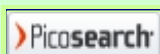


East Anglian Waterways Association. P



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Home	About Us	News & Events	East Anglian Waterways	The Easterling	North Walsham and Dilham - Updates	North Walsham and Dilham - Then and Now	Work Party	Join & Donate	Directors	Lin
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And now have your say in the ***EAWA Forum***

NEW! With General Forum for you to chat!

East Anglian Waterways Association and North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust, Work Parties - 2012

Briggate Mill Pond & Lock Site	Briggate Mill Pond.	Honing Staithe Cut.	Briggate Lock.	Ebridge.	Royston and Honing Lock.	Work Party at Royston Bridge Area.	Work Party at Royston Bridge Area.	Royston Bridge Area.	Royston Bridge and Weir.	Royston Bridge Area.	Ebridge.
16 Dec. 2012.	2 Dec. 2012.	18 Nov. 2012.	4 Nov. 2012.	21 Oct. 2012.	7 Oct. 2012.	23 Sep. 2012.	5 Sep. 2012.	26 Aug. 2012.	19 Aug. 2012.	29 Jul. 2012.	8 Jul. 2012.
Honing Lock Area.	Royston Bridge area.	Royston Bridge area.	Honing Lock & Staithe Cut.	Royston Bridge.	Royston Bridge.	Honing Lock.	Honing Lock.	Briggate Mill Pond.	Briggate Mill Pond and lock area.	Royston Bridge area. (Bacton Wood upper).	Royston Bridge area. (Bacton Wood upper).
24 Jun. 2012.	10th Jun. 2012.	27th May. 2012.	13th May. 2012.	29 Apr. 2012.	15 Apr. 2012.	1 Apr. 2012.	18 Mar. 2012.	4 Mar. 2012.	19 Feb. 2012.	22 Jan. 2012.	8 Jan. 2012.

In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Briggate Mill Pond.

Sunday 16th December, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. On this second visit to site to clear up the remaining tasks allotted, given time, volunteers and weather.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. On arriving on site the weather proved to be just the job for the day – wall to wall sunshine and no wind! The first several minutes were taken up observing the activities of a pair of kingfishers flitting about over the mill pond and along the canal. They were busying themselves fishing and seemingly doing rather quite well. There is something living under the water here after all, which attracts such wild birds. We have achieved something in assisting nature back into a previously desolate site!

The plan for the day and H&S details were discussed. Back on the business side of things, **Chris** took the large mower once more over the chamber island and improved it for the last time this year. Meanwhile, **David S** and **Mary** ventured onto the east chamber island space and cut away the brambles and other vegetation to expose the “*Danger – Keep out*” sign standing there, alerting people to the potential dangers on this side of the lock chamber. I cleared some brambles from the roadside, which were stretching out onto the roadway. **Laurie**, meanwhile, had taken an interest in the engineering side of how to inspect and more importantly remedy the problems with the collapsed part of the chamber wall.

Time had seemed to fly by and so it was that we stopped to partake of a ‘coffee’ and mince pies and also some rather naughty other creamy, weight-putting-on cakes. Undaunted by this sudden intake of calories, **Chris** and **David S** removed themselves to the top of the pill box, which had become rather covered in tree debris and looked decidedly untidy. This did not take long at all to clear and afterwards, picking up tapes, clip-board and pencils we wandered over to take measurements of the mill building and quay heading alongside the Mill Stream running beside the old granary site. This mill stream belongs to the **North Walsham Canal Company**.

Just as we were leaving site at about 12.30, our surveyor arrived and I stayed with **LA** to discuss the measurements and details of the subject works with him.

My thanks go to all who turned up today and of course to all who have made the work parties so interesting and worthwhile during the year. Our progress has certainly been noticed and noted! The potential for preventing flooding is being slowly processed and hopefully it will not be too long before our dream will be realised and the landowners and householders previously affected will begin to see the benefits of our work.

Nature already knows!

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Briggate Mill Pond.

Sunday 2nd December, 2012





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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Honing Staithe Cut.

Sunday 18th November, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To cut grass and other foliage around the sides of the Cut; to check on dangerous looking trees in the area which could endanger people; to maintain the free movement area along the Walk; to remove any obstructions (both natural and man-made) from the water in the Cut.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather turned out as forecast and proved to be a very fine day without a breath of wind and pure wall-to-wall sunshine - which for the second half of November is quite surprising!

A total of eight (8) volunteers turned up and the work progressed easily throughout the time on site.

Before we took our lunch-break, taken in the sunshine near to the mouth of the Cut, the major part of the ground to the south of the Cut had been attended to and left looking really tidy and spacious for the winter months.





Of interest, during lunch, an enormous amount of spiders invaded our space! Before we resumed work, the grassed area was covered in a myriad of spider webbs - looking like a silk carpet, glistening in the calm air and sun.

Several pieces of tree branches were removed from the Cut and before we left at 15.00 hrs, a long stretch of the growing reed had been taken from the water, but some left on the side of the bank itself.

A smallish branch was taken from the Canal upstream of the bridge which was causing a large build-up of weed, some of which had taken root in the bed. Shoots were removed from some standing trees but any ivy berries were left for the wildlife to feed upon.



