

THE BUCKINGHAM NAVIGATOR

The Newsletter of Buckingham Canal Society

Registered Charity No. 1156662

Issue No. 116
Summer 2023



Featuring:

- Cosgrove Teams Muck in to Drive in the Piles
- All Aboard for Our Biggest Event of the Year
- New Shoots of Sustainable Growth at Cosgrove



Cosgrove Marina

Lock Lane, Cosgrove, MK19 7JR

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Mick and Shirley are pleased to support the restoration of the Buckingham Canal.

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Keith Rawlings MISE is proud to support
Buckingham Canal Society's work to restore the waterway to Buckingham

Please re-use this publication which incorporates a variety of information about some of our activities, to promote the work of the Buckingham Canal Society to a friend / neighbour / colleague / relative or other interested people.

Editorial

Welcome to the Summer 2023 edition of The Buckingham Navigator.

Well, there's a lot to cram in to this issue, meaning it's a text heavy edition full of important information this time around. Some regular articles have had to be sacrificed, including the Spring Wildlife Report which will be held over until a later edition. Meanwhile, as we start our somewhat cooler ascent into summer than usual, all eyes are on Cosgrove once more as construction of the new narrows beyond Bridge No.1 commences in earnest as the ground slowly dries out. The best thing is, you will be able to view this and our latest tasks at Cosgrove at our biggest event of the year...the Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair. Tell your friends, bring your family, make a day of it and support us, our local traders and the talented artisans while you are there. **Full details on pages 15-18.**



Thank you to all the contributors. Cover photo: Piling was well underway on 13th April at the newly formed narrows at Cosgrove. **See page 5 for the latest update.** © Alan Mynard. **Why not drop me an email about what you enjoyed in this issue, and furthermore, why not contribute ideas or articles for future editions (see page 29).** In addition to our website, we now have a wide social media presence:

Please visit our website at: www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Follow/Like us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/buckinghamcanalsociety

Reach us on Twitter at: www.twitter.com/bcsocietyuk

Find us on Instagram at: www.instagram.com/buckinghamcanalsociety

Watch us on YouTube at: www.youtube.com/buckinghamcanalsociety

Follow us on LinkedIn at: www.linkedin.com/company/bcsocietyuk/

Ian Matson
Editor

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Restoration Site Update



© Alan Mynard

Preliminary works were well underway by the beginning of March when the hotly anticipated formal approval was given by Canal & River Trust to commence construction of a cill at the newly formed narrows, and the subsequent piling work too. Here, the team are draining the water-logged bed against all odds on 2nd March.

Piling on the Effort at Cosgrove

Apparently, it's about the journey, not just the destination. Or so I am often told! The good news is that we managed to get formal approval to start piling work at Cosgrove at the start of March. We had already set up the compound and undertook some vegetation clearance during February in anticipation of the approval.

The team have put in a lot of hours preparing and concreting a cill (**right & below**) upon which the stop planks will sit on. The work of piling has been progressing (**see cover & overleaf**), albeit slower than hoped due to the ground condition of both mud and stone under the clay bed. Most weeks throughout February, March, April and now May will have seen an average of 100 person hours each week, totalling over 1,250 hours of volunteer effort on this site by the time you read this. Piling is a new skill for most of us, but we have the insight of a few experienced folk who are able to guide us through the learning curves (as they say).





© Terry Cavender



© Terry Cavender

Once the piling is complete, we will fit stop planks at the newly formed narrows and allow the section between the existing bund and these stop planks to fill with water. It will take a few weeks for these planks to fully seal, and we then anticipate permission from Canal & River Trust to remove the stop planks at Bridge No.1. This will enable us, once the final dredging



© Terry Cavender

is done, to get our workboats into the newly watered section and fully remove the bund with the workboat to then fully complete the towpath side piling both at the narrows and at the Buckingham Palace Bug Hotel. This should see the small leaks on this section satisfactorily remediated and allow us to focus on the next section between the farm crossing and Bridge No.2, including the anticipated site of the new descent channel.

Additionally, we have been installing wooden planters at the Cosgrove Lock site (**left**), as well as planting a small mixed fruit orchard of over fifty trees including Apple, Plum, Pear, Hazel, Quince and others near Bridge No.1. **For more on this project, read 'Restoration for a Sustainable Future' by Edima Inwang on page 20.**

The Strategic Stuff

The various adjacent landowners continue to be supportive in principle, although we still await the outcome of planning applications at the time of writing. More to follow when we know, and hopefully before our upcoming Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair in July.

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

Bourton Meadow

Bourton Meadow looks beautiful at this time of year with the Daffodils, Marsh Marigolds and Cowslips all in full bloom along the canalside, and all the while our volunteers have been working hard to keep the rest of the site looking attractive too. To this purpose we have been clearing the Brambles on the offside of the canal. This side was left to grow wild to prevent people walking along it as it is not a public footpath, but this plan has misfired slightly as the Brambles have grown far too well making it difficult for volunteers to take wheelbarrows and other tools along the path. So a decision was made to clear all the Brambles from here, including the ones which had started to grow in amongst the reeds in the canal bed.



Another large job has almost been completed, which was to remove masses of reeds from the canal bed, which were then left to dry out in piles along the bank last summer. These have now been wheelbarrowed along to the area around the spillweir where they can then be disposed of.

Both of the above tasks have almost been completed, and was done with the help of a group from Santander. By the time you read this, they will hopefully have visited Bourton Meadow once more on Thursday 11th May, meaning that these tasks should be finished soon. Four bench seats at the top of the canal have also been repainted (**above**).

I also want to thank two other external organisations who have helped with this work. These are Network Rail who worked at Bourton Meadow on Thursday 16th March, and Ingram Micro who joined us on Monday 20th March.

We are now commencing work with the summer tasks of clearing the excess of reeds from the canal bed once more. If these reeds are not removed, they would completely block the whole of the canal which means there is still plenty of work here to keep our volunteers busy!

