

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd.

Subject: Work-party at Swafield.
Date: Sunday 29th March 2015
From: C.J.B. Black, NW&DCT and EAWA

THE PLAN:

- To clear brash from the NE bank of the canal above the road bridge.
- To stack and remove any useful size firewood.
- To burn the remaining brash.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT: The early morning was dry but the rain, as forecast, soon arrived accompanied by a noticeable south-westerly breeze. Eleven volunteers turned out and we were briefed by Mickey Starling as to the extent of the clearance required. We made our way down to the canal, with the tools and David Revill being transported in Mickey's van.

The usual H&S precautions were taken. There was no water hazard identified here as the canal is very shallow at this point so safety throwing lines were not required to be on site.

As the bird nesting season is nearly upon us we surveyed the site for any recently constructed nests. There was no evidence on the ground and as there were no leaves on the brash and small trees, it made the search easy. One nest (old?) was identified and was left undisturbed.

A fire was lit on the edge of the canal with smaller brash being sorted out and burnt. The larger firewood was stacked for removal later.

The rain continued to fall, heavy at times. By midday we had completed just over half of the planned work and with the little change in the weather I decided that we should concentrate on tidying up the cleared area, leaving the remaining brash standing.

Lunch was called at approximately 12.30. Ann and Mickey arrived with a very welcome hot lunch of curry and rice. The volunteer workforce has always appreciated the hospitality shown by them at Swafield work-parties.

The rain continued during lunch but despite a brief respite I decided to call a halt to the work-party as it seemed unlikely that we could continue our task.

While driving home the weather brightened up and I thought I had made a mistake by halting the work, however the skies darkened, the wind started blowing hard and the rain poured down. A short time later we arrived home and a heavy thunderstorm ensued with more heavy rain. We had made a good choice after all!

Work ceased at approx 13.30.

Chris Black, Work Party Leader