not forgetting Carly for their continual support day in and day out to Laurie and to the Canal. And of course Laurie and Julie for all the work that they have put into the Canal, and for allowing us to help them with their endeavours.

Politically, the Trust has helped to raise the awareness of the Canal both locally and nationally. Meetings were held with the Broad's Authority as part of the new 2017/22 strategy, with County and District Councillors, Council Engineers and the Press. Two Open weekends, coffee mornings, stands at local events, talks to groups all helped to raise public awareness. The award of the Canal & River Trust's Commendation in the Restoration & Historic Environment category of the 2016 Living Awards reflected the efforts of the Trust's volunteers. Although others would say that the highlight was the Open Day being used as a clue venue for Radio Norfolk's Sunday Treasure Quest!

As the Trust approaches its tenth year, it's time to look at the workloads of Trustees and officers, and the structure of the Trust. We've managed to relieve the burdens on some shoulders with new specific appointments and jobs – but still in desperate need of a General Secretary! However, the Trust's structure also needs to be updated, which is why the Trustee's are proposing a change to CIO later.

Looking towards the coming year, we look forward to seeing the Trust working to help the new lower canal owner to open up the bottom stretch of Canal to canoeing, kayaking and other boating, to re-opening talks on the Ebridge Honing section, to seeing waters flowing under Royston Bridge, and to a NW&DC Trust CIO operating its trip boat, owning some canalside land – with its legal opportunities, and looking towards achieving larger grant aids towards the re-opening of the NW&DC for the benefit of the Community as a whole.

Ivan Cane, Chairman

The following proposal was put to the meeting and subsequently carried:

Proposal:

That the structure of the Trust should be changed to that of an association model Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and that all memberships, Trust assets, and archives are transferred to the new CIO. Following completion of the transfer, the original NW&DC Trust be closed.

Ever since the Trust was formed, it never achieved full charitable status, the quoted reason often being that its annual turnover was less than £5000. As Interim Chair I proposed to the Trustees at their June 2017 Meeting that:

‘the structure of the Trust should be changed to that of an association model Charitable Incorporated Organisation’

The reasoning for this is as follows:

Present Structure	CIO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A collection of individuals with no separate legal existence. • Trustees fully liable – unlimited personal liability – financial risk • Vote restricted to trustees • Not able to benefit from Gift Aid • Cannot enter into contracts in own name. Trustees have to enter personally – hence liable. • Staff not normally employed, if they are – then by Trustees • Ownership of property by individual people • Cannot deliver charitable services under contract e.g. with local authority • Has constitution, needs to be a registered charity if income over £5000 p.a. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation is a legal entity – • Trustees not personally liable. Limited Personal Liability usually £1 • Members may have vote • Gift Aid on donations, rates relief • Can enter into contracts, own property. • Staff employed by organisation • Ownership of property by the organisation • Can deliver charitable services under contract. • Need to register with Charity Commission, has statutory framework and required to provide returns

Following the business a presentation by Aaron Brown, Conservation Officer, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, was introduced by Perry Hampton, Trust Wildlife Officer.

The full minutes of the AGM are available to members on request.

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News...

The 'very exciting news' promised in the last edition of Quagmire is that the Trust has been **given** a trip boat! It was given to us by The Barnsley, Dearne & Dove Canals Trust on the understanding that we would collect it. David Revill reports:-



The Story of ELSA – Part 1

Some months ago a pair of intrepid adventurers left Norfolk and travelled northwards – with a little bit of left hand down – and arrived somewhere in the wilds of the largest county in the UK! I can't remember what they intended to do there but the result was quite good and unexpected. They had been offered a trip boat...for FREE. The only down side of this was that we had to move it from there to here. Ah well! But first of all, of course, the vessel had to be looked at in a bit more detail to see if it was worth all the ensuing hassle. So it was that the, then, Boating Officer and I ventured NNE to inspect same. Andrew brilliantly drove us up to the location, in the sticks, and we duly noted dimensions and state of the vessel. It came with a trailer – which was not allowed onto the public highway – so that was something else to be considered. But as reported back to the Trust meeting, I considered it a worth- while project, but that there would be work to be done on ELSA before she could be put into use. The next question arose – how do we get her to Norfolk? Ivan had received a quote of something like £800 for the task. As luck would have it, I had made contact with a gentleman who is quite knowledgeable about canals and vessels and he offered to do the fetching and carrying for us! For FREE! As the saying goes, 'never look a gift-horse in the mouth'. (Never did quite understand that! Could be a bit smelly?) So it came about that Andrew was taken back to Yorkshire by our new man Graham and his partner Mark with a plan to retrieve ELSA. Unfortunately, having pulled the boat on its trailer out of the shed it became too obvious to the trio that under H&S thoughts they could not bring both. The trailer was by this time already on the carriage ready to leave and the boat sitting in the yard. As time was running away, it was decided to leave the boat in the yard and 'just' bring the trailer along and think about the boat later. So that is what has happened and eventually ELSA made her arrival in Spa Common, somewhat full of rainwater. A better inspection has now been made of her and several areas of work are noted to be done. This will be looked at in the near future with a view to having her ready to sail next season.

