

Ymddiriedolaeth Camlesi Nedd a Thennant.



Neath and Tennant Canals Trust

Newsletter

Nov/Dec 2019 – No. 154



Weed cutting at Tonna Lock – Summer 2019.

Neath & Tennant Canals Trust – AGM - July 2019

Chairman's Report, 2018 – 2019

The beginning of the financial year was characterised by a continuing sense of frustration given the lack of progress - and seemingly the lack of concern by other key stakeholders - concerning the impasse relating to the desired change of ownership of the Neath Canal. The Trust has continued to explore options, including the involvement of the Welsh Assembly Government, with a view to securing a financial package which would persuade CRT to assume ownership.

In August, attention was drawn in an article published in *Waterways World* to the neglected state of the northern section of the canal which is leased and managed by NPTCBC. The feature, however, attracted little attention locally despite the best efforts of the Trust, and not surprisingly little has changed over the course of the remainder of the financial year. Towards the end of the calendar year, it became necessary to review the proposed restoration of the Carpenters' Shed and Saw-pit in light of the effects of Storm Callum. Given the Workshops' proximity to the River Neath, the whole site was flooded to a depth of a foot or more. Whilst some items of equipment were damaged, the financial loss was relatively small and did not justify an insurance claim. Fortunately all of the significant historical files and papers survived.

The layout and content of the Workshops will be modified to minimise the effects of future flooding. The means by which the Carpenters' Shed and Saw-pit can be restored and protected are being explored. Given the substantial growth of knotweed in the Workshop garden, a 5-year eradication programme undertaken by NPTBC was initiated.

In contrast, 2019 began very positively. The Trust was delighted to accept a gift of £25,000 from the partner of the late Mike Charles, in memory of his affection for the Neath Canal and to honour his wish to support the work of the Trust.

In addition, the publication of NPTCBC's Supplementary Planning Guidance on the Historic Environment afforded protection to an additional 27 structures on the Neath and Tennant Canals – incorporation all but a few of those submitted by the Trust and ensuring that 17 of the original 19 locks on the Neath Canal are now protected.



Weed cutting at Tonna – July 2019.

Gareth Edwards' Great Welsh Adventure



You may have seen the four programmes on BBC Wales recently featuring Gareth Edwards and his wife, Maureen, visiting the canals of Wales. The last programme in the series featured the Swansea and the Neath Canals. Filming took place in July. If you missed the programmes they can be seen again on BBC iPlayer.



The up-grading of the Trust's web-site is underway.

Progress regarding the proposed restoration of the Aberdulais Aqueduct has been limited despite NPTCBC being identified at a meeting of the Swansea Bay Inland Waterway Partnership as the coordinating body.

The Trust has continued to be represented on various national and local organisations. Mike Jones continues to give illustrated talks to various organisations as well as assisting in manning the Trust's exhibits at various events.

The £25k donation has ensured that our financial position is particularly sound.

Finally, as always, I wish to thank all those who have served on the Council of Management and otherwise contributed to the smooth running of the Trust over the past 12 months.

Gareth Hughes
Chairman.

Trust News.

Tonna Workshops. The Workshops were flooded again at the end of September – flood water coming down the river coinciding with a high tide. A number of work parties have taken place where undergrowth and saplings have been removed from around the long shed and surrounding area. The knotweed treatment continues. Quotes have been obtained for the replacing of fencing around the Workshop site.

Website. Our new website is now up and running. It is still under development but is well worth a look.

<https://www.neath-tennant-canals.org.uk/>

Canal Talks. Mike Jones continues to give illustrated talks to various organisations around Neath and Swansea. Gareth Hughes recently gave a talk on the Neath and Tennant Canals to the Warwickshire Branch of the IWA.

Thomas Dadford. No change from the last report.

Other Canal News.

AGM. The Annual General Meeting was held at the end of July and it was good to see a few new faces at the meeting. The Council of Management now looks like this – Chairman – Dr. Gareth Hughes; Vice-Chairman – Mrs Margaret Gwalter; General Secretary – Mr Ian Milne; Company Secretary – Mrs. Margaret Gwalter; Treasurer – Mr. Malcolm Smith; Publicity and Website – Mr. Martyn Lyddon; Newsletter Editor – Mr. Ted Porter; Work Party Organiser – Mr. Malcolm Smith; Archivist – Mr. Peter Ricketts MBE; Other COM Member – Mr Mike Jones.

New Members – A few new members have joined the Trust over the past few months. We welcome them

Weedcutting. As can be seen in photos elsewhere in this newsletter, two weed cutters have been busy on the Neath Canal during the summer. They started clearing a channel from Bridge Street down to Briton Ferry and were then lifted over Bridge Street bridge to work their way up to Tonna Lock.

The Canal and River Trust has received another generous grant from the People's Postcode Lottery. Since 2012, it has received over £6.3 million.

St. Modwen has recently sold part of its interest in the Student Accommodation at the Swansea Bay Campus for £43 million.

From Wales Online – Four women from Neath spend the last weekend in each month clearing litter from the Neath Canal. So far they have filled over 40 rubbish bags as well as pulling out two shopping trolleys and a wheelchair. A spokesman from Neath Port Talbot CBC stated "The council is only responsible for the length of Neath Canal north of Resolven to Glynneath which is leased from the Canal Company. The Canal Company is responsible for the remainder. We have a full time employee that tends to the leased section."

Newsletter Contributions – we welcome letters, short articles etc from members to be included in future issues of the newsletter. The address for contributions to be sent is on the back page.

**Neath and Tennant Canals Trust.
Council of Management 2019 – 2020**

Chairman: Dr. Gareth Hughes

Vice-Chairman: Margaret Gwalter

General Secretary: Ian Milne Tel: 01792 547902

Company Secretary – Margaret Gwalter

Treasurer: Malcolm Smith

Membership Secretary: Vacant

Publicity & Website: Martyn Lyddon

Newsletter Editor: Ted Porter.

Work Party Organiser: Malcolm Smith

Archivist: Peter Ricketts MBE

Other C.O.M. Members: Mike Jones.

Articles, letters, photographs etc. are always needed to keep your newsletters interesting. All contributions should be sent to the Editor:

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- by the first week of the month of publication i.e. March,
June, November.