The Nature Reserve Gets a Fresh New Look

As well as working at our Bourton Meadow site, we have also managed a couple of visits to our Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve site at Hyde Lane.

Volunteers have been painting the five bench seats (**below & inset**) at the nature reserve, and also the newly constructed bridge (**below**) at this site. This time I have decided to paint them black and white to match the lock gates, rather than green as they were painted before. This work has now been completed and most people seem to think this is an improvement as the black and white paint makes them stand out so much more.

The areas around the seats in addition to the towpath and other areas have been trimmed, while tree branches have been cut back to make the Hyde Lane site a more attractive area for walkers.

We are always looking for more volunteers, so if any of the above interests you, then please get in touch. See page 9 for further details.

Athina Beckett

**Trustee, Volunteer Leader
and Work Party Organiser**



Do You Dig Canals?...We Do!



Work parties are now held every Tuesday, Thursday and the second & last Sunday of each month and are always friendly, welcoming and very rewarding. Most Tuesdays and Thursdays, as well as the second and last Sunday of each month will take place at Cosgrove. Some of the other dates will be at Bourton Meadow or Hyde Lane.

Further information can be found on page 29, and more detailed information about these and extra curricular dates can be found by visiting our work parties web page at:

www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/events-and-news/work-parties/

If you would like to become involved, please contact either myself or Terry using our contact details on page 30.

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

Health & Safety Refresher

Buckingham Canal Society has a duty of care to its members, volunteers and the public to comply with the Health & Safety legislations in place.

Buckingham Canal Society operates work parties under terms of Insurance provided through the Inland Waterways Association. As a part of this, we work within many of the principles and methods of Waterway Recovery Group.

You will always be given a Health & Safety briefing for any work party. All work parties involving construction machinery, often referred to as plant, will require that you confirm you have watched the Waterway Recovery Group's Health & Safety video (via the link below) within the past twelve months.

Waterway Recovery Group's Health & Safety video contains important Health & Safety information that all new volunteers need to know. All volunteers are required to watch the Waterway Recovery Group Health & Safety video before they go on site. Please watch the video to find out about Waterway Recovery Group's on site Health & Safety.

This video is only an introduction to site safety, and does not remove the need for a volunteer to have a full briefing about a specific site/project.

For full details of the Waterway Recovery Group's Health & Safety policy along with additional documentation and other important videos, please visit:

www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/wrg-health-safety-video/

For more information about Waterway Recovery Group, please visit:

www.waterways.org.uk/wrg

Buckingham Canal Society News

The 2023 Annual General Meeting & Social Evening



On Saturday 18th March we held our 31st Annual General Meeting in the Buckingham Community Centre. Perhaps not as well attended as in previous years, after a little encouragement to get those seated in the back rows to move closer to the front to make it feel a bit more intimate, the session got underway. In the absence of our chairman due to work commitments, Terry welcomed those present and proceeded to work through the agenda.

With no issues from the last meeting to cover, and the unanimous acceptance of the minutes from the 30th Annual General Meeting, Terry moved on to give an overview of events from the year just gone. For avid readers of The Buckingham Navigator newsletter, these will be well known to you. **For anyone else, you can catch up by downloading a copy of the 'Trustees Report & Accounts for the Year Ending 30th November 2022' from our website at: www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/BCS-Annual-report-2022-v1.1.pdf, and you can also download previous editions of this newsletter at: www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/events-and-news/newsletter/.**

As a Trustee & the Society Treasurer, I gave a short explanation of some of the figures in the annual accounts, which drew a question from the floor regarding income from services provided by Buckingham Canal Society. Fellow Trustee & Executive Officer Terry Cavender explained that this was work carried out at the behest of Canal & River Trust. It was cited as an example of collaborative working, while at the same time providing valuable income for the Society. This is something we will have to consider doing more of in the future if grant funding is harder to attract. Grant applications now are requiring much more detail on how the projects are going to help benefit local communities, as well as meet the aims and objectives of those seeking funding. In tandem with this, we must be mindful that income-generating works do not suck up all of our limited resources, thus impacting on our ability to carry out our own key restoration works. The accounts were then accepted by those members present, and so have been lodged with the Charities Commission as per their requirements.

The re-election of trustees at the end of their three-year term was approved, along with the acceptance of our Marketing Manager Edima Inwang as a new Trustee, who had

previously been co-opted and has been a great help in dealing with all matters relating to publicity & communication.

There were no resolutions to put to the meeting, and after answering a question from the floor on the possibility of using rivers for navigation, the short answer to which was it was no longer possible, the formal part of the evening was concluded. The gathering then moved to the rear of the hall to feed the body, in preparation for feeding the mind.

Following the buffet, we were called to order for a rousing talk by our guest speaker, the well known local historian Ed Grimsdale on 'The Impact of the Canal on Buckingham'. His local knowledge is second to none and is always put across in a way you cannot ignore. It was well received and would have been impossible to sleep through, however much you had taken onboard at the buffet.

The evening was rounded off with the usual raffle, and with lower numbers attending, several people won more than one prize! Numbers were drawn until all the donated gifts had been taken.

Richard Dwight
Trustee and Treasurer

Wow!...We've Won Yet Another Prestigious Award!

Buckingham Canal Society has recently received a letter from Buckingham Town Council informing us that we have been "chosen to be awarded Buckingham Town Council's Natural Environment and Climate Change Award in recognition of the many years of service improving and renovating the canal".

Furthermore, it stated that "At Full Council on the 27th February, Buckingham Town Councillors unanimously agreed that the Buckingham Canal Society is a worthy recipient of the title". It went on to say that "A presentation will take place at the Mayor Making and Mayors Reception on Friday 2nd June". What fantastic news indeed, and another feather in our collective caps!