My thanks to all involved in this venture.

David Revill - Work Party Organiser

Members are invited to **suggest a name for our new trip boat**. Send your suggestion via secretary@nwdct.org or telephone David Revill on 01603 736648. If your name is chosen you will be invited to the naming/launching of the boat and a free trip in her!

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A General Secretary, Catherine Stell, has been appointed by the Trust. Catherine tells us that she has had a varied and fulfilling career, from horticulture to air-hostessing, always returning back to Personal Assistant work and now works for herself as a Virtual Assistant. Catherine was born and bred in Yorkshire and has just made the move to North Walsham this summer. She has a keen interest in history and the environment and enjoys time spent outdoors with her two Jackoodle dogs, no doubt exploring the canal. Catherine's first task will be helping the Trust to become an association model Charitable Incorporated Organisation (see below in the AGM Chairman's Report).



Catherine



Catherine has already exceeded her brief by collecting 4 Ash tree seedlings. They were grown from seeds from the woodland trust and kindly donated by Malcolm Bullen to be planted near the canal. They may be small yet but in the Trust we are very aware that small things can and do grow! Many thanks to Mr Bullen and Catherine.

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One of the new members joining the Trust's organising team is Chris Heath, who has agreed to take on the role of Projects Officer. This new position has a very wide brief. Chris will be looking after shorter term projects, advising, scoping, and managing. The first task was to advise on the reconstruction of the wing walls to Ebridge Lock, the second is the refurbishment of the donated trip boat *Elsa*, the third ...could be anything! Chris is a Chartered Civil Engineer by profession but, as he puts it, *I went over to the dark side many years ago*. He spent the last 10 years as a Management Consultant and he retired last year. Chris has lived within a mile of the canal on and off for over 40 years and has been volunteering on Trust work parties during the last year.



Chris at Royston Spillway

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Not exactly a new post, but possibly a **new team** of willing **helpers** was formed during the Open Weekend, when Elaine Larke stepped in to hold on to the refreshment tent as it started to blow away! Perhaps you would like to help at occasional events but have been concerned that you don't 'know enough' about the Canal and its history. Let us know if you would be willing to erect tents, serve teas, welcome visitors, and be generally useful.

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2018 will see the tenth anniversary of the formation of the NW&DC Trust. Work parties had been taking place for many years before that but with a more structured Trust we were able to attract our valuable members - people like you! We are always grateful for the interest shown by our members, and of course, the fees you pay do help us to run what has become a considerable organisation. We are hoping to mark the occasion of the Trust's 10th anniversary with an event, yet to be planned, early next year. As with our film evenings, the event will be free to members and we will be inviting representatives from some of the organisations that have supported us in different ways over the years. Make a note to check the next Quagmire for more information.

Recent Events

Trustees and Officers give freely of their time in various ways in order to raise awareness about our canal. You may enjoy reading this report from Perry in his usual inimitable style:

Worstead Festival on 29th & 30th July was quite an experience! My el-cheapo Gazebo ended up in the bin at the end of the event. I had left it up during the overnight storm, so it's entirely my own fault. The frame was so distorted that it wouldn't fold up. Serves me right for buying something made from Bacofoil!! I have now replaced it with a steel-framed one with three 'walls' rather than the previous one, which only had two.

Jane (Gotts) worked incredibly hard at the Festival, giving up her entire weekend to work on our stand. That's real commitment from someone who also works full time. It was a pleasure to work with her. I don't know how she felt at the end of it all, but I was absolutely shattered!

Perry Hampson, Wildlife Officer

On 26th September David Revill gave another talk, this time to Broadland 41. It is very important to spread the word about the on-going restoration of Norfolk's only locked canal and with this in mind **the Trust has invested in a projector**. You will agree that talks without visuals can be pretty dry and, dare I say it, boring! Ivan Cane produces wonderful Power Point Presentations and knowledgeable Trust Officers will be able to use them to give illustrated talks.

There is no charge but we always hope for donations and we find that most groups are eager to support the Trust.

If you know of any group that would like a talk please contact us via secretary@nwdct.org giving details of the location and a contact number or email address.

Another Open Weekend was held on 9th & 10th September at Ebridge. The weather was not kind and some of the stall-holders were as wet inside as those out. A torrential downpour on Saturday afternoon sent visitors scurrying into tents clutching limp plates with half-eaten cakes and diluted cups of tea. The wind started gusting as we were packing up and it was decided to take down half of the information tent and lash it down to prevent it from blowing into the canal! Sunday was better weather although the wind meant that the refreshment tent had to be hurriedly secured with ropes.

On the evening before the event it was discovered that the generator had been damaged and it is thanks to Chris, Daniel & Darren that this vital piece of equipment was temporarily repaired, early on Saturday morning.

Thanks also go to those who turned up early at the lock-up early on Saturday morning to load all the equipment and erect the tents and those who stayed to clear up and return the equipment to the lock-up on Sunday.

Members Robert & Sheena Gill stepped in to help in the tea tent on Saturday and Terry Cane helped out on Sunday. Of course it is dangerous to start thanking people by name as there were so many willing helpers so I'll stop there. You know who you are!