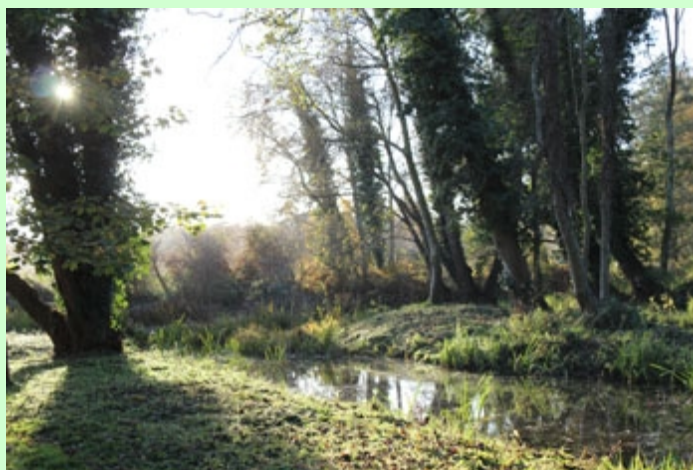
On the tree inspection around the Walk, three small trees were found to be in a danger category and these were removed. Several walking couples passed through the area, most accompanied by dogs, and all praised our work here and at other parts on the canal, especially at Ebridge, which they all reported as quite spectacular! Beautiful nature and water visible again! The main work today was concentrated on the south bank area and on the next visit, attention will be paid to the north bank area.

My thanks to all who attended and made it a pleasant, productive and relaxing day!

Our next work party will be at Briggate on Sunday 2nd December 2012 where there is a lot to do!

(E-Mail from Kevin Thomas:-)

Just to add....The man you don't often see in a photo as he is normally taking them, and also another end of day pic showing a result of the days efforts.



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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Briggate Lock.

Sunday 4th November, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

WORK PLAN. To clear the bank of unwanted, young, tree growth, which is damaging the bank and threatening the integrity of the bank, which if left could lead to flooding.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. Weather was forecast to be rain before 09.00 and continuing through the day – sometimes heavy. The met office got it right!

A total of six volunteers turned up in the rain. As the bank would be quite slippery due to the rain and the current wet state of the bank together with its steep profile, I stated that if anyone wished to stay and work, that this be restricted to the level area and not to attempt to stray onto the sloping parts.

The other part of the work programme today, was to attend a local meeting at 10.30 to discuss the future work on the canal in this area. Leaving three people behind, the other three moved off at the appointed time and on return at 13.40 found that a good amount of work had been carried out with several piles of brash standing on the sides of the track as witness to their efforts.

Not a pleasant day for working outside but on the whole it was a successful day both at the meeting and on the canal-side.

My sincere thanks go to the stalwarts who soldiered through the mud and wet to prepare the area for later proper clearance.





[TOP](#)

In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Ebridge.

Sunday 21th October, 2012

Report from: **David Revall, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To assist the owner of this pound in his **Information Event** on the lock chamber island; to clear the vegetation from the weir.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather was not good during the whole day with one or two light showers along the way, but it was not thought to be too cold for the event.

On arrival on site at 09.00, we found some canoes from **Bank Boats of Wayford Bridge** there, as planned, waiting on the island for their potential passengers.



Whilst erecting a tent to house the information and membership paperwork and other canal exhibits, **Laurie** arrived with a caravan, which was used to provide tea and coffee for the volunteers. **Tom** arrived trailing a rib, which was duly launched and later made several trips upstream.

Apart from being employed on the information and assistance side of the day, some of the fifteen volunteers went over to the weir and started to clear away the ever encroaching vegetation from its' surface and some from the backsoke. The original concrete facing (laid in 1941) is now in a bit of a sad state of repair and a lot of the water flowing over the top is now flowing under the facing.





Somewhere upstream from the lock a tree had fallen into the canal and a couple went by boat to remove the debris and allow uninterrupted navigation once more in accordance with the Act of 1812.

A gentle flow of people arrived to learn what had been completed so far and the plans for the future. One lady had heard a rumour that a large boat-yard was to be built somewhere along the canal in this region! I tried to allay her fears about this and other issues of concern and offered to come along and give a talk to her and friends if they so wished – at a time of their choosing. The offer was not taken up at this time, but it would be born in mind for the future.

Some-when during the morning, a group of old style tractors (Fergusons?), the one-time life blood of the country, came along and parked on the chamber island facing the road – an interesting and quintessential sight in this country/canal scene.



Most of the drivers took to the water in canoes for the fun of it and to look to their skills to see if they could plough a straight furrow through the water?

A good day with lots of enquiries and new memberships of the **Trust**. The general thoughts were that an event such as this in 2013 would be a real treat for all, for all manner of reasons including exercise, education of both young and old and looking at nature, including plants on the canal banks returning to bloom once more now that natural sunlight can reach them.



My thanks to all concerned at our work-party and assisting the **Old Canal Company** at its' information event.

The work-party on Sunday 4th November 2012 will be at Bacton Wood Lock.

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Royston and Honing Lock.

Sunday 7th October, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To meet at **Royston Bridge** and to carry out work with the Owner of the pound and an offshoot of the party visiting **Honing Lock** to erect some additional fencing.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather was forecast to be fine all day and so it turned out to be! The Met Office got it right....

On arrival at **Royston Bridge** we found that **Laurie** was already there with **Jerry** and chain saw running! The task here was mostly to do with Health & Safety; namely in the felling and disposal of two or three trees which were growing in situations which could quite easily cause damage, injury or death should anything untoward befall them. All were growing adjacent to the public

roadway.

With 12 volunteers on site, the task of felling and removing was easily undertaken, especially with the skills of both **Jerry** and **Laurie** at the helm and the rest of us taking care of the disposal after making the trees into more manageable sizes once on the ground.



Our Pyro-man, **Alan**, took care of the brush and some of the larger pieces were lifted, mechanically, onto a trailer to be carted away.



After the lunch break, taken in glorious sunshine, the clearing up operation continued whilst I left with **Ivan** and **Darren** to go to **Honing Lock**.

There we found the expected rolls of fencing lying suitably concealed under vegetation behind the existing standing fencing. Some folk were also present there taking a picnic beside the canal. This new fencing, provided by others, was duly erected as a continuation of the existing and reaching to within about a foot of the backsoke.

As stated above, this work is in the interests of Health & Safety in that it will help to prevent the casual access to the sides of the nearly empty lock chamber. It looks rurally in keeping, too!





