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Please note there is no meeting on Thursday 2 July

Although relaxation of the coronavirus lockdown seems to have started, many public events and gatherings are still not allowed. Our Waterways Events feature remains in abeyance. More information may be found on our [website](#).

#### A word from the Treasurer

Sadly, we can't meet this month, but I hope that you have read the Report that I prepared for the AGM and will give it some thought before we meet in October. [The report was published in last month's [Newsletter](#).]

As lockdown ends may I wish you all the opportunities you want to enjoy the rest of the summer.

Aelred Derbyshire  
Hon Treasurer

#### Moth Warning

CRT has warned boaters and towpath walkers to avoid a wood beside the K&A Canal while it investigates sightings of [oak processionary moths](#). There have been reports of this species in Jubilee Wood between Marsh Lane, Devizes and Bridge 144, Upper Foxhangers. Hairs from the caterpillars can drift on the wind and cause severe allergic reactions in people and animals.

[Towpath Talk](#) - July 2020

## Chairman's Column

Dear Friends and members,

Well another month has passed and a lot has happened in the world. The main glimmer of hope is that we can now go to our boat and actually stay the night and go away if wanted.

Hopefully we will go to Napton during July and can then check the state of the big lump of cheese that was left on board when we were evicted in March. We will give an update in our next report

Angie has been busy in the garden, so we now are picking Raspberries and Strawberries. We have runner bean plants and potatoes appearing everywhere there happened to be a space between the flowers!

If all goes ok over the next 3 months then the AGM is still planned for October. I think that it will have to be a short meeting without too much socialising, we will have to see.

We have provisionally booked Ron and Myra Glover for our November meeting and they will be talking on the Irish Waterways.

As yet we still have not decided about the annual quiz, so watch this space.

Please all of you, keep safe and keep the gardens up together.

Best regards

Alan and Angie

## Almost back to normal

In line with the latest government advice for England issued on 23 June 2020, CRT were pleased to say that from Saturday 4 July 2020 all boaters can stay overnight on their boats and take extended cruises.

Holiday hire boat companies will also be able to freely operate, taking precautions around safe practise, such as extra cleaning.

This means the waterways in England will be fully open from 4 July for boating, angling and paddle sports. CRT's towpaths remain open for people to enjoy exercise and being in the outdoors, close to nature.

In Wales, the restrictions on staying local will be lifted on 6 July, if conditions allow. A range of options for the reopening of self-contained holiday accommodation, such as boats, will be considered in a review on 9 July. CRT strongly advise that you regularly check the Welsh Government website for updated information.

You can enjoy the canals while following the

updated advice around social distancing, keeping at least one metre from both other people and moored boats where people may be living aboard.

When on the towpath, please move aside to allow others to pass safely, using the full width of the path. If you are a cyclist, please remember that pedestrians always have priority, so take it steady and be ready to slow down to give way to others, including those by their boats or fishing. You may want to consider using an alternative route away from the towpath for your exercise if you want to avoid other people.

CRT continue to remind people to act with consideration and respect for others.

CRT say they will keep the situation under active review and update you in line with changing circumstances and Government guidance. Sign up to [Boaters' Update](#) and their [stoppage notifications](#) to get updates.

[Towpath Talk](#) - 24 June 2020

## But there are some exceptions

The majority of CRT's navigations are now open, with a few exceptions that are listed in their [stoppage notices](#). Some staff-operated structures need advance booking while other locks remain closed with small periods of time allocated for boat movements. Please check CRT's [latest update](#) on this.

CRT regret but confirm that navigation opportunities along the Leeds & Liverpool, Peak Forest and Macclesfield canals this summer will be restricted due to the combined effect of reduced reservoir capacity and one of the driest springs on record.

To conserve water and ensure they are able to offer navigation in July and August, the three North West canals were not re-opened on 1 June when coronavirus navigation restrictions were relaxed across the rest of the canal network.

Due to the dry weather, the reservoir holding for the [Leeds & Liverpool Canal](#) is currently only 62% of its capacity - far below what is required for unrestricted use of the canal at this stage of the year. Despite the wet winter, the canal relies on a regular supply of rainfall throughout the year to

(Continued on page 4)

## £8.9m lottery bid

A bid for £8.9million to complete the restoration of the Stroudwater canal has been submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund ([NLHF](#)).

The funding will allow the remaining four miles of unrestored canal to be completed and will link the canal to the national canal network at Saul on the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal, bringing enormous health and well-being, environmental and financial benefits to the district.

A decision is expected to be made in the autumn.

In April 2018 the NLHF awarded £842,000 development funding to make sure everything was in place before the remaining funds were applied for in see the project through to completion.