Join Me on a Five Mile Informative Circular Walk

On Tuesday 18th July I will be leading a circular walk for my local walking group taking in the Buckingham and Grand Union Canals, and all Buckingham Canal Society members and friends are welcome to join me.

The walk will start in the Ostlers Car Park in Stony Stratford, meeting at 18.30. We will begin by walking through Stony Stratford Nature Reserve towards the Iron Trunk Aqueduct, and then along the towpath up the Grand Union Canal toward Cosgrove. At Cosgrove Lock we then we pick up the Buckingham Canal toward the A5, returning back to the car park in Stony Stratford. This circular walk is approximately five miles. **For more information, please email me using my details on page 30.**

Getting the Word Out There About Events in Your Area

If any members know of events or festivals they think might be of interest to other Buckingham Canal Society members, please get in touch. **Could you please forward the details on to me using my contact details on page 30, and I will include them in the newsletter's Future Events column.**

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

Exploring History and Heritage: Exciting Activities Planned for Milton Keynes Heritage Open Days

As the warmth of summer envelops the picturesque landscapes of Milton Keynes, Buckingham Canal Society is preparing to welcome the community to a series of captivating events during the much-anticipated Milton Keynes Heritage Open Days. This year's event promises a range of engaging activities for all, inviting participants to immerse themselves in the captivating tales and scenic wonders of the canal. In this article, we will highlight some of the planned activities that are sure to captivate the interest of families, nature enthusiasts, food lovers, photographers and writers alike.

1. Treasure Hunt: Uncover the Secrets of the Canal

Step into an adventure-filled treasure hunt along the meandering path of the Buckingham Canal. Designed to ignite the spirit of exploration and curiosity, participants will embark on a quest to unravel the canal's hidden history. Armed with clues, they will journey to various locations dotted along the canal, where they will encounter riddles, puzzles, and trivia questions intricately woven into the fabric of the canal's past. This thrilling activity promises an enjoyable and educational experience for participants of all ages. Families, friends, and individuals are encouraged to join in with this exciting escapade, discovering the wonders of the canal while creating lasting memories.

- **Details: Saturday 9 September, 11am -1pm.**
- **Location: Car Park, Lock Lane, Cosgrove, Milton Keynes, MK19 7JR**
- **To register, email: volunteer@buckinghamcanal.org.uk with the subject line 'Registration for Treasure Hunt'.**

2. Hedgerow Recipe Walk: A Culinary Exploration

Nature's pantry awaits as participants set off on a guided hedgerow recipe walk, showcasing the remarkable diversity of flora and fauna that flourishes alongside the canal. Participants will meander through picturesque landscapes, immersing themselves in the scents, colours and textures of the hedgerows. Along the way, they will discover a myriad of plants and herbs that have been used for centuries in traditional cuisine and natural remedies. To tantalise taste buds further, Buckingham Canal Society will provide delectable recipes for snacks, teas, soups and desserts crafted from these delightful

ingredients. This event is a must-attend for food enthusiasts, nature lovers and health-conscious individuals seeking to deepen their connection with the natural world.

- **Details: Sunday 17 September, 10am -12pm**
- **Location: Buckingham Canal at Bourton Meadow, Ouse Valley Way, Buckingham, Bucks, 7BW.**
- **To register, email: volunteer@buckinghamcanal.org.uk with the subject line 'Registration for Hedgerow Walk'.**

3. Photography Contest: Capturing the Canal's Splendour

Calling all photographers, both seasoned and budding, to capture the essence and beauty of the Buckingham Canal through their lenses. The Photography Contest invites participants to submit their best snapshots online, showcasing the canal's serene landscapes, charming bridges and captivating wildlife. The contest celebrates the power of visual storytelling, offering a platform for photographers of all ages and skill levels to showcase their talent and passion for photography. The winning entries will be announced during the Heritage Open Days event, with prizes awarded to the most captivating and evocative captures. Get ready to frame the canal's magnificence and leave a lasting impression on viewers' hearts.

4. Prose/Story/Poem Contest: A Journey of Words

For those who find solace and inspiration in the written word, the Prose/Story/Poem Contest provides a platform to express their love and admiration for the Buckingham Canal. Whether it's weaving a tale of the canal's history, penning a heartfelt poem, or crafting a captivating piece of prose, participants are encouraged to let their creativity flow and convey the essence of this remarkable waterway. This contest, conducted online, welcomes writers of all ages and skill levels to submit their entries, immortalizing the canal's allure in the realm of literature. The winning compositions will be celebrated and acknowledged during the Heritage Open Days event, with prizes awarded to honour the power of storytelling.

- **Theme: Heritage of the Canal.**
- **Details: Online event. Entries open 15th July 2023 and close on 31st August 2023. Prize distribution will be on 9th September 2023 at Cosgrove.**
- **To register, email: competition@buckinghamcanal.org.uk, with the subject line 'Registration for Photography Contest' or 'Registration for Prose/Story/Prose Contest' accordingly.**

Further details will be shared on LinkedIn, Instagram and our website closer to the date. People who register will receive emails with further details. Buckingham Canal Society eagerly anticipates the participation of individuals, families, and communities in these engaging activities which have been thoughtfully designed to celebrate and promote the canal's historical significance and natural splendour. By fostering a sense of exploration, creativity and appreciation, the Heritage Open Days events provide an opportunity for all to become involved.