Thanks as always to the support of you, the volunteers and the enormous amount of work which is carried out at each work party.

Our next meeting on Sunday 21st October 2012, is at the Ebridge Lock where we will be assisting in any work found for us there by the owner, who is also having an “Information” event on the chamber island.

This follows on from the very successful EAWA and Trust Event on 5th and 6th of May this year. Look forward to seeing you there!

A VERY IMPORTANT DATE....Wednesday 7th November 2012 which is the date set for Laurie's' Appeal against the stop notices issued to him by the Environment Agency for working on the Canal. If you can be there in support...PLEASE BE THERE!

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Royston Bridge Area.

Sunday 25th September, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

To The Team,





What a turnout after the earlier uncertain weeks. We are now back to the routine of meeting every two weeks. I thank you most heartily for this as there is such a lot of work to carry out here – and not a lot of time to do it.

Next time on the 7th October, we will be at either **Royston** or **Bacton Wood Mill** for the main party with an offshoot going to **Honing Lock** to put up some chestnut pale fencing.

Oh! As I was at **Honing Lock** last Monday, I noticed that the water was nearly covering the conduit pipe which runs alongside the small access bridge over the backsoke. This was caused by high spring tides once more – only this time some 9.3 metres at Blakeney! This is one more proof that the canal up to **Honing Lock** is tidal and therefore is navigable by that right.

Look forward to meeting you all soon

Take care!

[TOP](#)

In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Royston Bridge Area.

Sunday 9th September, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To liaise with the **owner** and carry out any works which he wishes us to do. In the event, the owner was away and therefore we carried on with general tidying up the canal bed and banks to the north of the bridge.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather turned out to be just right for carrying out the work envisaged and a pleasant day was spent with a large degree of satisfaction and success. Albeit only four volunteers were present, we worked steadily on and left the site ready prepared for the plant to move in and remove the remaining tree stumps from the canal bed and banks.

Following our lunch break we were shown some of the items found on the canal bed. These items included bullets (war-time use, spent), rings, coins and also other larger items such as an old iron wheel from a wheelbarrow!

We departed site at 15.00 on a fine afternoon.

The next work-party will be at the same venue on Sunday 23rd September 2012.

My thanks as usual to the stalwarts who came along on this occasion.

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Royston Bridge Area.

Sunday 26th August, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To meet the owner of the canal in this area and assist him in any way possible.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. As I would be away this weekend, Chris Black took over as i/c. Here is his report:-

"The day began with bright sunshine and was already very warm and humid, even before we started work. However, **Laurie** had had the foresight to provide lots of cold drinks - in a portable electric cold box! The work party was obviously in for some hard graft.

Ten volunteers signed in and with due respect to the on-site H&S issues in this dry section of the canal, I discussed the plan of work with **Laurie** and **The Team**. He was keen to continue with his maintenance effort on the structures so that all would be ready for the planned remedial work to be carried out during the forthcoming visit by the **London WRG**

. It was to be a day of mixing concrete. Initially we had two wheel barrows but following a tyre blow out, (being driven too fast? DR) we were reduced to one which **Alan** stoically pushed many times with heavy loads of wet concrete. The mixing process was relentless, broken only by cold drink breaks.

Lunch was taken at approx 12.30 and I think we all appreciated the rest. During the lunch break **Laurie** and **Jeremy** fetched a very large dumper and grab hook in order to shift the old tree roots, which had been left on the dry canal bed since the water controlling structure was cleared of roots and debris a year or so ago. It has made the area much tidier and will make mowing easier.

Lunch over, we continued mixing, being interrupted briefly by a thunderstorm and a little rain. By 16.30 we ran out of sand and ballast and had only one bag of cement left. With about 3 metres left to complete the job we had no choice but to abandon it until another day. It was estimated that we had mixed approx six tonnes of concrete!

We had a few comments from passers-by during the day and all were extremely positive

. Chris Black, Acting WPO."

That is a report of further hard labour by our dedicated Team! Well done and a very big Thank You from me.

The next work party will again be in the Royston Bridge area on *Sunday 9th September* and thereafter at two weekly intervals once more at the various places on the canal. The exact locations I will pass on in good time for you to be able to plan your movements.

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Addition work party at Royston Bridge Area.

Saturday 25th August, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

Chris Black and **Roger Hopkinson** took part in this venture, which was to continue work on the flood defences near to the former **Wherry Inn**.

Work continued through the day until it was halted by a thunderstorm! This was no mean thing as the canal bed became covered in water (whatever next?), making further progress impossible.

The Team took shelter under the bridge until deciding to pack up for the day at about 16.30. Great progress had, however, been made with several metres having been added to the previously erected structure.

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Royston Bridge and Weir.

Sunday 19th August, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.





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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Royston Bridge Area.

Sunday 29th July, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

We had 13 volunteers of The Team and the London branch of the WRG. Now the WRG are really professionals in canal restoration as they have been involved in it for so many years now. Their organisation and working ethics are a pleasure to see. They hope to be able to return at a later date this year to finish off the task.

THE PLAN. To clear the public footpath north of the **Royston Bridge** up as far as the **Pygneys Wood** area; to assist the canal owner in his works in connection with flood defences and to assist the canal owner in prevention of land erosion measures.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The day dawned bright and gay with the thought of water from the skies at a later time. It turned out very well and pleasant and work got under way in short time in sunshine. My thanks to **Matt**, with the strimmer, and to **Alan** with the big mower, for tackling and breaking a way through the 'jungle' on top of the canal bank, otherwise known as the public footpath up to **Pygneys Wood** from **Royston Bridge**. A truly splendid effort!





Later, when the canal bank is reformed, the top will be levelled and therefore a lot easier to keep in a neat and un-obstructive manner for the passage of users of the footpath. Below the bridge, work was carried on, on the flood defences at the spillway. A group from the **London area** were doing the majority of the work here, co-operating with the owner. This work progressed so well that now, in any event, water would not be able to breach the bank to bring about flooding lower downstream.