And in May 2019 the project was given a further boost thanks to a £4 million Highways England grant to Cotswold Canals Trust to restore the 'missing mile' of canal which was lost to road builders 50 years ago when the M5 was constructed. [Bridges under the A38 are currently under construction - see this [video on YouTube](#) taken on 1 June 2020.]

Dave Marshall, Stroud District Council's canal manager, said: "The canal project has been embraced by the thousands of people in the district who use it on a regular basis. People from all walks of life, ages and abilities enjoy the benefits of a restored canal corridor, and winning the bid will ensure it can be enjoyed by many more. Much of the restoration work relies on volunteers, to whom we owe a huge debt of thanks as well as everyone who buys a National Lottery ticket, which funds these grants."

Stroud District Council leader Doina Cornell said: "The regeneration of the canal is one of the largest such projects in the country and has already brought major benefits to the district.

"We really want to see the final phase succeed and Stroud and Stonehouse become canal towns once again, with a living waterway running through the heart of the district all the way to Sharpness and the Severn.

"The canal project fits in well with our priorities as a council to promote health and well-being and invest in the environment and local economy all of which are especially important in the wake of Covid-19."

Cotswold Canals Connected is co-led by Stroud District Council and the

## It's not the Oxford Canal!

In the Belgian port of Zeebrugge the second lock gate has been lifted and moved from the Pierre Vandamme lock to the inner port for renovation.

In the presence of the Flemish Minister of Mobility and Public Works Lydia Peeters and the Port of Zeebrugge, Jan De Nul Group disconnected, lifted and transported the second lock gate on a heavy lift vessel.

### Spectacular Operation

A spectacular operation because the gate weighs over 2,500 tonnes and has the surface of one quarter of a football pitch (60m x 10m x 24m). The work was commissioned by the Flemish Department of Mobility and Public Works and is part of the large-scale renovation of the Pierre Vandamme lock, the crucial point of access to the inner port of Zeebrugge.

The Pierre Vandamme lock dates from 1984 and consists of two lock gates, each with two rolling gates and two movable bridges. The lock gate closest to the sea was lifted from the gate chambers in 2018 and, after having been renovated in the inner port, was re-installed in 2019. Now, the same will be done with the most landward gate.

### Gulliver's Travails

After six weeks of preparations to make the lock gate ready for lifting,



the heavy lift vessel Gulliver of Jan De Nul Group can now lift the door out of its position. The 'Gulliver' is a pontoon derrick that can lift a weight of over 3,300 tonnes. The whole operation is a sequence of several partial operations that have been meticulously planned and prepared. The works started at 3 o'clock at night and will take an estimated 19 hours.

In March 2018, Jan De Nul Group removed the first lock gate from its position for the same renovation in the inner port. This lock gate was

reinstalled in the summer of 2019.

A consortium will renovate the lock gate in the inner port of Zeebrugge.

Once on land, a scaffold was placed all around the gate to remove oysters and sludge. The consortium will replace several mechanical parts and install new technologies such as a compressor and agitation screws. Also the steel structure will be taken on and adapted, including the installation of four extra butterfly valves. The door will be repainted to protect it against corrosion.

After the renovation work, the lock gate will be transported back to and mounted into the gate chamber. During the renovation of this lock gate, the Vandamme lock will remain perfectly operational thanks to the three remaining lock gates.

*Maritime Journal - 1 June 2020*

Cotswold Canals Trust with key partners Gloucestershire County Council, the Canal & River Trust and the Stroud Valleys Canal Company. Other partners include Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, Inland Waterways Association and the Stroudwater Navigation Archive charity.

Stroud District Council has committed £3 million to the project so far, with further contributions from Gloucestershire County Council, Cotswold Canals Trust and the Canal & River Trust. The total cash cost of the project, allowing for inflation and other contingencies, but excluding the value of volunteering, is £16.3 million.

The canal's history dates back to 1730 when an Act of Parliament granted proprietors of the Stroudwater Navigation the power to build it. It opened in 1779 and joined with the Thames and Severn Canal 10 years later, which established a largely inland waterway link between Bristol and London.

It was abandoned in 1954 but the founding of the Stroudwater Canal Society in 1972 led to the formation of the Cotswold Canals Trust. The Stroudwater Navigation links with the Thames and Severn Canal at Wallbridge and so far the stretch of that canal between Wallbridge and Thrupp has been restored.

Under the leadership of Stroud District Council since 2009, the project has seen restoration of five miles of canal, nine locks and six miles of towpath so far.

A fully restored canal will attract huge tourism benefits, create 21 hectares of bio-diverse habitat and canal towpath, conserve and digitise archive material charting the canal's history and attract more than £75 million worth of new private investment within five years of the end of the project.