Shivanshi Marwah
Community Engagement Lead



For more
information



COSGROVE CANAL FESTIVAL & CRAFT FAIR

Saturday 22 - Sunday 23 JUL 2023

- Historic Boats
- Trade Boats
- Cake Stalls
- Craft Stalls
- Games
- Entertainment

📍 **Cosgrove Lock,**
Lock Lane, Cosgrove,
MK19 7JR

Cosgrove Village Hall,
Bridge Road,
Cosgrove, MK19 7JA

🕒 **Saturday 10am - 5pm**
Sunday 10am - 4pm

**Fun for all
the Family**

Buckingham Canal Society Office
2 Staters Pound, Pennyland, Milton Keynes, MK15 8AX

This event is organised by the Buckingham Canal Society to raise awareness and funding for the restoration of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal.
Latest information and plans will be on display at the festival

🌐 **buckinghamcanal.org.uk**
✉ **events@buckinghamcanal.org.uk**

Fund raising for
Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registered Charity Number 1156662

2023 Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair

After a successful post-COVID festival in 2022, we are proud to announce that the 28th annual Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair is returning this year, and we are bringing our friends along too. The event will take place on the weekend of 22nd & 23rd July, from 10am to 5pm on the Saturday, and 10am to 4pm on the Sunday. As always, the main event will be at Cosgrove Lock, Lock Lane, Cosgrove, Milton Keynes, Northants, MK19 7JR, whilst the craft fair will be a short walk away in the nearby village hall.

This year, while a few new floating stalls have indicated interest in joining the party, a lot of old faithfuls including Friends of Raymond, Daisy's Bakin' Butty, The Beer Boat Company, Charlotte's Arts and more have told us they would be coming along with fantastic offerings.

As always, the festival promises to be an exciting weekend of fun, entertainment and above all, a celebration of the volunteers whose tremendous efforts have moved us closer to putting the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal in water once again after years of abandonment.

During the festival in 2022, we were able to showcase Bridge No.1 nearby to Cosgrove Lock, which was rebuilt across the Buckingham Canal to more modern standards whilst retaining some of its original features from when the arm was opened in 1801. This year, our volunteers have added to that list of achievements. The volunteers will be on the ground to talk about the planters and the orchard at Cosgrove, the piling work going on along the canal and other projects which have been keeping us busy since the last festival. You really need to be present to view these projects, as a few lines of ink will not paint an adequate picture.

A Gathering of Trade and Craft Boats

One of the highlights of the festival is the gathering of the trade and craft boats. Over the festival weekend, guests will have the opportunity to explore a vibrant array of floating market stalls, offering unique crafts, artisan goods and delightful treats. They will also be able to immerse themselves in the lively atmosphere and discover treasures crafted with passion and creativity. Please support local artisans and shop for something special to take home. The village hall, just a few yards down the road, will also showcase different treats and goods. **Richard Dwight discusses the craft fair in more detail on page 17.**

Fun-Filled Activities for Children

Every year, apart from the two festival periods that COVID-19 kept everyone indoors, our event has attracted lots of families, and we believe this year will be no different. Like every other year, this year, we will have exciting activities planned for children of all ages, inviting their imaginations to run wild as they enjoy games, face painting and exciting entertainment while also keeping an eye out for the Geese swimming gracefully in the canal.

Prizes Galore in the Raffle Draw

Don't miss out on the chance to win fantastic prizes! Guests will have an opportunity to participate in our raffle draw for an opportunity to take home exciting rewards while



supporting a worthy cause. Every ticket purchased not only adds to the excitement, but also contributes to our ongoing efforts to restore and preserve our canal's heritage.

If you fancy an evening of fish & chips (**above**), we always wait around with the boaters on Saturday evening on Lock Island to exchange stories, listen to folklore and share a few plates of fish, chips or whatever else you fancy. **This will need to be booked in advance by contacting the Cosgrove Festival Team using the details on page 30.**

Save the Date

Make sure to mark your calendars for the Cosgrove Canal Festival and Craft Fair on the 22nd & 23rd of July. Join us at Cosgrove Lock for a weekend filled with community spirit, live entertainment, delicious food, ice-cream boats and a chance to explore the wonders of the restored canal.

This festival is not just an event; it's a celebration of our collective commitment to preserving our waterways and creating a sustainable future for generations to come. Your presence and support will make a significant difference. Don't miss this opportunity to be a part of something extraordinary. We can't wait to welcome you to the Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair! Together, let's celebrate the beauty of heritage and make a positive impact on our community.

For more information and updates on the festival, then please visit our website at www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/events-and-news/annual-festival/, or search for us on social media via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or LinkedIn.

We always need and welcome more volunteers too, so if this interests you, then Ian Matson tells you how to get involved on page 17.

Edima Inwang
Trustee and Marketing Manager

Amanda Robinson
Trustee, Heritage and Archaeology Lead

It's Not Only Canalside...The Village Hall Will Be Crammed with Artisan Crafts and Foods Too!

As usual, we are running the canalside festival in conjunction with the craft fair in the village hall. The fair is already fully booked, and will not disappoint. There are twenty-four skilled artisan crafters, providing ideal gifts for family and friends, or even yourself if you like to self-indulge. Items on offer will include the following:

Chutneys and preserves; Wood-turned items; Wooden canal boat planters; Sea glass pictures; Fabric crafts and items from felt and crochet including bags and silk painted cushions; Knitwear; Jewellery of assorted types including novelty items made from fimo clay; Cutlery; Books, bookmarks and paper crafts; Spiritual & magic items; Plant terrariums; Assorted pottery and ceramics; Wax melts and vegan candles; Free motion embroidery cards; Walking sticks.



For personal adornment, the henna tattooist is back this year. If you need a break, the caterer will be providing a selection of hot and cold drinks, along with a variety of delicious sweet and savoury cold light bites. There will be a small entrance fee to the village hall of 20p per person, with under-sixteens entering for free.

Richard Dwight
Trustee and Treasurer

Why Not Volunteer with Us at This Year's Festival?

As always, extra help will be needed to begin setting up the festival on Thursday 20th and Friday 21st July, and also to dismantle everything at the end of it on Sunday 23rd July. We would like to thank everybody who helped out last year, and we hope to receive that help once again this year too. There will be a great variety of tasks to suit everybody, and we will need assistance with activities including, but not restricted to the following: Baking cakes for the Cake Stall; Serving cakes & refreshments in the village hall; Working on the Games Stall; The Lock Ransom, whereby training will be given to operate the lock gates.