Work-party volunteers carried on laying bricks on the spillway during the event and many visitors chatted to them on their way past walking along the canal. The Trust gained ten new members which made the hours of preparation and aching feet well worth the effort.

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On October 7th a film evening was held at Poringland's well-appointed Community Centre. Members in North Walsham have had it their own way for far too long and we felt it was time to spread the word about our canal further afield! Two of our members live in Poringland and Robert, who just happens to be a chef, kindly made cakes which were very well received. His wife, Sheena, helped with refreshments and two members, Kirsty and Christian, who live in Norwich, were on the door – and everywhere else assisting where they could. Chris and Mary Black organised the evening, which started by showing two of Jonno's films. A rolling presentation of over 400 photos was left running for people to watch whilst eating cake or browsing the wildlife display, the finds, maps, photos and information. A very successful evening.

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Taken from a Book...

The Battle for the Broads by Martin Ewan, 1992 has a page on the Canal. There are two interesting points that come from this.

First the "there was not enough water in Antingham Ponds, at its head, to fill the locks more than three times a day..." Now this is often quoted at us, for the whole Canal, and we know that there is more than enough water for a greater number of lockings than this. However, the restriction probably did apply to Swafield Locks, for at a work party we found that the spillway between the locks had been heightened at some time, which could add credence to this story. Below Swafield there are other watercourses adding to the stream giving a larger supply. It is an interesting theory – has anyone any thoughts on it?

Another reference to Swafield, was that "It was with extreme difficulty that the writer and photographer P.H. Emerson...managed in 1891 to penetrate to Antingham Ponds in his converted wherry, *Maid of the Mist*...." For that to have occurred, he would have needed to pass through Swafield Locks, some ten or so years after that section of the canal went into disuse. Again, if anyone can throw any more light on that source, I would appreciate it.

Ivan Cane, Trust Archivist

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Ebridge Spillway

Members who received the Summer Quagmire will know that an enormous amount of work was undertaken earlier this year by Trust volunteers to restore Royston Spillway. Never keen to rest for long, soon after finishing that spillway in July, they set about preparing Ebridge Spillway for its restoration. This time, however, the Trust volunteers would have help from volunteers from the Waterways Recovery Group.



Work started in July by clearing the spillway (probably for the 20th time over the years!) and laying 10” square, recycled timber groynes to support the new brickwork face of the spillway. The groynes, full of silica, had to be cut with chainsaws, which needed constant sharpening.



A retaining wall for the new east bank access had been almost completed by early August ready for the visit from the Waterways Recovery Group volunteers which had been arranged by David Revill.



After the WRG volunteers left, Trust volunteers worked tirelessly and cheerfully, day after day, mixing tons of sand and cement and laying thousands of bricks. (Hard-hats were not necessary for this part of the job as there was no working machinery on site, however sun hats were essential as strong sun can pose a risk.)

THE WRG VISIT TO EBRIDGE IN AUGUST 2017.

The WRG (Waterways Recovery Group) is a part of the IWA, of which the Trust is an associated member. Different WRG teams go out on many occasions during the year to all sorts of work, which is required on our waterways. It is not, however, at all easy to get the group of happy visitors to come to your desired site. Firstly the host (in this case the NW&DCT) has to decide what work is required. Then the site has to be visited by a professional engineer (for us I had called the IWA honorary engineer years ago) for him to provide a drawing and all the calculations necessary, which will show the forces against which we will need to operate and of course the means to counteract such forces.

Applications for a work party need to be with the organiser of such parties well in advance of the intended visit. I applied in August 2016 for the party to come in August 2017! I have already made my application for a visit in 2018.

Having achieved your position on the 'possible' list, two site visits are carried out by the WRG/IWA. Where are the visitors to stay? That too has to be arranged and the planned accommodation will be inspected and any good and not-so-good points noted and planning made to overcome any shortfalls. The host pays for the accommodation and the toilet facilities at the work site. Then the work site will be inspected and the plans from the engineer checked to ascertain that the work will be possible, for example with the number of people who may come along to join the party. Access to the site; public or neighbours interference?; footpaths over or near to the site?; positioning of the required plant and materials; are the required quantities of materials and plant available and ready to be on site and who pays for it all? (answer: the host).

The good old EA also comes into the picture! Are you in possession of a relevant Work Permit? That takes a time to obtain too. Flood protection, environmental issues, the list goes on.

Following on from making all the tentative arrangements, I made myself available to meet up with the various representatives of the accommodation and later the WRG, who mostly came up as a group, to carry out the two inspections. Then there was the game of getting our own volunteers involved on site with WRG, but despite some very stern warnings that each of our people would need to be 'integrated' into the scheme, it all seemed to go very well.

David Revill – Work Party Organiser



WRGies (red hard-hats) working alongside Trust volunteers



The Spillway in 2010 and in 2017

Meetings are attended frequently by Trustees and Officers. Two meetings are reported here, the first by Alex Hurrel:-

Meeting with Andy Hutcheson, Countryside Manager with Norfolk County Council (NCC).

Chris Black and I met Andy Hutcheson in August to find out what NCC could do to help promote the Canal and the work of the Trust.

