



BASINGSTOKE CANAL BULLETIN

No. 11 December 2011 / January 2012

Recently Photographed near Deepcut....

A very strange vision indeed could be found recently hanging from trees on the footpath leading up from Lock 28 at Deepcut.



A hangover from Halloween perhaps or maybe a warning to ne'er-do-wells to stay away. Either way, really odd. Please send your suggestions (not rude!) as to what one skeleton might have said to the other to the [bulletin editor](#) (they may or may not be published...)

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- [Basingstoke Canal Wiki Page](#)
- [New Basingstoke Canal Authority \(BCA\) Website](#) **NEW**
- [Map of the Basingstoke Canal](#) **NEW**
- [John Pinkerton on Facebook](#)
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Activity on the Basingstoke Canal

We are pleased to say that the surge in activity on the Basingstoke Canal reported in the [last bulletin](#) has continued. In the last month the Society regular work party completed paving the previously very muddy towpath between Norris and Eelmore Bridges to the south of the Farnborough airfield (*right*), a distance of around 1000m. The job was started last October with the help of the [Waterway Recovery Group \(WRG\)](#) visiting party during the [Peter Redway memorial weekend](#), and was finished over a further 4 weekends. Around 450 tonnes of stone were transported in dumpers, spread and rolled along this length.



BCA ranger Chris Healey has started up a [Tuesday work party](#) which has met a couple of times recently at



Brookwood (*left*). This team got stuck in and did some major scrub clearance along the Brookwood pound, which is now much more tidy. Chris is looking for more volunteers, so if you would like to be

involved in this friendly gang then do please [get in contact with Chris](#) to [find out more](#).

Activity on the Basingstoke Canal (continued)

Members of the [John Pinkerton trip boat](#) crew have been out a couple of times this month as yet another work party, doing bank and overhanging tree clearance west of Odiham, along the course of the JP trips (*right*). This stretch of canal was partially cleared last year, but parts of it have steadily narrowed as trees have grown out making navigation difficult in places. They hope to go out again in February and March to finish this off. If you like to join this team, please email [John Abbott](#), or call him on 01252 621496 for details.



The term contractor, Dyer and Butler, continues to make progress at Deepcut. As [previously reported](#), they are concentrating on locks 19, 20 and 25, with work on lock 19 nearly done, including the completion of the bywash outlet (*left*). Work on Lock 20 has continued with extending one upper wing wall with piling (*below right*), and

pointing the lock chamber. To an untrained eye, they seem to be doing a pretty good job. Lock 25 has just recently been started.

The JP maintenance team have taken a break from work on the BCA's weed cutter (as reported in the [last bulletin](#)) while waiting for parts for the hydraulic pump to turn up and for leader John Wharf to refurbish it. Meanwhile they have started on the regular cycle of JP winter maintenance, to get the boat ready for the cruising season.

There was a possibility that a brand new replacement boat (the "JP2") might have been ready for use this year, but for various reasons this did not happen (we are hopeful that a specification will be agreed and contract signed for it to be with us in early 2013 – watch this space for more news). So, the boat that has served the Society well for the last 33 years will be out for trips along the western end of the Canal for another year.



Society Regular Volunteer Work Party

The next regular Society work parties will take place on **21st/22nd January**, when we plan to complete the landing stage below Lock 1 (started last Summer by a [WRG](#) working party), and then on **11th/12th and 25th/26th February**, where we will do some badly needed **bank repairs along the towpath between the Guildford Road bridge at Frimley Green, all the way to the Canal Centre**. This is the most heavily used section of towpath along the entire length of the Canal, so the washouts and subsidence will be familiar to a lot of you.

Note: There will inevitably be some disruption to walkers, runners and cyclists during these and subsequent alternate weekends (depending how long the job takes), for which we apologise in advance. We will do what we can to ensure that the towpath remains clear for users, however some may not know that the towpath is a *permissive* path, and is *not* a public right of way; it can therefore be closed at any time for safety reasons, if that is just unavoidable. We will endeavour to give notice of this. Heavy plant will be operating at various times, and we ask you to observe any warning, including closure, signs that will be posted at each end of the works.



For more details, please contact Janet Buckley at workparty@basingstoke-canal.org.uk or on 01252 620787.

Model Engineer Help Wanted



Many years ago, the SC Johnson Company of Frimley donated the working model of a lock that resides in the foyer of the Canal Centre building (*left*). The design was based upon the cottage and lock at the top of the Deepcut flight (Lock 28). It was a hit with children: when a button is pressed, the gates close, the lock fills, the model boat rises etc. At least, that was the case when it was working. It has not done so for some time now,

and unfortunately it also leaks water. Ian Brown, the Canal Director, has asked if there is anybody out there who would be willing to spend some time fixing this. It will require model making experience and maybe an understanding of fairly antiquated electronics (*right*), depending on what is wrong. If you believe you have the necessary skills and time and would like to help, please contact the [bulletin editor](#) initially.



Other News

Woking Borough Council capitulates over design of Bedser Bridge



Following the flood of critical feedback and the signing of a petition by nearly 1900 people over the design of the proposed footbridge to join the new WWF building with the opposite side of the Canal at Brewery Road, Woking council have scrapped the plans and proposed a new design (*left and below*). At a recent Council meeting, leader Cllr John Kingsbury

advised that “*the representations received on the proposed design had been taken into account. The new design incorporated a significantly lower bridge and therefore fewer steps and a shorter ramp on the WWF side of the Canal.*” The planned height has been reduced by around 4 feet (1.2m), to just above that of the existing bridge. There will now be fewer steps, no ramp on the town side, and on the other side the ramp is to be half its originally planned length. For more information, see the [Bedser Bridge website](#). There’s democracy in action for you...



