

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

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

Subject: Work-party at Bacton Wood Lock area.

Date: Sunday 12th April 2015

From: C.J.B. Black, NW&DCT and EAWA

THE PLAN:

- To prepare the Trust's recently donated pontoon for repainting and refurbishment by removal of rust and loose paint.
- To paint the rust areas with red oxide and to paint the framework with metal hammer finish paint.
- To clear some of the brash in the area above the lock.

WORK ACHIEVEMENT: The morning was sunny but windy. No rain was forecast however the wind was set to increase significantly during the day. 13 volunteers arrived on site and it was decided that the workforce would be split into two groups, one group to work on the Trust's recently donated pontoon and the other group to help with general tidying up brash located in the dry bed of the canal above the lock. Sadly, David Revill fell ill and decided to go back home to recover.

As the pontoon was located in the workshop yard there was no water hazard to consider. Dust resulting from the rust removal presented a low hazard for which face masks were provided and fumes from the paint were also considered low hazard as we were working in the open air with a strong breeze blowing.

The team tidying the area above the lock were working in the dry canal bed and on the bank, so there was no water hazard.

The pontoon is one of a pair of professionally constructed pontoons which consist of two 24ft by 2ft diameter floats affixed to a welded square section frame. They are ruggedly made and support a level platform of 25mm marine quality plywood. Square sockets are affixed to the outer frame edges to enable safety rails to be installed. Each end of the pontoon has the facility to attach an outboard motor for propulsion.

The metalwork is in very good condition with only minor surface rust. The platform (deck) has been removed as it was in poor condition. This will be replaced with non-slip trailer board, expensive but very durable. The cost of the refurbishment is likely to be around £600 – but we will have gained a substantial floating work platform for a tiny fraction of the cost of a new one.

Work went to plan on the pontoon with the rust removed and then painted with red oxide, which dried fairly quickly in the sunny, warm weather.

The brash clearance work also proceeded well and at approx. 12.30, lunch was called when we made use of the pontoon to sit on as the metal floats had been warmed by the sun!

Around 13.00 we resumed work, the pontoon team painting the pontoon frame with the metal hammer finish paint. Two coats were applied as this type of paint dries extremely quickly. The remaining paint was used to coat some areas of the floats but we will have to purchase more paint to finish the upper side at a later work-party. The undersides of the floats will have to be scraped and re-painted as there is a considerable accumulation of lime-scale, a testament to Norfolk's hard water!

Meanwhile the brash team resumed their work. With no more work possible on the pontoon the teams merged to help with the brash clearance.

Work ceased at approx 16.00.

Chris Black, Work Party Leader