The remainder of **The Team** acted in unison with the owner in clearing away some bush and weed growth and exposing the bank ready for the installation of quay heading, which is a necessity to prevent bank erosion. The original canal bed of clay was exposed in places.



Interestingly, there were so many finds exposed in this area, ranging from old beer bottles of various sorts and from various companies, pieces of pottery, medicine and poison bottles to the remains of children's' wheeled toys. By the end of the day, several metres of the quay-heading

had been installed, with water lapping at its' feet. No! Not yet canal water, but ground and heavy rain-water which came down in torrents just before 'time' was called.

My thanks to all the volunteers who attended today and made once more a great advance in the progress of this canal and protecting the surrounding landscape.



The next meeting will be on the 19th August and will be at Bacton Wood Lock.

Further details of the revised sites for the programme for the rest of the year will be published when I have the confirmation from the canal owners. Thank you all so much and take care.

[TOP](#)

In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Ebridge.

Sunday 8th July, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.



THE PLAN. Originally to work at **Bacton Wood lock** area but this was altered by the owner, **Mr Laurie Ashton** due to more pressing work required at **Ebridge**. This work was de-weeding and clearing reads from the mill pond area.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather started the day the way it meant to carry on – wet and cool! The eight volunteers met up at **Bacton** and then drove to **Ebridge** where **Laurie** fired up the **Weasel**.

He moved methodically around the pond and pulled weed and reeds from the water, without unnecessarily disturbing the bottom and moved them near to the pontoon. We had previously clambered aboard the pontoon and pulled the weed out of the water onto it and thence onto the chamber island bank. It was left there in piles to allow any wildlife contained therein to return back to the water.



Nothing noteworthy happened apart from observing the great amount of water life evident in the collections. It just proved to us all that the improvements made to the depth, width and quality of the water present between **Ebridge** and **Bacton Wood Lock** had had a major beneficial effect on

water life. Leeches, shrimp, water snails, frogs, toads, fish fry, mayfly lava – all seen today – where maybe the odd frogs were to be seen when we started work in this area! Then to crown the observations near to the end of play – a kingfisher appeared and flew upstream! Kingfishers are certainly not seen near to dirty water, for obvious reasons.

Just before lunch-break two of us moved over to start clearing the spillway of growth. The water was flowing over the weir but its' progress down the slope was impaired by the immense amount of weeds and saplings growing into the breaking up concrete surface (laid in 1941, if you remember?). Before we finished work, the weed piles were laid more evenly along the edge of the chamber island to facilitate the easier return to the water of said wildlife.



A good reed bed is now growing along the banks of the canal in this area for the use of wild bird life and other aquatic creatures requiring such shelter. Two wild timber benches have been erected, one on the chamber island and one on the western bank, for people exercising in the newly available area to take their rest for a while and observe the returning natures' beauty.

*The next work party will be in the **Royston Bridge area** on Sunday 29th July at the usual time.*

My thanks to all who turned out today in the, now to be half expected, wet summer!

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at the Honing Lock Area and Canal.

Sunday 24th June, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To cut the grass between the two small access bridges at the lock and to continue to clear debris and plant growth from the canal water as far north as the first bend in the canal.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather forecast was not too good but we started to work nevertheless. **Mary** strimmed the grass footpath to some 5feet wide between the two bridges. In the area of the back-soke, the defences which we had built earlier to deter folk from entering the area beside the water upstream of the access bridge had remained intact and there was no sign of anyone having moved there.



The broken plank in the small bridge, reported following our last work party there, had been replaced by the relevant authority. Of the eight volunteers present, only one, **Alan**, had waders! So it was that the seven of us stayed, roughly, on the west bank and Alan waded!

Work was interrupted somewhen around 11.00hrs due to a small matter of very heavy rain. The thunder and lightning which came along with it merely added to the interest of the morning.





To counter this set-back we repaired to the vehicles and sought shelter therein - at the same time partaking of a somewhat early lunch, resolving that, should it commence to rain again we would cease work for the day. It didn't - and we completed the first phase of the task in the canal, finally leaving site at just before 15.00hrs. Great care was taken when approaching the edge of the water that we would not be disturbing any possible wild-life there. None was found.

Not to have anything to do with this work party but of great interest nevertheless, we found that a great number of sand-bags had been laid alongside the **Water Measuring Station** located just upstream of the lock. This wall had been constructed projecting some 2feet or more into the flow of the canal and restricting the width of the navigation. It was also noted that the bricks, which we had salved for future possible use in the maintenance of the mouth of the lock, had all disappeared! Of note also was that the ground nearby had been carefully levelled and grass seed sown onto it.





This Water Measuring Station, inoperative since 2008 (it is believed) but with flows still recorded in the press since then, is possibly being brought back to life again without any consultation with the EAWA

Despite all, this was a most enjoyable day and a great deal achieved and, I hasten to add, lessons learned about methodology for future use!

The next work party will be as planned at Bacton Wood Lock area, parking at the Work-shops, on Sunday 8th July 2012.

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Royston Bridge area.

Sunday 10th June, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To liaise with the owner, **Mr L Ashton** and to complete the previous unaccomplished task of locating the lower gate stop timbers (if present); expose the hinge bases; to take measurements for replacement gates; to clear debris from lock chamber; remove fish (if any) and other obvious living beings from lock chamber; to tidy around the new brickwork.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather, despite an unfavourable forecast, turned out to be excellent for the type of work envisaged. A most pleasant day! The task required that the water in the chamber be removed and at the start that had not been accomplished! However to fill in the time, the litter around the west chamber wall top was tidied of used plastic sand bags and other sandbags, brick wrappings and general debris resulting from building works. Wow!

