

NORTH WALSHAM & DILHAM CANAL TRUST

In co-operation with the East Anglian Waterways Association Ltd

Subject: Work-party at Ebridge spillway
Date: Sunday 16 July
From: Chris Black, NW&DCT.

THE PLAN:

- To clear the weeds etc. from Ebridge spillway and surrounds.
- Assess the quantity of old groynes required for the supporting timbers to be placed at the foot of the back-slope in the back-soke.
- To sort out suitable groynes from the two large piles near Bacton Lock.
- To work out a method of constructing the concrete retaining wall for the new access track placed across the northern tip of the spillway. (Required to gain access to the east bank for maintenance)

WORK ACHIEVEMENT: The weather was fine and warm, but overcast. 12 volunteers turned out which was a good number as the spillway was covered with weed growth. We had to clear the spillway in readiness for the WRG work-party in August.

A new access track to the east bank has had to be built over the northern tip of the spillway as there was no possibility of gaining additional land from the adjacent landowner. This has reduced the width of the spillway marginally at the top overspill wall but it does cross the sloping face of the spillway at approx. 45 degrees. thus shortening the bottom length of the spillway. As the track is clay rich subsoil it requires a concrete retaining wall to be constructed on the spillway side to prevent it being scoured by the water running over the spillway. There are few hazards on this site as the canal does not directly abut the spillway having a 15ft waterlogged earth bank in front of it, the back soke into which it feeds is shallow and gravel bedded and there is easy access from the top and bottom of the banks. The main hazard is working on the slope which had one small patch which was slippery of which the volunteers were aware. Otherwise the surface was uneven but dry apart from where a small amount of water flowed over the spillway.

With the majority of the work-party getting stuck into the clearance the remainder measured up the bottom of the spillway slope to see how many timber groynes we would need to place at the foot of the slope. Approx. 90ft of useable timber was deemed to be required plus retaining posts. It was decided to lap joint the groynes and bolt them together. Being some 9" square these ex-groynes will last for many years in the wet conditions. Once this was sorted out we concentrated on getting the spillway cleared hoping to get it finished by early afternoon when we would return to Spa Common to help sort out the timber.

At approx. 12.15 we called lunch.

After lunch we continued clearing the remainder of the weeds from the spillway and generally clearing up the site. I cut the reeds and grass on the east bank of the back-soke adjacent to the spillway bottom which was then cleared by Dennis and Frank. We managed to place some temporary pieces of broken concrete on the top wall of the spillway to divert the flow of water spilling over away from the new track, as some soil had already been eroded.

At approx. 14.00 we made our way up to Spa Common to help sort out suitable lengths of the timber groynes. Being second hand some were clean and free of metal whilst others were not useable. Eventually 11 lengths were selected having useful sections between 7 and 10 ft long. These were loaded on to Laurie's refurbished heavy trailer ready to be transported up to Ebridge. We then discussed what else was required such as the water bowser, mixer and materials.

It was then decided to hold a 2 day work-party next weekend to construct the retaining wall and hopefully place some of the timber footing in.

Work ceased at approx. 16.15

Chris Black,
Work party leader.