Whether you can spare a couple of hours or a whole day, all and any help would be much appreciated as this event is our one big opportunity where we can reach out to the public to explain our current and future projects and promote the Society. If you haven't been involved for a while, it's a chance to meet up with the other volunteers. Why not also invite your family and friends along to the event for what is promising to be a very enjoyable weekend! You would also be very welcome to join the boaters on Saturday evening for a fish & chip supper, although this must be booked in advance.

So that we can get an idea of the volunteer numbers and the days you will be available to help out at the festival, please contact the Cosgrove Festival Team using the contact details on page 30. You can also use this to book a stall, arrange a boat mooring or to reserve your fish & chip supper. Additional details can also be found by visiting: www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/events-and-news/annual-festival/.

Ian Matson
Editor

The Spring Statement

Welcome to summer! There has been some fantastic progress made, although unfortunately much of it is not yet visible. For every hour spent on site actively working, there is an hour of planning and paperwork to wade through. The upcoming festival is well advanced with some old favourite traders returning and several new boats coming along to see what it is all about. We are running a raffle this year, so if you're feeling lucky then come along and take a chance on winning some of the fantastic prizes up for grabs. The Publicity & Bric-a-Brac Stall will be in its usual place with all sorts of pre-loved treasures. The craft fair will be in Cosgrove Village Hall. This is as popular with traders as it is with visitors, so much so that we have a waiting list of vendors wanting to attend!

Work has progressed on the arm at Cosgrove, and if you have wandered down recently you will have seen the new pilings going in to improve the line of the canal and to provide future mooring spots. Regular work parties at other sites have continued to keep access open, as well as providing habitat improvement for the incredible wildlife. Diana, our new workboat has been on the receiving end of some tender loving care and is looking more ship shape and nearly Bristol fashion. Having used that expression for years, I have only just found out what it actually means! Catch me at the festival and I will explain it to you.

With summer upon us and the school holidays starting soon, now is the time to speak to us about volunteering opportunities during this period, make a difference to your local area, promote its heritage and learn some new skills. But most of all, when you come along to a work party, you will make some new friends and have plenty of fun and come away with a huge sense of achievement!

Rob Morris
Trustee and Chairman

The Marketing Report

Hello Summer...Bring on the Festival Crowds at Cosgrove!

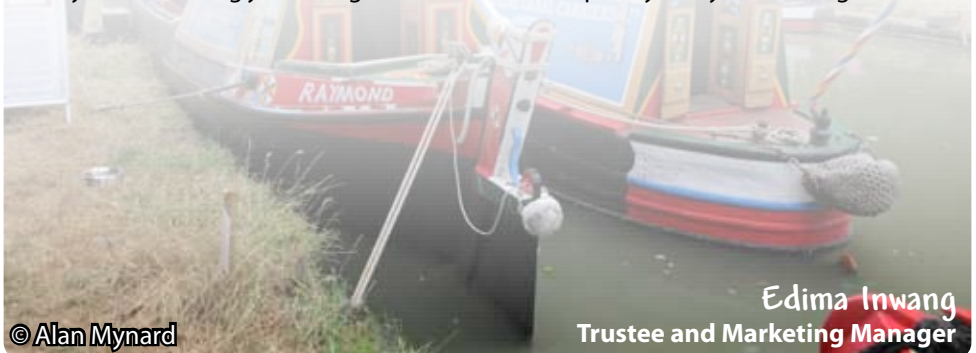
A lot has happened since the last edition of The Marketing Report, and I am back now with the updates. I am also excited to announce that all things look green and blue along the canal front and, thanks to the efforts of our volunteers, we are in full swing to keep restoring the Buckingham Arm.

Great news everyone! Our projects have caught the attention of a few interested parties, of which Cranfield University is one of them. They have expressed a keen interest in our work and plan to involve a few students who might be interested in hydrology and our project management efforts. It is fantastic to have the academic community recognising the significance of our work and actively joining hands with us. We eagerly anticipate the valuable contributions and fresh perspectives they will bring.

But wait...there's more! As much as we appreciate the contributions that members of organisations including Santander, Arriva Bus UK - Procurement and Mitie Group plc are putting in to help us achieve our goal, we look forward to having others join the fun. We believe that collaboration and shared enthusiasm can truly make a difference. We are working towards having other organisations lend a helping hand so we can amplify the impact of improving the blue and green spaces around us.

As most of us are aware, July is almost here again and we are expecting the festival boat to berth at Cosgrove on July 22nd for another exciting edition of the Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair. Mark your calendars for yet another family fun time along the canal. We are looking forward to a festival that will be bigger than the last one, and so far, with the collection of vendors on our list, it seems we might just get there. Come along and enjoy the sun and explore how well our piling activity is going near Bridge No1. Who knows, you might be tempted to stay for an evening of fish & chips.

Finally, if you happen to be within Milton Keynes city centre, do us a favour and pick a copy or two of our festival posters from the central library so you can invite your friends and family. Here's wishing you a delightful summer and hopefully many walks along the canal.



© Alan Mynard

Edima Inwang
Trustee and Marketing Manager

Restoration for a Sustainable Future

Adding More Colour to Our Blue & Green Landscape

Buckingham Canal Society is making great strides in promoting sustainable and eco-friendly living through our recent efforts to add planters (**opposite, top**) and an orchard (**opposite, bottom**) in the local community. The planters, located at Cosgrove Lock on the Grand Union Canal, offer a vibrant mix of herbs, vegetables and flowers, all of which are Bee-friendly and suitable for visually impaired individuals. Nearby, the newly restored Bridge No.1 on the Buckingham Arm also features a community orchard, comprised of Apple, Plum, Cherry, Pear, and Hazel trees, as well as Blackcurrant, Raspberry and Gooseberry bushes. The fruit produced by these trees and bushes will be available to the local residents and boaters, further promoting community involvement and sustainability.