Andy fairly quickly explained that NCC, like all arms of local government, was short of money. He said there had been a reorganisation of departments within the authority. Culture and heritage had been brought together, encompassing aspects including trails, museums and the “visitor economy” which brings an estimated £1.3bn into Norfolk’s coffers each year.

He could see the potential of encouraging people to canoe, walk etc on the Canal.

He was interested in the Canal as both an example of Norfolk’s industrial heritage and an outdoor attraction. He described it as a “very specific Norfolk story” and was also interested to hear that a particular type of wherry, none of which have survived, sailed the Canal.

He said NCC had made a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for more than £450,000 which will be used to make more of the Marriott Way’s industrial and natural heritage. It is a long-distance path (a disused railway line), which is owned by NCC.

NCC has begun preliminary work on putting together a similar HLF-funded project for the Weavers’ Way, which it also owns. Part of the Weavers’ Way was also once a railway line and it links up with paths to the Canal.

Andy thinks the Canal and its paths could be “an interesting addition” to this project. He does not expect “an expression of interest” to be made by NCC to the HLF until mid to late autumn and cautioned that the project could take a long time to come to fruition.

He would like Russell Wilson, NCC senior trails officer, to look at the Canal and its paths. Andy’s initial ideas included interpretive boards explaining the history of the Canal and of the railway line, and promotion of circular walks in the area. He also said HLF money could be used towards such things as governance arrangements and a marketing plan. If the Canal was successful in securing HLF money, as part of the project, it would be easier to get money from them in the future since they would want to protect and develop their investment.

NCC owns the former Station House at Felmingham, on the Weavers’ Way, and there is also an extant platform at East Ruston, also on the Weavers’ Way. NCC is working out ways in which these could be turned into cafes which Andy considered to be an important way of attracting visitors. I think there was a tacit suggestion that it would be good if something similar could be set up in the Canal environs!

Although the HLF bid would be long and complex, Andy said there would be nothing to stop NCC getting the Canal paths mapped and online during the development phase.

Alex Hurrel – Media & Press Officer

Note: not all of the banks and towpaths alongside the canal from Ebridge to Swafeld Bridge are Rights of Way, but walking along them is allowed by kind permission of The Old Canal Co.



In 2008 volunteers built this footbridge at Honing Staithe for the use of walkers.

The second meeting report by Chris Black:-

Broads Plan Launch

On July 26th, David & Gisela Revill, Chris & Mary Black and Tom Carr attended the launch of **The Broads Plan 2017**. This report from Chris Black:-

Following the meeting held with the Broads Authority (BA) on the 28th November 2016. (As described in the article featured in Quagmire Winter 2016/17) the consultation deadlines for the Broads Plan 2017 were met ensuring the Canal Trust's views were considered.

It is important that the Trust is involved with Local Authorities as the restoration of the top third of the Canal is progressing at a great pace and the lower tidally influenced section in the BA's boundary is at long last looking more positive for restoration.

On the 26th July 2017 the Trust received invitations to attend the launch of the Broads Plan 2017 at Whitlingham Country Park. We were issued with a copy of the Plan followed by presentations from various speakers. Short addresses were given by Professor Jacquie Burgess, BA Chairman and by John Packman CEO. The afternoon ended with tea and cake and some very interesting dialogue with some of the BA staff and other guests. Jacquie Burgess was very interested in the restoration of the Canal as she knew it well having lived in the area and she asked us to arrange a guided walk for her. All in all it was a very useful day and we made our project known to a lot of useful contacts.

Chris Black - Vice Chair NWDCT

*The Broads Authority has a favourite quote which we think applies equally to our Canal:-
... 'a place that provides breathing space for the cure of souls'.*

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Julie Kelleher – IT Officer

North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust Website

The Trust website is hosted by Darren Rogers owner of Broadland Computers, Stalham.

You'll not see many large picture files on our website taking up valuable server space as our Facebook account is where we upload the majority of the ever changing photos of the Canal.

On checking my records it was the 6th July 2013 when Sue Boulton and I received confirmation that The North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust's new website domain name was available for us to get working on.

Over the years with what started as a very basic information website has become a site hosting 13 different information pages with lots of information for our World Wide audience to read and enjoy. The most regularly updated pages are the Trust 'Work Parties' and the 'Events' pages. On these pages you'll find the latest WP reports and where Trust Officers, Trustees and Trust volunteers host public presentations or even coffee mornings. Sometimes a private group will contact us asking if we can provide a presentation for their members, these private presentations are listed just under the Open Events listings.

Sadly since the passing of Sue I manage the website on my own but **if you're keen to volunteer your time and willing to learn to administer our website** I would love to welcome you to our team and our ever growing band of volunteering Trust social media administrators.

The North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust would very much like to thank Darren and Broadland Computers for their sponsorship, for hosting our website and for his continued support for the restoration and recovery of Norfolk's only locked sailing canal.

You can find us on the World Wide Web at:

www.nwdct.org - www.facebook.com/NWDCT - www.twitter.com/NWDCTrust

Julie Kelleher – IT Officer

Items of interest to members:

Inland Waterways Association photography competition

We know that we have some keen photographers who love taking photos of our canal and this competition is a must for you! Do consider entering as all publicity is good publicity for us.

