

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd

Subject: Work party at Honing Staithe Cut

Date : Sunday 12th January 2014

From : D E Revill, NW&DCT, and EAWA.

THE PLAN. To consolidate the Walk through the woods and check on the remainder of the area and the canal itself for obstructions.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT. The 7 earlier volunteers met on the Triangles and the H&S and general briefings were held before moving along towards the Walk at the far end from the Cut. A goodly number of wheel-barrows were present and this made the work a lot easier. The 'brawn' behind this operation was the good folk who filled the barrows! In just over an hour and a half, the large heap of shredded timber had been laid onto the Walk making it a lot safer by covering the slippery pieces of wood previously laid. The Walk is now clearly to be seen and does not have as many of the very muddy, sticky patches to negotiate when traversing the pleasant area through the trees. The large, heavy branch previously reported to be down by the entrance to the Walk from the Weavers Way, had been mostly cut up and removed by others so no further action required there! On checking the canal, I found that a tree had fallen across from the Walk side, reaching the opposite bank on to what had been the towing path (now overgrown). The tree was held up above the canal by still resting on its' main trunk and the other end resting on the other bank. A further branch is supporting it by being stuck in the mud of the canal bed. Due to limitations of our equipment we could not tackle this obstruction which effectively blocks the canal to all but a vessel with an air draught lower than 2'6"! Having completed our task on the Walk in the trees, the now 9 volunteers moved along to the inland end of the Staithe Cut and there partook of our luncheons. What kind of people sit outside in the middle of January for a picnic? The strong, English hearts of oak, taking care of our heritage and conserving our natural surroundings for later generations! Duly refreshed, we moved along further to where, just upstream of the road bridge, another tree was lying in the water adjacent to the near bank. This was tackled and on removing it from the water it was discovered that its' twin tree was very unstable and in such a state that if it collapsed it could have struck the road bridge or even worse, people on the roadway itself. It was therefore removed. There lies another branch against the reeds against the opposite bank which could not be retrieved. That will be yet another piece of timber which will eventually float down under the bridge to help cause a blockage above Honing Lock. Unfortunately this stretch can not be cleared owing to the EA instructions preventing such work, contrary to their written advice. A further large branch arching down over the Staithe Walk was also removed to prevent any possible danger to walkers. A large amount of dead vegetation was cut back, along and around the Staithe Cut to allow sunshine through to the ground level to encourage future plant growth.

It is considered that the work here is completed until the end of the summer/autumn seasons when attention will need to be focussed on the usual maintenance requirements and also a major clearance of reeds and weeds in the water of the Cut.

David E Revill
Work Party Organiser



A fleet of wheelbarrows was used to move the chippings which were dropped off in November and were used to reinforce the canal walk, particularly at the lower end. The last two views are all looking up the walk, one view of which is taken from the footbridge visible at the foot of the picture.



David and other work party volunteers take part in the usual discussion of general progress in various matters. One half of the tree closest to the upstream side of the bridge had fallen into the canal, this was removed leaving the remaining part of the tree standing on its own. Having looked at the remaining part of the tree, this looked very unstable so it was also removed, as was a low hanging branch of a tree close by, changing the view from the bridge.



Meanwhile Chris had been strimming parts of the bank, which left us at the end of the day with a nice view down Honing Staithe Cut into the winter sun.