



Friends of the Cromford Canal e-Newsletter

FCC primary aim is "The restoration, reconstruction, preservation & maintenance of the Cromford Canal, its associated buildings, towing path, structures & craft & the conservation of its natural character as a navigable inland waterway system for the benefit of the public."

Issue 9: May 2021

THE EIGHTH COVID EDITION:

Although we are still managing operations "virtually", FCC is slowly recommencing our field based activities – work parties have started and our trip boat is being cleaned, tested and used as a floating shop! New volunteers are being recruited and trained. Hugh Potters' new booklet "Cromford Wharf" is flying off the shelves (there's even a rumour of another booklet on the Nightingale Arm!). We're receiving Donations and even buying land...!!



FCC core & general updates: Trustees held our AGM on 19th April "virtually" for the second year running; FCC's 2020 accounts and AGM minutes have been filed with the Charity Commission. The highlights of the year were outlined by the Chair - not surprisingly Covid and its impacts dominated, including the FCC operating loss. Trustees continue to monitor proposals for a hydroelectric scheme in Cromford and its potential effect on water flows into the top end of the canal. The Midland Railway Trust has requested the loan of our dumper, and as always we are happy to help out fellow charities in their hour of need. Trustees have recognised additional funding streams are needed and have launched easy ways for FCC members and the wider public to be able to contribute and donate to our causes: all donations will go directly towards to costs of restoring the canal – the "Give as you Live" facility provides two ways of donating to FCC - [see our newly relaunched website \(4th May\) for details.](#)

FCC Conservation and Restoration:

DCC Countryside Services have served notice, that the Environment Agency has instructed that further to the new Water Transfer Regulations, in times of drought the water flow into the canal at Cromford Mill could be suspended at 48 hours' notice, possibly compromising our boat operations. FCC work parties under the direction of John Barker have been assisting CRT at Ironville replacing fence posts, and also working with DCC at Ambergate installing more coir-rolls along the banks. **Beggarlee extension:** RW Brickworks had agreed to the sale to FCC of half an acre of land along the western-side the canal for £11,000 and a solicitor has been engaged: A fund raising appeal through Portal is expected to generate donations of about £10,000 with the addition of £2,000 Gift Aid.

Browns Bridge: after extending the tender deadline, three technically compliant responses have been received, but the bad news is that they are 3-6 times higher than our original estimates. The Heritage Lottery Fund application was unsuccessful – they didn't like us proposing repairing someone else's asset. Consequently Trustees have decided to suspend the project and concentrate on working with DCC on funding next year, and meanwhile have declared the bridge inoperable. The imminent local elections have presented us with an opportunity though and 15 local DCC councillors have been written to in the strongest terms, a Facebook campaign has been launched, and a petition is being planned in an attempt to garner political support for funding. The good news is that the missing pre-purchased slewing ring has been received and is now in storage.

FCC's Birdswood & Shop: Derbyshire County Council's Health & Safety Officer has again confirmed that we should assume Covid Road Map Step 4 – i.e. they hope to be able to approve us cruising again after 21st June. FCC's Boat Committee's has been preparing by cleaning the boat and has commenced some soft publicity by means of having the boat on the Cromford wharf on Sundays – starting in 18th April and planned through the whole of May, to act in part as a floating shop. Several new volunteers have been recruited on the back of this publicity, and income generated amongst other things from carved tree trunks - in the shape of mushrooms – donated by a work party volunteer. All volunteer crew have been sent further updates by email on the status of Birdswood. We continue to exploit our on-line presence: more than £2000 of sales of merchandise has been achieved in 6 months from the Birdswood website: In addition to an eNewsletter sign-up button, a new "Donations" button has been added to the Birdswood website which mirrors the facility on the new FCC website, and facilitates public donations to the charity and its objectives through our partner "Give as you Live".



PLEASE FOLLOW US @FriendCromCanal – Tweeting and Retweeting is good!

PLEASE FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK We've had lots of "likes", "shares" & extra followers :FCC: [click here](#): has grown from 886 members (Nov19) to 1591 members, +80% in 16 months!