



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 7: January 2021

THE SIXTH COVID EDITION:

Well there's light at the end of the tunnel!!...vaccines are on their way, but it looks like we'll have to put up with some Covid restrictions for some time yet. YET, our stakeholder base continues to grow! FCC membership is up to over 900, volunteering across the charity is up to well over 150 and regular followers across social media numbers over 2500. Interest, engagement and involvement flourishes: this e-Newsletter now gets distributed to over 700 subscribers every two months: so never let it be said that we're not trying on the communication front!!



FCC core & general updates: The Charity Commission has counselled against delaying the annual AGM and Trustees are planning to hold the event on 19th April – probably "virtually" again. Additional to the two grants mentioned in the previous e-Newsletter, a third small grant has recently been received from DCC to support our Covid mitigation plan. Local work parties have been hard at work as usual: mainly on weed clearing at the Cromford end where most of the weed at High Peak Junction was cleared – amounting to some 30-40 wheelbarrow loads - a big job by hand until stopped by inclement weather. Thanks to all the heroes – you know who you are! An FCC Trustee team met with DCC twice recently – once for a general operational update and once specifically on Browns Bridge repair planning. DCC's Susan White is providing a ZOOM based briefing session in early January on the subject of water laws and regulations so that we can be better educated on our obligations when using the canal at the Cromford-Ambergate end, and on general ecological best practice.

FCC Conservation and Restoration:

Steve Parish continues to provide fantastic support to FCC to monitor and mitigate threats of all developments that might restrict restoration of the route of the canal.

FCC's Strategic Restoration Committee is starting to plan for the construction phase of the new Beggarlee extension that will extend the canal from Langley Mill to Stoney Lane: to aid this a new Construction Committee is being set up: many planning conditions are being worked through but we hope to start to dig very soon.

Invitations to Tender have been issued to three potential contractors for the renovation of Browns (Swing) Bridge: the tender response deadline has had to be extended which means that we are unlikely to be able to complete the work until after Easter 2021. Joint funding is being discussed with DCC.

FCC's Birdswood & Shop: FCC's Boat Committee's focus is now entirely on planning for the re-commencement of public cruising as from the middle of March 2021. Our planning assumes that for the first part of the season we will be operating under Covid Tier 1 conditions (as advised by DCC). Although the Warehouse Shop remains closed, we are exploiting our on-line presence: more than £1000 of sales of merchandise has been achieved in 2 months using new online payment facilities, which is easier for customers to use and costs the Charity less to run. Merchandise has been flying off the shelves – including Xmas cards: if you have any Christmas scenes of the canal in winter, we could get some new designs sorted for next season's sales!

Birdswood helped our chums at Aqueduct Cottage by transporting roofing timber along the canal in October – the first cargo on this section for over 100 years! Our technical team resolved the issue of the noisy new motor, but the primary integrated motor / pump assembly sprung an oil leak and is being repaired by professionals. We had our bi-annual in-water inspection from the Maritime & Coastguard Agency on the 4th November and although we got a clean bill of health for the next 12 months (thanks to the team lead by Mike Kelley), the inspectors have pre-warned us that they want a rather more intrusive inspection when we get the boat out of the water next year. Corinne Rose has agreed to join our Boat Committee to provide publicity support - our new Birdswood Facebook page went from zero to over 400 followers in a week!, and we've now got our own Instagram page!!



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 1450 members, +65% in 12 months!