What is particularly exciting about the orchard and planters is that they not only add visual appeal to the area, but also offer numerous benefits for the local community. Apart from their visual appeal, the flowers provide a natural habitat for Bees and other pollinators. The fruit produced by the trees and bushes will also provide a healthy and delicious snack for those passing by.

The installation of the planters and the growth of the orchard has been made possible by the generous donation from the National Lottery Awards for All grant which is earmarked to support the building of strong relationships in and across communities as well as helping to improve the places and spaces that matter to these communities. With the help of this grant from the National Lottery, communities can continue the process of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, the orchard and planters also serve as a means of promoting sustainability and eco-friendly living. The plants have been carefully selected to be not only Bee-friendly, but also scent-rich which will offer a welcoming environment for all members of the community, regardless of ability.

This effort was supported by volunteers from Buckingham Canal Society who invested many hours to help install the wooden planters. Our volunteers play a huge role in driving our environmental sustainability efforts. By meeting on Tuesdays, Thursdays and the second and last Sunday of each month, these helpful and obliging contributors play a part in ensuring that we will restore the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal to such a high standard. As such, the communities living along the waterways will hopefully enjoy the various attractive benefits of living by water that we have either restored, enhanced or even newly created.

Buckingham Canal Society's ongoing efforts to promote sustainability and community involvement are truly inspiring. As the planting continues over the next few months, it is exciting to see how these additions will further enhance the local area and contribute to a more sustainable future for all.

Edima Inwang

Trustee and Marketing Manager



© Terry Cavender



© Alan Mynard

The Community Engagement Report

Restoring the Buckingham Canal: A Community Endeavour



© Athina Beckett

As we embark on the latest edition of our quarterly newsletter, I am thrilled to share the remarkable progress achieved by Buckingham Canal Society in the three months since the end of January.

Our unwavering focus has been on our community engagement, recognizing that the involvement of our community is pivotal to the success of our restoration

endeavours. We have orchestrated numerous work parties (**above, at Bourton Meadow in March with Network Rail**) and actively participated in impactful events like the Annual General Meeting, effectively raising awareness about the restoration of the Buckingham Canal. Witnessing the indefatigable enthusiasm and dedication of our community members who have rallied behind this noble cause has been nothing short of inspiring.

In our quest for community engagement, we have forged fruitful collaborations with esteemed institutions such as Cranfield University, Milton Keynes University and The University of Buckingham, with further partnerships in the pipeline. These collaborations allow us to tap into their vast resources and expertise, fostering mutually beneficial relationships that enhance our impact.

Recognising the exponential power of collaboration, we have also sought meaningful partnerships with other esteemed community organizations and government agencies. By expanding our reach through such alliances, we have unlocked new platforms to amplify our message and garner widespread support. In fact, we are currently on the verge of going live on additional platforms, enabling us to reach an even wider audience and ignite a collective passion for our cause.

To ensure the seamless execution of our projects, we have actively contributed to the formation of Project Management groups. By formalising our plans and strategies, we equip ourselves with the necessary tools to effectively tackle upcoming projects along the canal, paving the way for their successful implementation.

Embracing the digital realm, we have also engaged with our audience on LinkedIn, harnessing the platform's power to disseminate the activities and accomplishments of our esteemed society. Through our relentless efforts, we have witnessed an astonishing surge in our followers, likes and page visits, amplifying our visibility and exponentially spreading the word about our crucial restoration work.

Furthermore, we have diligently assisted in securing micro-grants, empowering us to organize impactful events and initiatives that benefit our beloved communities. These invaluable grants provide us with the necessary resources to leave a lasting imprint and create a significant impact on our surroundings.

In our pursuit of cultivating a robust volunteer network, we are currently revamping our volunteer form. This innovative tiered approach allows us to effectively categorise volunteers based on their unique interests and skills, thereby ensuring a more personalised and engaging experience for each participant. This structured approach not only bolsters our comprehensive volunteer database, but also ensures that our volunteers are matched with projects that resonate with their passions and expertise.



Our collective efforts have yielded outstanding achievements that serve as a testament to our tireless commitment. We have successfully cleared overgrown vegetation and revitalised damaged sections of the canal, breathing new life into areas like Bourton Meadow and the Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve at Hyde Lane **(above, in April with a volunteer family)**. These tangible improvements stand as proud reminders of our resolute dedication and hard work.

Our online presence has flourished exponentially. Buckingham Canal Society has garnered substantial recognition in esteemed publications such as Towpath, with a specific spotlight on the inauguration of the iconic Bridge No.1 at Cosgrove. Moreover, we had the distinct honour of hosting renowned YouTuber Paul Whitewick, whose captivating video showcased the picturesque Cosgrove and Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve locations. Garnering over forty-thousand views and three-thousand likes, this exposure propelled our restoration efforts to a wider and more enthusiastic audience.

Looking ahead, we stand resolute in our firm commitment to managing our social media platforms and expanding our online reach. Our ultimate goal is to attract an even greater number of passionate volunteers and ardent supporters who wholeheartedly have the same vision and enthusiasm for the Buckingham Canal's restoration as we do!

Shivanshi Marwah
Community Engagement Lead

Driver Authorisation Scheme Update

For those who aren't aware, Buckingham Canal Society uses the Waterway Recovery Group operated Driver Authorisation Scheme which requires volunteers to have the appropriate authorisation for the relevant category of vehicles or machinery on their Driver Authorisation Card before they are permitted to drive/operate them. It covers vans, other road-going vehicles, site vehicles and also machinery such as dumpers and excavators as well as some hand-held power tools.

There are two levels of authorisation - 'operator', which means that you have been trained/satisfied Waterway Recovery Group that you have the appropriate competency, and 'instructor', which means you have the greater level of appropriate experience to enable you to train new operators.