A ladder was placed into the chamber to connect the upper cill to the invert and several members of the volunteer team tentatively lowered themselves into the black mire. Ladies would pay a fortune to be bathed in this black mud, but we made it available totally free of charge! The invert (base) in this location (inspected some time ago) is totally of timber excepting for the 'V' shape behind the lower gate stop boards, which is of concrete.



Whilst there was still a considerable amount of water present, one of the first tasks was to collect as many fish and water snails as possible. Surprisingly, this task resulted in several buckets full of fry and water snails and these were carefully placed into the water on the other side of the temporary dam. Even at its' lowest level, there was still present a good depth of some five feet of water, below the bottom cill, so that any remaining fish etc could survive until the water in the chamber returned again. Just before we broke for lunch, and after a couple of tons of mud had been labouriously pushed out of the lock, the long awaited find was made - the 'v' shaped gate stops! That find boosted all of the eleven (11) volunteers on site and a peaceful and contented re-vitalling took place in the sunshine.



Following the lunch break the time came to take details and this was done using very careful measurements. With one piece of wood costing upwards of £1,000, (more than one required of course!) one cannot afford to make errors in the measuring! Getting to the foot of the quoins was not an easy task as water constantly returned to cover the area. However, this was achieved by grim determination and the required details were sketched and sizes noted. A very contented group of people finally left site at about 16.00 hrs as the water slowly returned to the lock chamber. A final clear up of the site can take place at a later date, but right now it looks a much tidier place than at 09.30 this morning - and vital information gained.

My thanks, as always, to the volunteers of The Team for their constant efforts.

*The next work party will be at Honing Lock and canal on Sunday 24th June 2012 and remember **please do NOT park on the Honing tri-angles** as they are required for the people of Honing on that day. Thank you.*



Plank of wood leading up to the 'v' boards. Job done!

[TOP](#)

In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Royston Bridge area.

Sunday 27th May, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To liaise with the owner, **Mr L Ashton** in connection with the removal of the scaffolding from the lock chamber; tidying up and to close the top lock gates: to take measurements for the bottom gates.



WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather was absolutely grand! Too good for work, but things had to be done!

Whilst the first team descended onto the scaffolding, the spare pieces were loaded onto the wagon beside the top cill. In the mean-time, the pumps had been working to drain the lock of water. This operation seemed to be taking a long, long time! On reflection, of course, there were several hundred thousand litres of water sitting there, so one should not look to the impossible. The work was pleasant, the company great and the first level had been removed before we took a well earned break for hydraulic refuelling (for the personnel) kindly provided by our host.

Lunch was taken after the boards had been lowered to the bottom level, some even managed to find shade in which to sit! Many photographs were taken and after the lunch break, most of the

weed had been dragged out of the lock and stacked on the side, so that any wee things could find their way back into the water. One water snail was found at another location and put back into the water.

The final part of the scaffolding was heaved up and stacked on the wagon followed by another drink break and then the magical moment of closing the top gates! What a wonderful sight that made. Unfortunately we could not get to take measurements for the bottom gates as the water was still in situ so that inspection of the invert was not possible.

We finally left site at 15.25 after a very satisfying, hot, and tiring day.

My thanks to all of the 12 volunteers present today.

*The next work party will be on **Sunday 10th June** at **Ebridge** and the next on **Sunday 24th June** at **Honing Lock** (both as per the original programme).*

Early reminder: at Honing please do NOT park on the grass triangles as they are required for the villagers!



[TOP](#)

In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at canal near to Honing Lock & Staithe Cut.

Sunday 13th May, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA. Work Party Leader.**

THE PLAN. To 'cut' the grass between the access bridge and the lock bridge to a width of 2 cm; trim the prescribed area adjacent to both chamber walls; to clear debris and growth from the water in the canal upstream of the lock; to start to clear the weed obstructing the back-soke downstream of the little access bridge, (one wooden piece of this bridge is found to be broken and this is being reported to the relevant authority as a danger); time and volunteers permitting, to inspect the trees in the Staithe Cut area and remove if necessary.



The Canoeman!

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. With ten volunteers and **John Parker, film maker**, on site and the weather planned to be sunny all day, all seemed to be set fair. After the welcome and the H&S and general briefing, with particular attention being paid to careful inspection of the work areas for signs of birds or other natural inhabitants, we split into separate parties.

One promptly cut the grass on the path and the two areas adjacent to the chamber walls. The coping stones on the two walls are now readily visible providing a splendid improvement to the looks of the area! Another group ventured to the entrance to the back-soke and commenced the clearance of weeds etc there.



Four of us walked the Weavers Way up to the Staithe Cut and immediately went to the long-fallen tree being held up by others at an acute angle adjacent to the Walk. It was found that one of the supporting trees was also dead! With the dead trees on the ground, they were cut up into smaller chunks and stacked loosely for the habitat of the smaller creatures. We then walked the Walk and took out a further two trees deemed to be a danger and laid or stacked the results of these.

On return to the Lock we found that it was about lunch time and so took our break in glorious sunshine. It should be noted that during the whole day, we found that we were constantly being asked about the canal by walkers and also canoeists. **The Canoeman** arrived with eight canoes and potential occupants, who all set off happily in the direction of Wayford Bridge. Other canoes arrived from downstream and naturally, all of the occupants wanted to discuss the work which we were carrying out.



Following our lunch, we split into two groups and one returned to the back-soke and the other to the water in the canal. It was found that a couple of trees, heavily laden with ivy, had collapsed into the canal and these were removed to clear both the water and the bank. There is much more to do here – as in the back-soke and the winding hole. We departed from the site at 15.00, leaving any disturbed fencing returned to its' original state.





My thanks to all who attended and made the day so enjoyable! *The next Work Party will be at the Royston Bridge area on Sunday 27th May 2012.*

[TOP](#)

In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at canal near to Royston Bridge.