The Brewery Road car park closes on 6th February so work on the WWF building can begin. For more see [here](#).

Proposed new development at Odiham

It is expected that plans will be submitted for a development of up to 85 houses and a care home at [Hatchwood Farm](#) in Odiham, which is the stretch of land on the opposite side of the Canal from the Colt Hill wharf, behind Galleon Marine and adjacent to the Odiham bypass. The Society will consult with Hart District Council at the appropriate time with the view that Canal should benefit in some way from “section 106” money* levied on this development.

(*Now called a community infrastructure levy; money which developers are required by local authorities to provide to fund infrastructure to support developments- Ed)

Proposed new development in the Winchfield area (“Winchfield New Town”)

The Society has just found out that a group of landowners in the Winchfield area is collaborating with Barretts on the development of a [new town which could involve the construction of 4000 houses](#). If this development goes ahead, it could have a very detrimental effect on the very attractive and unspoilt section of canal between the Barley Mow at Dogmersfield and Broad Oak bridge. An action group, the [Winchfield Action Group \(WAG\)](#) has been formed to [fight this proposal](#) and we would encourage all our members to support WAG by [registering on its website](#).

Philip Riley – Society Chairman

Reaction to proposal to change of Society name

In the [last bulletin](#) it was reported the Society committee are considering changing the working name of the Society to the “*Basingstoke Canal Society*”, to more accurately reflect that of the Canal in which many of us invest a lot of time. We asked for your reactions to this idea, and some of you indeed responded. All the messages received were supportive of the change - it seems the proposed name is regarded as more relevant and focussed, and would be more meaningful to those who are not aware of the Canal history. If you would like to comment, [we would be interested in hearing your views](#).

Basingstoke Canal Authority News



The start of January saw storms and high winds which inevitably brought down around twenty trees, several right across the canal blocking the navigation both in Surrey and

Hampshire. The largest was a birch across Malthouse Cutting, which thankfully was held up in the air by branches meaning the workboat could get right underneath it (*right*). In Aldershot three birch and an oak came down together, completely blocking the navigation. The oak is still partially across the canal but will be cleared when the workboat goes by next week.



Offside cutting and bank clearance is continuing through Hampshire and we are now in the vicinity of Farnborough Airport. Cutting through Fleet town as usual presented the usual challenges of disposing of the materials as we own so little land through that section (*left*). We also took the opportunity to remove a couple of standing dead trees in this section

The first Tuesday volunteer event (*see above – Ed*) was very successful, attended by 10 volunteers who assisted with bankside vegetation trimming in Brookwood. This was very encouraging and we look forward to regular events.

Our attempts to improve the slipway at Farnborough Road in Fleet have again been thwarted, with the British Waterways padlock smashed off and the barrier propped open along with an attempt to steal the picnic bench. On discovering it was bolted to the floor they decided to set fire to it instead! The car park is currently on the fly tippers radar at the moment and we are regularly clearing it. Finally, fly tipping over the Christmas period in Colt Hill car park also contained a child's exercise book....subject.... "Ethics". Happy New Year all!

James Emmett – BCA Ranger

Membership of the Society

We are pleased to say that the readership of this bulletin is now approaching 500 people, which represents a significant growth over its modest beginnings in late 2010, and is evidence that there is a real and perhaps increasing interest in the Basingstoke Canal as an amenity and as part of the local heritage. However we have not seen a corresponding growth in the Society membership over the same period. If you are not a member, then we urge you to [consider joining](#). Membership costs only a [modest amount](#), brings with it the quarterly printed [Basingstoke Canal Newsletter](#) (which contains more in-depth articles than the bulletin), will help fund the charitable aims of the Society in support of the Canal, and gives the Society a greater voice when it is campaigning for the betterment of the canal environment. If you would like to know more, then please contact the [membership secretary](#).

Click here to join the Surrey and Hants Canal Society

Forthcoming events

Here are some dates for your diary:

- The 2011/12 season of the *Chobham Social Meetings* will take place at The Parish Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Station Road, Chobham, at **8pm** on the **third Wednesday** of the month. Non members and friends are very welcome. Refreshments will be available at the interval. Please call David Millett on 01252 617364 for more information. For a map and for more details about the talks, please refer to the latest [Basingstoke Canal News](#).
 - **15th February 2012** – Robin Higgs OBE – “Canals and Rivers of Eastern France”
 - **21st March 2012** - Dick Skeets – “The Hereford and Gloucester Canal”

Note: We urgently need one or more persons willing to help with refreshments at the Chobham social meetings to identify themselves. Maureen Coxhead has had to retire from making the tea and coffee at the Woking talks due to ill health. Unfortunately no one person has been able to undertake this task on a regular basis, and individuals are therefore helping on a rota basis. If anyone is prepared to volunteer for refreshments for any of the remaining talks in 2012 please call Peter Coxhead on 01932 - 344564. All the tea making equipment and ingredients will be provided.
- *Surrey and Hampshire Canal Cruises (John Pinkerton Boat Company) AGM*
 - **23rd March 2012 –7.30pm** at the Canal Centre, Mytchett. Come and hear the latest on the JP2, among other things.

Contributions to the Bulletin are welcome..

Short articles about the Canal with accompanying photos if possible would be appreciated. The copy date for bulletin articles is the **last day of each month**. Publication (if it occurs) will normally take place approximately in the middle of the following month.

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