The deadline is 31st January 2018 and this year's prize will be a **£100 voucher** to spend in **IWA's online shop iwashop.com**. The best images will feature on Christmas cards, the 2019 IWA calendar and other promotional materials.

Photographs can feature different weather conditions and seasons as well as a range of waterway activities and subjects such as different types of waterways craft, cycling, angling, walking, wildlife and structures. Photos need to be a high resolution at least 300dpi and at least 2100 pixels x 1500 pixels.

To enter please send your photos (including the location and waterway the photo was taken) by email, dropbox link or wetransfer to stephanie.pay@waterways.org.uk. A maximum of 20 photographs can be entered per person.



_Mark Gliddon won IWA's 2017 Calendar photography competition with his colourful picture of Tivertonian being towed by horse along the Grand Western Canal.

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Queries and Questions!

I'm enquiring as to whether it is permitted to kayak / canoe along the canal?

This question was received via the website on secretary@nwdct.org. Ivan Cane's response is summarised here:

The Canal has 4 owners. From the junction with the Ant and Smallburgh river near to Wayford Bridge to 20 yards below Honing Lock, the Canal is owned by Bidewell Ltd. This part of the Canal is easily canoed up to the Junction with the East Ruston Branch, as is the branch itself, from there to Honing Lock, you may find some obstructions, but it is regularly used by canoeists. The owners have placed an honesty box for a payment of a toll to navigate that delightful section of the Canal, to go towards its maintenance. For more information, please contact Luke Paterson <luke@patersonag.co.uk>.

From 20 yards below Honing Lock to 20 yards below Ebridge Lock the Canal remains in the hands of the North Walsham Canal Company. They have been permitting canoeists access to Honing Staithe Cut, where one can access, via a footpath to Weavers Way, for launching or taking out.

From the Cut, via Briggate, to Ebridge the NWCCo have not been permitting access of late - although there are videos on You-Tube of intrepid navigators.

The Old Canal Company allows free access, without prior notice, from Ebridge Mill Pond to Swafield Bridge. The first mile is fully navigable to Bacton Wood Lock. Above the Canal is dry to just above Royston Bridge (0.5 mile) and one could wheel a canoe along the banks. The Trust has a licence for a trial rewatering of this length, which we hope will happen in the near future. The final 1.2 miles to Swafield are shallow, and dependent on water levels and reed growth, so inspection of the watercourse before venturing is recommended. However, this length is canoed at times.

The final stretch (0.67M) from Swafield Bridge to Swafield locks is owned by Mike Starling, and if you wished to complete the whole Canal you need to contact him at Mick and Anne Starling <annemstarling@yahoo.co.uk>

Press Releases by Alex Hurrel



Alex

Alex Hurrel, the Trust Media and Press officer is always busy promoting the Trust in various publications. The article about Perry Hampson appeared in Towpath Talk and the article about Ed Cubitt appeared in the EDP.

Perry Hampson, Trust Wildlife Officer

Anyone passing the North Walsham and Dilham Canal in the wee small hours spotting a bright light and hearing a generator hum can rest assured it's nothing nefarious - just Perry Hampson out trapping moths. So far, he's recorded at least 200 moth species along the waterway, Norfolk's only sailing canal with locks.

The information is gold dust to fellow members of the North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust who are working to restore a unique part of the county's 19th-century heritage.

Former police officer Perry has been the Trust's wildlife officer for more than two years, documenting an ever-growing number of creatures making the most of restored sections of the Canal, especially the 2.3-mile stretch between Ebridge Millpond and Swafield Bridge.

From deer to dragonflies, wildlife has come flocking since choking vegetation was removed.

"If you want to maintain decent habitats, doing nothing is not an option," said Perry, 68.

"Left to its own devices, alder and willow scrub would start to take out the moisture and eventually you've got no canal. Canals are a linear feature which help create wildlife corridors."

Born in Clacton, Essex, Perry remembers, aged about four, accompanying his wheelchair-bound uncle as Perry's mum pushed him round the park.

"My uncle would point out all the birds to me," said Perry whose boyhood was spent watching insects and fish in woods and streams, rather than playing football with his mates.

He joined the police in North Walsham in 1976, serving for 34 years. Memorable incidents in his career include the night he arrived at a large house in response to a burglar alarm and was met by a man emerging through the front door holding a large TV. "He saw us and said: 'Aah - I suppose you'll be wanting this now,'" Perry recalled.

Later, as a public enquiry officer, Perry took a call one night from a Wells-next-the-Sea resident worried that the geese she could hear honking overhead wouldn't know where to land because it was foggy.

On another occasion a well-spoken woman rang demanding a police squad to help retrieve her Jack Russell from a rabbit hole.

But nowadays Perry's attention is on the animal life around the Canal and when he isn't spotting water vole and otter, his binoculars are trained on the skies.

Canal-area residents include kingfisher and grey wagtail, while marsh harrier, sandpipers, and little egret have also been sighted.