Sunday 29 April, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To continue the clearance of scrub from the right hand, dry bank on the upstream canal side, as far as the breach by the foot-bridge.

As I needed to be at the AGM of the EAWA this day, the following report has been sent in to me by **Darren Cooke** (also an EAWA member) who was acting as the Work Party Leader for the day.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. I arrived first at the pill box at about 09.30 and decided to have a quick walk up to Pygneys Wood. On returning to the road I met **Alan** and **Claire**. Alan informed me of **Dauids'** e-mail sent last night (which I had missed) and we inspected the remaining scrub and brash for birds' nests before returning to the cars for the tools.

Matt arrived from Briggate, another e-mail not read!

Whilst **Alan** set about lighting a fire, not easy in such "drought-ridden" conditions and **David's** unusually "damp" weather conditions (perhaps another e-mail missed?). The rest of us (total of 7 volunteers) started to remove the aforementioned scrub, constantly keeping an eye out for signs of our feathered friends.

During the morning **Kevin** arrived with his strimmer and started on the brambles and grass a little further up the bank. Once the scrub had been cut down, a couple moved up to three further small alder trees near to the foot bridge and the others kept feeding the fire.



At 12.00 all the scrub was on the fire, so we stopped for lunch. After lunch we all moved up to the last alders and had these cleared by 13.30. It was decided not to burn these as they were too far from the first fire and it was best not to start another, so we made sure the foot path was tidy and finished the work party as the "drought" continued with another heavier shower.

Darren Cooke





Many thanks for that **Darren** and to all who turned out on this 'miserable' morning.

*The next work party will be, as planned, at **Honing** - please meet up at the lock on Sunday 13th May 2012.*

I made a visit after the work party finished to Honing Lock. Comparison with the pictures I sent after the work party four weeks ago show what a difference a bit of water makes. The difference in level can particularly be seen in the height of the pipe alongside the footbridge above the water level in the previous pictures. Flow of water through the lock was somewhat increased.....

Alan Bertram



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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at canal near to Royston Bridge.

Sunday 15 April, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To continue the clearance of scrub from the dry bank on the right hand, upstream side of the canal above Royston Bridge.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. I had met up with **Gary Summers, London WRG**, and brought him along to the site.

After giving the main briefing and the H&S to the assembled group of volunteers (welcome to new member Claire!) I handed over to **Chris** to take charge for the day. I then took **GS** on a conducted tour of the canal down as far as **Bacton Wood Mill Lock** and explained the work to be carried out in the maintenance of the canal spill-way downstream of Royston Bridge.

Here is the report as sent to me by Chris.

"After **DR** had left to show the WRG man around the canal, our first task was to survey meticulously the scrub and brash for nests before anything was cut down or removed. We, seven volunteers, all took part in the survey and found only one, old disused, scruffy nest.



During the brash removal we continued to look for any nests which we might have missed but found none. The brash was burned on a previous bonfire site so as not to disturb any possible life in the dry canal bed. The footpath was kept clear of debris during the whole operation.

Lunch was taken at 12.00 and with some of the work party leaving early, we decided to halt the work at 15.30. During the afternoon we retrieved a sign from the backsoke - which after cleaning turned out to be a sign erected by **The Pygney Wood Trust**. I will let **David Gosling** know were it is!



We had a few visitors on the footpath, one of whom was extremely interested in the canal restoration. However, it is sad to report that **Kevin** was *verbally abused* about the work by *passers-by in a motor car*.

Andrew, Alan and I decided to walk down the canal to **Bacton Wood Lock** to see the new lock gates which are nearing completion.

Chris"

Again many thanks for that **Chris and to all who attended**. I do hope that **Claire** found the task interesting and worth-while.

Our next work-party will again be at this site to finish the clearance along this stretch, on **Sunday 29th April**.

*As **Chris and I** will be at the **EAWA AGM** on that day, our very own **Darren C** will be the on-site leader and I am sure that he will welcome as many volunteers as possible.*

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Honing Lock.

Sunday 1 April, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA. Work Party Leader.**

THE PLAN. Further clear backsoke upstream of small access bridge; remove obstructing trees beside backsoke/small access bridge; further clearance to the canal upstream of the lock cill; ensure that fence preventing access along the top of the right side bank is still intact and firm up the posts; leave the site tidy and as secure looking as possible.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. As I had a prior appointment, I met up with The Team as usual and gave the briefing for the day – weather and time permitting, before handing over to Chris Black. Here is his report:-

“The weather forecast was proved incorrect again – beautifully sunny and warm. **David** arrived on site just before me to hand over the relevant paperwork and discuss the proposed agreed work programme. **Several volunteers** (10 in total) arrived during our handover and following the usual H&S briefing, the work plan was revealed to all.

This included removing two large trees which had been growing on the north bank of the soke. These had fallen across the soke-dyke and were obstructing the flow. Removal was not an easy task as they were difficult to cut in a way which enabled retrieval from the muddy dyke yet again - it proved to be a case of man and woman power on the rope to haul them out. The timber was cut up and piled on the north bank.



Another large tree, which had fallen from the canal bank side, was again removed using muscle power. A large rhododendron and a large laurel, both on the north bank, were trimmed back to just beyond the soke-dyke bank and the trimmings stacked beneath them. The timber from the tree was cut into large logs and piled on the bank.

Once cleared of the large trees the soke-dyke was raked clear of twigs and detritus resulting in a much improved flow.

Lunch was called at 12.30 and taken in the sunshine on some of the logs! We had a discussion regarding some of the ongoing canal issues then set about the more difficult task of tackling the removal of the tree (with five trunks) threatening the bank and the small access bridge and which also obstructed the ford which will have to be used to get machinery to the lock when it is repaired.



