

November 2018 Newsletter

Litter picks

Throughout the year we have participated in 'litter picks' along the line of the Canal between Clayton and Debdale reservoir.

These events have been carried out in association with Sustrans, the cycling charity. Both Sustrans and ourselves are promoting the line of the canal as a 'litter free' zone and encouraging the local community to take up this task on a regular basis.

Discussions have been held with Manchester City Council regarding the collection of litter bags arising from these community events.

Further effort by both our organisations is still required to develop this community involvement.

Sustrans are presently setting up a regular monthly 'picking day', the first of which is on 10th November - **watch our website for joining details and future event days.**

Please try and spare a few hours to help our combined efforts and encourage the local community.

Community appreciation of and care for the canal line is our first step in our efforts for the longer term restoration of the canal - without Community involvement and support the restoration will not happen.

Community 'Soup' grant application

In September we made a grant application through a local government funded initiative which provides funding for locally inspired community projects in the East Manchester area.

We laid out our near and longer term plans for preparing the line of the canal for its eventual restoration.

Our initial intention was to raise monies to publicise and 'kit out' volunteer litter pickers in the community.

We then described how we foresaw the involvement of schools and possible youth employment in the clearance of undergrowth to improve the state of the existing pedestrian/cycleway as a prelude to sympathetic removal and replanting of trees to enable canal restoration to take place.

The intention being to gradually re-shape the environment around the canal without sudden, drastic changes to this green corridor.

We were shortlisted to attend an event to 'pitch for our bid' (their words not mine!).

We had no idea what was in store! The event was organised so that the results (and awards) were determined based upon support from the audience, who were basically made up from groups supporting their own cause.

We had no inkling it was to be such an event and had made no provision to alert members to support us.

Needless to say, we were under represented, outvoted on the night and were unsuccessful on this occasion.

We did learn however - there is money out there to be had - but you must have the support of your Society to get it! - when future opportunities arise we shall be better prepared to forewarn you and be looking for your 'vocal

support'

Openshaw Festival and other events over the summer

We hosted stalls at several events over the summer at Clayton Hall, Morrisons-Reddish, Vine Street Gorton and Openshaw Festival and Manchester Road Heaton Chapel.

We also joined in the Manchester History Festival with the Inland Waterways Association (IWA) to celebrate the history of canals in Manchester.

At Openshaw we were joined by the Manchester Branch of the IWA and the Waterways Recovery Group (WRG) .

This year these organisations are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the 'Great Ashton Canal Clean-up', a 'protest' action aimed at showing the authorities that the canal was viable and should not be abandoned as the Establishment wished.

Film show at the Strawberry Duck - 'The Ashton Canal Clean Up'

As part of the celebrations by IWA and WRG mentioned above, the organisations are presenting a film of the clean up of the Ashton Canal **at the 'Strawberry Duck' public house, Crabtree Lane, Clayton (canalside at lock 13, Ashton Canal) on Saturday 17th November 2018 starting at 2.00pm.**

(Manchester IWA are holding a work party prior to the film show if you are interested in participating - see our website for details)

Please come along and watch the film and see what was achieved by collective action.

As a result of their activities, those canal enthusiasts enabled the Ashton Canal to be saved and restored to its present day condition.

Our Stockport Canal restoration would not be a possibility if it had not been for the actions of these people all those years ago

Progress on survey work

We continue to make slow but steady progress on this work, we have three volunteers, two involved with the surveying and one person looking at the means of presenting the results.

We are still short of helpers with knowledge of CAD and digital surveying techniques - **ANYBODY OUT THERE ??**

Need for more active membership and volunteers

You have no doubt realised from the tone of my newsletter that the message is very much that we need our members & friends to become more active to turn our aspirations into achievements.

Currently our 'active' members who turn out for events, organise our stalls and manage the society generally number less than ten people.

If we are to make meaningful inroads into the restoration of the Stockport Canal we need to increase this active involvement.

It doesn't matter what walk of life you have trodden you will have a skill or knowledge that would be helpful to us in reaching our goal.

Please contact me (RBravey@aol.com, 0161 442 9087) and we can discuss what help you can provide.

Roger Bravey - Chairman Manchester & Stockport Canal Society 5/11/2018