Meanwhile fishermen have caught 20lb-plus pike in the Canal which is also home to roach, rudd and eel. Despite a lifetime's dedication, Perry does admit to one gap in his natural history knowledge: "I don't know anything about plant life. If someone wants to walk the Canal and tell me what we've got, I'd love to know," he said.

Alex Hurrel, the Trust Media and Press officer



Ed Cubitt

When teenager Ed Cubitt looks out over the North Walsham and Dilham Canal at Ebridge, it's in the knowledge that he has helped open it up for thousands to enjoy.

The 17-year-old spent more than a year taking part in regular volunteer work parties on the waterway, Norfolk's only sailing canal with locks.

His efforts helped him gain his silver Duke of Edinburgh Award and counted towards the platinum and diamond Chief Scout Awards he has also achieved, all as a Victory explorer with First North Walsham Scouts.

The teenager, son of North Walsham vicar the Reverend Paul Cubitt, became involved after dropping in with his family at a canal open day about three years ago.

He needed to commit to a volunteering project over a period of 12 months as part of his Duke of Edinburgh Award requirements and, as a keen sailor and canoeist, the canal restoration project fitted the bill.

He said: "I was doing things like clearing undergrowth off the spillway, helping cut down trees and turning them into wood chippings.

"I was also working on pontoons, trimming overgrowth from the banks and adding stuff to the fires at the end of the sessions. It was hard work, but I enjoyed it."

He also gained new skills as a volunteer, including the use of manual saws and other tools, and learned more about the birds and other wildlife regularly seen along the canal. He would recommend it to all ages, including other young people.

"It was very satisfying," he said. "Where there was overgrowth, there's now a path and the canal is clear. It's nice to see people enjoying it - it makes it all worthwhile."

The teenager, who hopes to study transport management and planning at university, is on course to achieve his gold Duke of Edinburgh Award this summer.

Ed continues to show an interest in the canal and occasional attends work parties. He is always a welcome sight, biking along the banks to help with whatever is going on that day. Editor.



--oOo--

Perry Hampson – Wildlife Officer

Elephant Hawk-moth caterpillar

NW&DCT Volunteers carrying out removal of Himalayan Balsam at Purdys Marsh on 13th August 2017 were surprised to encounter a very large and fearsome-looking caterpillar.

It was the caterpillar of the Elephant Hawk-moth; a common moth in Britain as far north as Lancashire. It got its common name from the appearance of the caterpillar which has the front section of its body narrowed to look almost like an Elephant's trunk! Added to that, on the thicker part of the body behind the

'trunk' are some huge 'eye-spots', designed to scare off would-be predators. Some people have even mistaken these caterpillars for small snakes! At the tail end is a curved horn or spike, looking for all the world like a sting. It's all bluff and bluster. These marvellous caterpillars are completely harmless – if you discount their fondness for munching their way through Fuschias! They also feed on Himalayan Balsam, along with various willowherbs and bedstraws and other Officer plants.



Swallowtails at Ebridge

Alex Hurrell, the Trust's Press Officer, contacted me on 25th August 2017 with some tremendously exciting news. As a result of what a friend had told her, Alex very kindly put me in touch with the person who had made a very special discovery.

On 26th June 2017, and again on 1st July 2017, whilst out with her dog at Ebridge, Alex's friend reports seeing a Swallowtail butterfly! The sightings were on opposite sides of the canal. There is no way of knowing, however, if this was one butterfly that stayed for a few days, or two separate insects. I'd like to think it was the latter, but who knows?

It was very fortunate that the dates of these sightings had been noted as I can now include these as proper records on my database of the Canal's wildlife.

The finder had the presence of mind to quickly grab a snapshot of one of the butterflies, and whilst it is what wildlife photographers might refer to as a 'record shot', it is sufficiently clear to enable positive identification to be confirmed.

I have not previously had any reports of Swallowtails this far upstream, except for a chance sighting in my garden not far from the Canal in 2013. This now bodes well for the work being done to restore Purdy's Marsh with a view to encouraging Swallowtails to breed there.

I offered to credit the finder for her photograph, but she declined which is why her name does not appear here, so all I can do is say thank you to her for expanding our knowledge of the wildlife along the canal.

The Swallowtail, *Papilio machaon*, is a large butterfly, about 80mm across the wings. It lays its eggs on Milk Parsley in late May or June. The eggs hatch in about 7-10 days.

The adult butterfly is on the wing from late May until the middle of July, so if you're wandering along the canal at that time of year, keep a sharp look out for these beautiful creatures. They are not strong flyers and tend to look quite 'floaty' in flight.

The Swallowtail is only found on some sites in the Broadland area of Norfolk and nowhere else in Britain. It became extinct at Wicken Fen, Cambridgeshire, in the 1950's, and attempts to re-establish it there have not succeeded. It can be deduced from this that we have a difficult task on our hands, but having definite reports

of Swallowtails at Ebridge is most encouraging. Purdy's Marsh is only about a mile-and-a-half away from Ebridge!

It nectars (feeds) on Ragged Robin and other wetland flowers. It is the latter that probably brought them to Ebridge as we currently don't have any Milk Parsley – something we're working on at Purdy's Marsh.