Our main concern was to protect the bridge from damage as two trunks were leaning in its' direction. The timber was cut up and stacked in piles for the wildlife.

The remaining area of the soke-dyke just upstream of the footbridge was raked clear of detritus and the access track we had used to carry out the work was blocked off by wooden stakes with brash placed beside the footbridge to deter people seeking to access the east bank of the canal.





Ivan Cane walked through to Dee Bridge to check for debris in the canal and to obtain information regarding the milestone for the Milestone Society.

We left site at approx 16.30.

Chris Black, Work Party Leader.”

Thank you for that, Chris, and naturally to all of The Team for turning out and carrying out such a splendid improvement to the movement of water and for the benefit of nature in general.

N.B. There is a change to the Work Party Programme for the next two meetings! April 15th and 29th will now be at the Royston Bridge area and NOT as on the original programme.

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Honing Lock.

Sunday 18 March, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. Having received details of the work to be carried out, the work was prioritised. Therefore today would see the backslope near to the little access bridge cleared for a short distance; the tree growing into the bank just above the lock, threatening the integrity of the bank, was removed; the canal bank above the lock cleared and the bank top cleared to a distance of c50mtrs long and c3mtrs wide.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather was forecast to be fine to start, followed by rain, then showers followed by sunshine. *Fairly close!*

It started with light rain as we arrived on site and this increased to heavier rain....no showers and certainly no sunshine. However, it turned out to be a very fruitful day with the canal bank (east), just above the water level, being cleared for the first c15mtrs.

Whilst doing this a former barbed wire fence was discovered, all screwed up in a heap. This was readjusted to reach the waters' edge, where a replacement post was hammered in, to help to prevent unauthorised access along the canal side on the east bank. The growing intermingled brambles just upstream of the redundant water measuring hut were left in situ.

The 3mtr wide strip along the canal bank top was cleared back to a conveniently growing row of

saplings - the brash stacked to form a nature-friendly place for creatures' inhabitation. The tree was removed and the brash stacked as above and the thicker pieces of the trunk placed close together on the ground, to form a habitat for the smaller insects etc.



Clearing the nearer part of the backsoke proved a little more difficult than at first thought, as the bushes growing there, which had fallen over to a horizontal position, had all interwoven their branches to form an almost impenetrable obstacle. The task was, however, completed and the flow of water increased considerably without it having to navigate the obstructions. A natural fence was built on the far side of the small access bridge to prevent unauthorised access to the side of the backsoke and thus onto the canal land.



My thanks go to all of the nine other volunteers who came along today and produced a great result.

*The next work party planned for the 1st April, will now take place at **Honing Lock again** and **NOT at Bacton Wood**. Please note the change in your diaries!*

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Briggate Mill Pond.

Sunday 4 March, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA**. Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To clear the remainder of the saplings on the east bank just below the road bridge at the lock; to build from natural timbers a small island in the millpond, just where the original course of the **River Ant** is shown, for the use of duck nesting.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather for the day was forecast to be 'rain later'. I'm not quite sure how much later was intended, but we had only just got to the canal bank to commence work when the first drops fell! And they kept falling until we left site at about 12.20hrs.

As at the previous work party at **Briggate**, when I had been made aware of the possible presence of the **Schmallenberg infection**, the Team kept strictly to the area of work which is away from any possible animal activity. We removed all but two of the saplings - these being too close to the stock fence to be taken out without any possible damage to the fence and will be attended to at a later date, probably in the autumn/winter season. Yes, we did get a little wet but the morning went well and we tidied up the site leaving the brash on the western bank over an area of brambles and some of the saplings lying safely on the eastern bank.

Some trunks are left lying on the ground and others in the air so that the small members of nature may set up home there and the birds may make use of the higher arrangement for nesting purposes. The small track, adjacent to the bridge parapet, running down to the canal bank was left blocked with brash to deter unauthorised entry. Unfortunately, we did not get around to any building of the ducks nesting island.



Standing on the road bridge and looking downstream now presents a much tidier picture with both banks clear to the extent of about 8mtrs along. Looking upstream from the bridge, it was surprising to see that the canal above the lock cill was quite well filled and extending nearly from bank to bank; a lot of the weed and reed having been covered with water. Whilst perusing this scene, an obliging kingfisher flew down into the lock and then returned upstream for some 40 metres before being lost to sight.

With many thanks to **The Team** of volunteers, this should be the last work party to be held at **Briggate** for the foreseeable future. The reeds around the pond will be left to grow and the grass on the chamber island not cut until the autumn to allow for the use of birds, frogs and other forms of wild-life. We should even get a sight of some natural floral items - given time. The **Team** having done the work, I now look forward to the return of nature to this site for the benefit of all to see and admire. And of course for nature!

The next work-party will be at Honing Lock on Sunday 18th March 2012.

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Briggate Mill Pond and lock area.

Sunday 19 February, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To clear the remaining damaging trees from around the pill box; to clear the banks just below the lock road bridge to enable the removal of willows growing in the bank and canal; to visit the resident of the **Wherry House** (formerly pub).



WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather dawned bright and clear and it remained so throughout the day! A goodly, cool breeze accompanied the sunshine, but this was beneficial for the bonfire. A detailed description of the intended work was given to the other twelve members of **The Team**, before we split into two groups.

Having seen that the one large branch near to the pill box had been safely landed and a substantial amount of brambles removed from the bank near to the bridge, I departed to the **Wherry**, leaving **Chris** in charge.



On my return just before our lunch break, **Chris** was fending off a series of irate questions about the pond in general from **a local lady**. I listened in before introducing myself and said that it was good that people should come and talk to us about their concerns instead of merely talking amongst themselves. We could, at least, be able to answer most, if not all, of their questions. After a further 15 minutes or so, the lady departed in a much happier frame of mind and agreeing with what we were doing.