For more about the scheme and to download the application forms etc to apply for authorisation and other paperwork, see the Inland Waterways Association Restoration Hub website as per the end of this article.

The scheme isn't just used by Waterway Recover Group on its canal camps and weekend working parties. Many canal societies also use it. So it needs to cover all sorts and types of vehicles and machines, and periodically the categories need to be changed to keep up, as George 'Bungle' Eycott explains below...

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye. Over the past year a couple of anomalies have cropped up relating to the Waterway Recovery Group Driver Authorisation Scheme:

1. One restoration group which uses the Driver Authorisation Scheme has purchased an MPV so we needed to add it to the scheme.
2. We came across an issue where the 'small excavator' category was covering too large a range, so you could be trained on a 0.8 tonne machine then go and drive a 6 tonne machine (or vice versa which actually is just as bad).
3. The system prompted people for a licence check if they had category 4 (trailers), even if they were only towing with their own vehicle or just using site trailers.
4. It was not possible to go on road with plant (e.g. a tractor) unless you also had vans, minibuses or 4x4 on your Driver Authorisation card.
5. Ride on mowers were included with tractors, and splitting small/large tractors by weight no longer makes sense with the modern 'compact' tractors now being heavier than they were when we designed the current Driver Authorisation system some twenty-odd years ago.

So, following some discussion, the following changes are being made:

Category 1 (vans and trucks). 1a (which was vans) is becoming 1b, 1b (which was 7.5t trucks) is becoming 1c and so on. 1a will now be 'cars' and category 29 (which is currently cars) will become obsolete. This formalises the situation where anyone who had vans was able to drive a car by putting them into the same hierarchy.

Other than your next card having a different reference there is no impact to you as an operator/instructor.

Category 10 (excavators). 10a (excavators up to 7 tonnes) will become new category 30, and category 10b (excavators over 7 tonnes) will become new category 31. Anyone who currently has 10b will get both 30 and 31 under 'grandfather rights' BUT remember when your renewal form comes through you get the option not to renew certain categories if you feel you have not had enough experience on them, so please make sure you consider this carefully on your renewal. Category 10 will become obsolete.

Note that when training for large excavators (31) you will be expected to be trained on a minimum 6 tonne machine.

Category 5 (tractors). 5a (small tractors up to 1 tonne) will become 32a (tractors up to 30 horsepower), 5c (tractors over 1 tonne) will become 32b (tractors 30 horsepower and above). Ride on mowers will become new category 33. We will be contacting some people who currently have 5b or 5c to discuss individually which of the new categories they should get. Incidentally, if you are not sure whether what you have is a ride on mower or a tractor with mower fitted, the answer is to look at the back. If it has a three pin hitch and power take-off shaft, then it is a tractor. If not, then it is a ride on mower.

Category 99 is going to be created which is 'Plant use on road'. This will trigger an annual licence check and means that volunteers (mostly with local canal societies) that do not have vans/minibuses/4x4 on their Driver Authorisation card will still be able to drive plant on the road. Anyone who currently has categories 1-3 and a plant category will be given 99 automatically. Category 4 (trailers) will be removed from the need to have a licence check.

Category 28. Lastly, if you wish to use a cut off saw (bricksaw) you will be required to have the new category 28. This was a decision made earlier last year but we deferred the change so it only becomes mandatory after the training weekend this year to give people a chance to get trained/assessed. Of course if you already have training and/or extensive experience, there is nothing stopping you from applying prior to this.

Shortly (i.e. hopefully by the time you read this) the Driver Authorisation application form will get updated, as will the Instructors Guidance Notes. Latest versions will be on the Restoration Hub website (which no longer requires you to login, hurrah!). Just go to www.waterways.org.uk/restoration_hub/overview and scroll down to the bottom of the page.

George 'Bungle' Eycott
Waterway Recovery Group

Funders

We are very grateful for the financial support from all of our funders. Listed below in chronological order, beginning with the latest, are our most recent funders:

- Co-op - Local Community Fund
- Buckingham & Villages Community Board
- The Woodroffe Benton Foundation
- Heart of Bucks Community Foundation - B P Collins Fund
- The Skinners' Company - The Lady Neville Charity
- Waitrose & Partners
- Moto in the Community Trust
- Arnold Clark Community Fund
- The National Lottery Awards for All England
- Heart of Bucks Community Foundation for Buckinghamshire - Bucks Coronavirus Stabilisation Fund
- HDH Wills Charitable Trust - Martin Wills Wildlife Maintenance Fund
- Buckinghamshire Council - Local Authority Discretionary Grant
- Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust - Thriving Communities Fund
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Rank Foundation
- The Radcliffe Trust
- The Foyle Foundation

Patrons, Partners & Supporters

We are very grateful for the continued support of our patrons:

- Lord Boswell of Aynho
- Lord & Lady Scott of Foscote

We have formal partnerships with the following:

- Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust
- Buckinghamshire Council
- Buckingham Town Council
- Canal & River Trust
- Deanshanger Parish Council
- Environment Agency
- Inland Waterways Association - Corporate Member
- West Northamptonshire Council

We are very grateful for the ongoing support of:

- Inland Waterways Association - Milton Keynes Branch
- Inland Waterways Association - Northampton Branch
- Waterway Recovery Group and their regional volunteers

We have been recognised by the following:

- Cosgrove Parish Council
- Foscote Parish Meeting
- Maids Moreton Parish Council
- Old Stratford Parish Council
- Thornborough Parish Council
- Thornton Parish Meeting

Corporate Members

Braunston Marina



Lionhearts Cruising Club



Taverners Boat Club



The Wyvern Shipping Co Ltd



Inland Waterways Association Northampton Branch

We Support:



Corporate & External Volunteer Groups

We are very grateful to all of the organisations that have ever assisted us with their volunteer groups. Listed below in chronological order, beginning with the latest, are our most recent attendees:

- Ingram Micro
- Network Rail
- Mitie Group plc
- Cummins
- Arriva UK Bus - Procurement
- Audi UK
- HSBC UK Bank plc
- British Telecommunications plc
- The Royal Latin School
- Milton Keynes College
- NHBC
- Santander
- Sava
- Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles
- Waterway Recovery Group - Bit in the Middle
- Kent & East Sussex Canal Restoration Group
- Waterway Recovery Group -London
- RS Components
- Marsh LLC
- Hallam Land Management Ltd
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Northampton Stake
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
- McAfee
- Eddyfi Technologies - TSC
- Vinci Technology Centre UK
- Computacentre
- Stowe House
- Stowe School
- Trees for Cities
- Argos
- Network Rail - Bletchley Maintenance
- Virgin Money UK

Buckingham Canal Society Craft Group



© Athina Beckett

Our craft group still isn't meeting, but I still continue to make the rag rugs which I am hoping to sell at the many planned visits to canal festivals and events throughout 2023. These are sold on our Society stall for £25 each, raising much needed funds for us.

If any members have any unused or old T-shirts which are not wanted, then please get in touch with me using my contact details on page 30. They can still be used to make even more rag rugs.

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

Future Events

Tuesday 18th July 6.30pm

**Buckingham Canal Society
Five Mile Circular Walk Taking in the
Buckingham Canal with Athina Beckett**

Meet at: Ostlers Car Park, Ostlers Lane,
Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes, Bucks,
MK11 1AR.

Details:

Contact Athina Beckett - See Page 30

Saturday 22nd - Sunday 23rd July

**Buckingham Canal Society
Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair**
Cosgrove Lock, Cosgrove, Milton Keynes,
Northants, MK19 7JR

Details: See Page 14

Saturday 29th July 11am - 5pm

Linslade Canal Festival
Tiddenfoot Waterside Park, Linslade,
Leighton Buzzard, Beds, LU7 2AE.
Details: www.leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk

Saturday 5th - Sunday 6th August

**IWA Milton Keynes
Fenny Stratford Canal Festival**
Towpath south of Watling Street Bridge,
Fenny Stratford,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK2
Details: diane.witts@waterways.org.uk

Saturday 9th September 11am - 1pm

**Buckingham Canal Society - Heritage
Open Days
Treasure Hunt: Uncover the Secrets of
the Canal**

Meet at: Car Park, Lock Lane, Cosgrove,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK19 7JR
Details: See Page 12

Sunday 17th September 10am - 12pm

**Buckingham Canal Society - Heritage
Open Days
Hedgerow Walk: A Culinary Exploration**
Meet at: Buckingham Canal at Bourton
Meadow, Ouse Valley Way, Buckingham,
Bucks, 7BW
Details: See Page 12

Work Party Dates 2023/2024

July

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 9th
Sunday 30th

August

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 13th
Sunday 27th

September

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 10th
Sunday 24th

October

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 8th
Sunday 29th

November

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 12th
Sunday 26th

December

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 10th
Sunday 31st

January

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 14th
Sunday 28th

February

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 11th
Sunday 25th

March

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 10th
Sunday 31st

April

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 14th
Sunday 28th

May

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 12th
Sunday 26th

June

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 9th
Sunday 30th

Next Navigator

So we are nearing the end of another issue of the Navigator and I am sure many of you are eager for more. You can be part of what appears in the next issue. There are regular items from the committee but there is space assigned to YOU, our valued members, for your submissions. I am also always very interested to hear what you think of the newsletter and comments are most welcome!

Please submit all contributions for Issue 117 (Autumn 2023) by the 1st August 2023 via email, CD, or typed/handwritten letter (in that order of preference) to:

editor@buckinghamcanal.org.uk or

Ian Matson, 63 Almers Road, Lyne, Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 0BH

Advertising with us

We welcome advertisements in the Navigator to assist funding. Rates are as below. Payment is required before copy date. Cheques made payable to "Buckingham Canal Society". 33% reduction for 3 issues.

Whole Page: £16

Quarter Page: £6

Back Page: £22

Half Page: £10

Inserts: £7.50

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We are interested to hear from people who would like to join us as trustees.



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Cosgrove Festival Team

events@buckinghamcanal.org.uk



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Buckingham Canal Society, Aylesbury Canal Society.



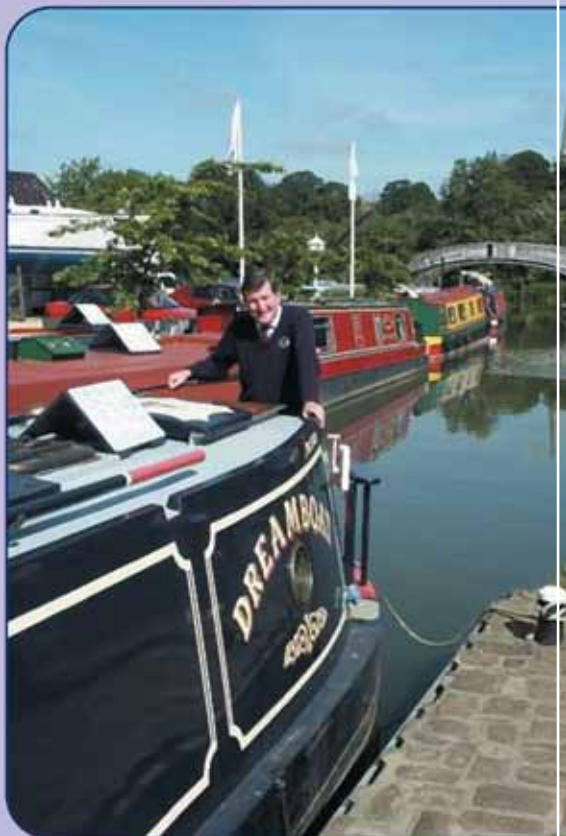
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