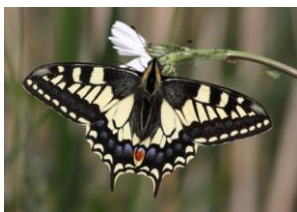


Photo: The Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Willow Emerald Damselfly – a new species for the Canal

On 29th August 2017, one of our Facebook readers, **David Martin**, took a walk along the canal between Royston Bridge and Swafield. He was fortunate enough to find a couple of **Willow Emerald Damselflies**, *Chalcolestes viridis*, and posted a beautiful photograph of one of them. This is a particularly good find, as I believe it is a new species for the Canal list.

This species, (formerly *Lestes viridis*), is a recent colonist to South East England. It first appeared in East Anglia around 2007 and is now quite well established. It flies late in the year, with the peak time being August - September, although sometimes they can be seen right through to November.

Individuals typically perch on the ends of exposed branches, hanging off at an angle of 45 degrees with their wings half open.

Thank you to David for bringing this new species to my attention and for permission to share the photograph.

Also thanks to the British Dragonfly Society from whose website I gathered some of the above information.
Perry Hampson - Wildlife Officer



Another of Alex's articles appeared in Towpath Talk:

Dennis swaps slippers for steel-capped boots



Dennis

What has Norfolk's Dennis Williams got in common with the Queen and the Pope?

They all put in a full day's graft at an age when most of us are pulling on our slippers and puffing on our pipes.

Now aged 85, Dennis is a hard-working and very valued member of the North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust's regular volunteer work parties.

When he isn't filling the cement mixer with shovels of sand, Dennis, from Blofield, is sawing up trees, clearing choking vegetation and burning it on

bonfires, alongside other volunteers working to restore the 19th-century waterway, Norfolk's only sailing canal with locks.

Dennis began volunteering with the Trust three years ago, following the death of his wife.

"I suddenly found myself on my own and I didn't know what to do," he said.

"I found out about the Trust on the internet and got in touch. I enjoy it - you have a good laugh. It's physical work and it keeps you active."

Before retirement Dennis worked for Shell, as a certification engineer on gas platforms. His working career took him all over the world, including the Falkland Islands, Brazil and Italy.

Work parties usually meet once a month on a Sunday, from 9.30am to about 4pm.

Men, women and teenagers, with or without skills, are welcome. The Trust is working to improve the neglected Canal, once nearly nine miles long, and over the past 17 years, volunteers have helped the Old Canal Company, which owns part of the waterway, to restore structures, which will bring 2.5 miles of the upper canal back into full navigable use.

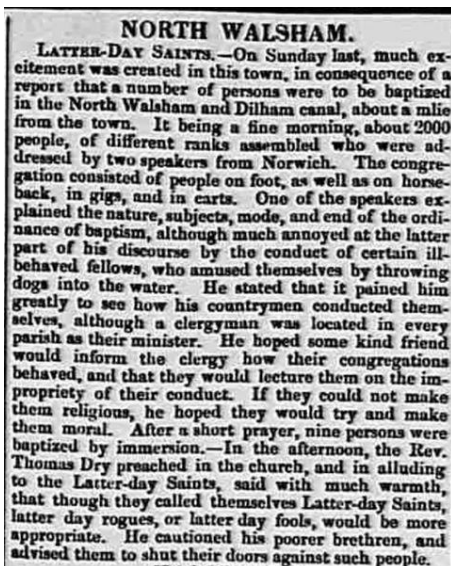
We are pleased to announce that Dennis Williams has agreed to become an Assistant Work Party Leader and so far he has really been a great asset to the Trust in a couple of areas. Welcome Dennis!

--oOo--

We are indebted to Chris Harvey for the following amusing article from 1849.

(Copyright the British Library)

NORTH WALSHAM



LATTER-DAY SAINTS. – On Sunday last, much excitement was created in this town, in consequence of a report that a number of persons were to be baptised in the North Walsham & Dilham canal, about a mile from the town. It being a fine morning, about 2000 people, of different ranks assembled who were addressed by two speakers from Norwich.

The congregation consisted of people on foot, as well as on horse-back, in gigs, and in carts. One of the speakers explained the subjects, mode, and end of the ordinance of baptism, although much annoyed at the latter part of his discourse by the conduct of certain ill-behaved fellows, who amused themselves by throwing dogs into the water. He stated that it pained him greatly to see how his countrymen conducted themselves, although a clergyman was located in every parish their minister. He hoped some kind friend would inform the clergy how their congregation behaved, and that they would lecture them on the impropriety of their conduct. If they could not make them religious, he hoped they would try and make them moral. After a short prayer, nine persons were

baptised by immersion. In the afternoon, the Rev Thomas Dry preached in the church, and in alluding to the Latter-Day Saints, said with much warmth, that though they called themselves Latter-Day Saints, latter day rogues, or latter day fools would be more appropriate. He cautioned his poorer brethren, and advised them to shut their doors against such people.

--oOo--

The Trust is fortunate to have knowledgeable and experienced Trustees and Officers working tirelessly behind the scenes. This item focuses on:-

Tom Carr, Land Issues for the NWDC Trust

A canal and the railway are both linear estates.