Following our lunch break, taken in the sunshine on the chamber island, came the most daunting task of removing the tallest part of a tree which was damaging the roof of the pill box. As a safety measure, we posted two marshals on the roadway to alert any possible passer-by. As planned, this piece of timber landed safely in the newly de-silted west end of the pond and was subsequently removed from there.

In total, the area around the **pill box** and the top of the bank are now cleared of annoying growth and a reptile safe haven has been created under the bank of brash on the boundary. All manner of small wildlife and birds can now settle happily in that region beyond the pond in the knowledge that they will not be disturbed in the foreseeable future.





Back at the bridge site a few further small pieces of trees were removed and the site tidied up before we left. All resulting brash and bramble were burned on the chamber island. It now remains for nature to benefit with the spring and return the area to its' former glory. For the chamber island and the sides of the pond, a nature friendly management plan will be initiated. For example, to encourage more wild-life to the pond, the plants and reed on the edges will be left to grow through the year and not cut back until well into the autumn. There is currently only the trees below the bridge to be sorted out and that will terminate our work here - apart from general observation and maintenance, of course. Then there is the lock itself.....!

We are planning to commence some safety work on the lock during the summer months, before a further engineers' inspection can take place at a later date.

Thank you very much indeed to **The Team** for another splendid days' activities. *The next work party on **Sunday 4th March** is again at **Briggate**, when it is hoped that we can wrap it up - as they say!*

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Bacton Wood Canal Upper.

Sunday 22 January, 2012

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. *Tom and Digger* would go to **Briggate Mill Pond** to complete the de-silting of the west end of the pond and *Ivan, Darren and I* would be there in support. **Chris** would attend at **Bacton** as Work Party Leader and the *Briggate few* would join him there when ready.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. Weather forecast was uncertain for the day but in the event it turned out to be clear, mostly, but with a fresh wind. The arrangements went according to plan at **Briggate** and whilst **Tom** was working well on the edge of the water, the other three of us carried out other tidying works such as removing the ivy from the pill box and some of the minor trees brushing up against the box causing damage over the years.

By 13.00hrs the work was complete and the site tidied with all fencing replaced. The state of the pill box is not quite as good as was at first thought owing to the damage caused by trees and in-growing ivy roots, which had

not been visible on previous occasions. Generally the box is tinder dry inside but has adopted a slightly slanted outlook on life - towards the mill pond! Not a structural problem, though.

On the wild-life scene, a pair of mallard ducks were happily swimming around the pond and out onto the canal; one egret, often seen by the residents, made his (or her?) appearance and the great flasher - the kingfisher - showed its' skills in the air over the pond. Oh! And one frog made a dash into the water. So therefore the west end of the mill pond is now completed as far as clearing and earth works are concerned for the time being. The banks are landscaped and the access track alongside the road-wall is completed and taken around the corner towards the pill-box - and of course, levelled.



And so to **Bacton Canal - Upper**. On arrival there after the lunch break, work was coming to a conclusion! And what a lot of work had been carried out too. The growth on the backslope alongside the canal bank to the north side was terribly difficult to remove, being of a mixed variety including bushes, thorns, blackthorn and reeds. However, removed it was along a stretch of some 40metres and also some debris removed from the backslope to improve the water flow.

Two bonfires had consumed the majority of the brash, both wet and dry, and the site left in a much tidier state than at the start.





My thanks to **Chris** for taking on the post of Work Party Leader there and also to **all twelve folk** who came along to yet another 'keep fit' party. Your attendance is continuing to make a great difference! My continued thanks, also, to **Matt Williams** for allowing us the use of the parking facility.

NB: CHANGE TO NEXT WORKPARTY. Due to the fact that there is no work for us to carry out by the (quote) 'river' (unquote) at Ebridge, the work party on **February 5th** will be again at **Bacton Wood Canal - Upper**. Same parking arrangements as previously! Hopefully on this occasion we should be able to complete the stripping of the relevant backsoke bank.

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In Co-operation with the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust

Work Party at Bacton Wood Canal Upper

Sunday 8th January, 2012.

Report from: **David Revill, EAWA.** Work Party Leader.

THE PLAN. To remove obstructive growth upstream of the breach from the banks of the canal; continue to burn brash remaining from last visit; to clear the canal of debris to enhance the flow into the land drain; to start clearing the canal side bank of the backsoke.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The weather for this early January day was to be sunny with cloud after lunch, but drizzle possible in the evening; medium, cool wind. As forecast, it was a glorious day weather-wise! We even had the bonfire smoke blowing *away* from the work-party! Eleven volunteers turned up and following the usual briefings, we started on the designated tasks.

Saplings from both sides of the canal (this part of the canal actually has water in it!) were initially removed together with the usual brambles and some ancient, dead rose growth. When all this was cleared and placed tenderly onto the bonfire, a start was made on the larger tree growing into the bank, near to the access bridge over the breach water.



This took a remarkably long time as it did not want to fall over despite a large amount of pulling on ropes! Eventually, of course, it did fall and was rapidly cut up into manageable sized pieces before we broke for lunch break.

After lunch, taken in the sunshine on the canal bank (without the water in the canal!) the brash and logs of the tree were removed to clear the path and the smaller parts taken to be burned. The successful, happy day ended on site with a general clear up of some smaller areas of plant growth. There was insufficient time to make a start on the last task of starting to clear the bank of the backslope - that will wait for the next visit there. The photographs taken during the day will show the amount of general progress made. Our work on these projects always makes it much easier for the, eventual, plant operator to carry out his work, as he usually has a clearer run at his tasks.

Thank you to all of our stalwarts - good to see so many back at the beginning of 2012! Our next party will be at the same place on Sunday 22nd January 2012. Look forward to seeing you there?

After the end of the work party, over half of the volunteers called in at Ebridge to see the progress, having heard that the water level was now at weir top level.