My year with the Norwich office of the British Rail Property Board proved to be more relevant to what I am now able to do in advising the Canal Trust and its proprietors than I could ever have expected. That year was spent on the top floor of Grosvenor House on Prince of Wales Road, opposite what is now a Premier Inn.

In 1970 when I was in Grosvenor House it overlooked the coasters unloading at the timber wharves on land which belonged to one of the Norwich charities and where Property Partnerships built Hotel Norwich. I knew that my work in the Property Board office would last only one year - the third year of a four-year degree course in urban estate management. What I did not know was that my experience with monitoring wayleaves, discovering adverse possession and licences to use or cross railway land would have relevance to the use of the canal. The main difference has been that, unlike the railway estate, the canal has suffered from the illegal abstraction of water by licences issued in ignorance of the prohibition in the 1812 Act.

In a sense not much has changed, as the railway estate is as vulnerable to opportunistic trespassers taking land outside their ownership as the canal has proved to be. The main difference was that the railway estate was policed by the Property Board surveyors and the canal was not, or at least not very well, hence the amount of trouble and expense the canal proprietors have incurred in re-establishing the canal boundaries as defined in the 1812 enabling Act.

The guidance I have been able to give has not always been from the front. Trustees and proprietors have often led the way, leaving me to ponder the consequences.

Some of my research has taken me into the reading room of the County Record Office and the County Engineer's Office where I have been able to see, on the microfiche, the correspondence between Cubitt and Walker (acting for the North Walsham Canal Co Ltd) regarding various bridges over the canal, their replacement, widening and transfer to the County Council. Recently the County Council's obligation to replace Royston Bridge, presently only a culvert, with a normal bridge to the required eight feet of navigable height was confirmed by the examination of those records.

Statute established the right to build the canal and imposed on the proprietors the obligation to maintain it. The 1812 Act together with the later Act, which permits the sale of the canal but prohibits its closure, remains on the Statute Book subject to a consent to abandon the stretch from Antingham Pond to just below the Swafeld bottom lock.

The size of the canal, and the earth works which comprise its formation, has not received any authorised variation. However the earlier disinterest of conveyancing solicitors or compelling claims by opportunistic frontagers has resulted in at least four cases where the proprietors have had to take legal action to assert their position.

So after 45 years, I have returned to the issues which arise on a linear estate where only abstraction of water distinguishes the canal from the railway estate.

In summary, I work for the Trust and any proprietor that requires to defend the integrity of the canal as private property where public access is being encouraged to what may eventually become a multi-recreational green corridor.

Tom Carr, Land Issues

--oOo--

The Trust was invited to the Launch of the North Walsham Showcase Gallery's **Calendar Planner for 2018**, by Jan and Bob Lester at their shop in the Market Place. One of the pictures included, was that taken by our ICT Officer, Julie Kelleher, of the picnic bench at Ebridge Millpond. David Revill and Ivan Cane represented the Trust. Jan and Bob are great supporters of the Trust, and will be including a Trust leaflet with every calendar sold. The calendar, and Trust cards may be purchased at the Showcase Gallery, priced £7.50 (post & packing £2.)

Dates for your diary

Talks & Presentations 2017

18th October.	Park Farm Probus.	Chris and Mary Black.
2nd November.	Wissey U3A.	Ivan Cane.
14th November.	Trunch Friends.	Ivan Cane.
24th November.	Broadland and Coastal Cruising Club	Ivan Cane.

Work Parties

It is not feasible to list work party dates here as Quagmire is issued quarterly. Work parties are usually held every alternate Sunday but sometimes weekend and mid-week parties are organised for particular reasons. If you would like to come along to a work party, contact David Revill (Work Party Organiser) on 01603 738648 or click here davgis@live.co.uk to send him an email. Just bring a packed lunch, gloves and a willing attitude!

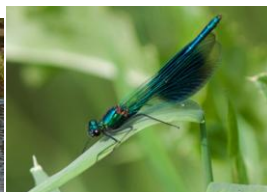
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Our appeal for canal photographs to use as greetings cards resulted in the three lovely scenes shown below the ever popular wildlife series. We thank member Lizzie Guilbert for the two stunning sunset photos and our ICT Administrator, Julie Kelleher for the peaceful daytime view of the canal.

The A5 greetings cards are all photographed on the Canal, are blank inside and are a reasonable £1.50 each. Canal information is printed on the back and the cards are a delightful way of publicising our canal.



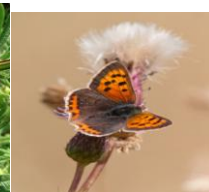
Mute Swan



Banded Demoiselle



Emperor Moth



Small Copper



Picnic Bench



Sunset 1



Sunset 2

Cards are available by post via mdablack@btinternet.com Postage & Packing £1.50 for up to 12 cards or from The Showcase Gallery, 40a Market Place, North Walsham (01692 500928) at £2 per card.

The Quagmire is a newsletter for all members of NW&DCT and members are encouraged to make suggestions for future items.

The deadline for items for inclusion in the Winter2017/18 Quagmire (at the Trustees' discretion) is the first week of January. Contact mdablack@btinternet.com