So far, the district council-led restoration between Stonehouse and Thrupp has transformed the canal corridor, attracting £139 million of private investment - with studies suggesting that boaters and visitors to a restored canal would spend more than £5 million a year in the Stroud district.

*Towpath Talk - July 2020*



## More of our yesterdays - History of a Canal Stool

Another item featuring the Evans family - thanks to Annegret & Brian.

November 25th, 1961. A damp, dull and cold day. Annegret and I were staying at my Mother's home, the Village Post Office of Clows Top, about the halfway point between Tenbury Wells and Bewdley.

We set off quite early for Braunston, my younger brother Maurice and sister-in-law Carol came along. Arriving at Braunston boat yard we found the weather about the same, only less people about. Not a soul. A dismal scene with ex working boats, some floating, some sinking, and some sunk in weedy old docks.

We had come to collect an order, which my brother, Don, had placed before:

- Two black stools with castle
- One black stool with roses
- And one black water can with roses.



We walked up to Braunston Village to find Michael Streat, who at that time ran the boatyard and Blue Line Hire Cruisers from there. He loaded us all into his Bedford Dormobile and drove us down to the yard. He handed over the ordered beautifully decorated items. I paid the bill, totalling £15.

I believe they were made and painted by a workman, employed by Willow Wren well before most of the artists began this form of art. One of the stools was for my Mum; we have one with a castle - see pictures. The third stool was for Ron Antley who in June 1967 fixed for us to hold the first meetings of Southampton Canal Society in his little Scout Hut at Millbrook Point, Southampton.

While emptying the drawer in the stool to find the Canal Stool Invoice, we came across quite a collection of commemorative postage stamps, and among them some Canal ones.

We seem to have only three different ones, but there were four in the set. Maybe you could ask if any member could send a picture in of the fourth. Many members will have forgotten all about them.

*Annegret & Brian Evans*

Well, by the "miracle" of the internet, I have found a picture of the fourth stamp with a value of 39p and included it below. The set, called "Inland Waterways" was designed by the boat painter Tony Lewery and issued on 20th July 1993.

As for the prices of the stools and the water can - well, 59 years makes a big difference!

*Peter Oates*



## SOUTHAMPTON CANAL SOCIETY

Established 1967

The objectives of the Society are to foster interest in canals and inland waterways, to assist in their preservation, restoration and development, and to give practical help on waterway projects.

Meetings are normally held on the first Thursday of each month at 7.45pm (see Waterways Events in this issue) at Chilworth Village Hall, Chilworth, Southampton, SO16 7JZ. OS Grid Ref: SU410184. Contact the Secretary for further information.

This Newsletter is normally published during the first week of each month in time for the Society's meeting.

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## Southsea's coastal defence scheme gets funding

Plans for state-of-the-art new coastal defences in Southsea, on the UK's south coast have been given the green light as the government has awarded nearly £100m of funding.

Funding from the Environment Agency was the final hurdle the Portsmouth City Council project had to overcome and work is now set to start on site later this year. The scheme is being delivered by VSBW (a consortium of Volker Stevin and Boskalis Westminster).

Cllr David Ashmore, the council's Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate Change, said: "Securing this funding is a testament to the hard work put in by the team over the last seven years. We are now able to replace the outdated defences and protect Southsea residents and businesses from the risk of flooding for generations to come."

### Protection

The proposed scheme will protect over 10,000 residential and 700 non-residential properties in Southsea from the risk of coastal flooding. It also aims to bring more economic benefits to the area, including attracting further tourism and events to the area and support local businesses and employment through the scheme itself to name a few.

Cllr Hugh Mason, Cabinet Member for Planning Policy & City Development, said: "This is excellent news and it is the culmination of many years of planning and careful negotiation. The scheme has been challenging because we had to plan not just to build sea defences but to plan them in a way which would protect and enhance the unique character of the Southsea seafront, so loved by both local people and visitors."

As part of a six-year programme worth £2.6bn to protect 300,000

## Cruising Restrictions

(Continued from page 1)

replenish its resources, and the last three months have been exceptionally dry.

This includes the driest April on record as measured by the summit reservoir rain gauge and an even dryer May. This is coupled with the fact that key reservoirs are not currently able to operate at peak capacity due to vital maintenance work.

homes across England, the Environment Agency is supporting the Southsea Coastal Scheme with £97.8m of funding following on from planning permission being granted in December and now final approval from HM Treasury.

### 7 Years Work

The project team has worked closely with the Environment Agency on a local as well as a national level to secure approval, despite unprecedented demands placed upon central government finances at this time. It is the culmination of seven years of work including wide ranging public consultation to help develop and shape the scheme.

Cllr Judith Smyth, who sits on the project's cross-party working group, said: "I am delighted government has awarded this funding. It will be great for residents to start seeing the delivery of the plans they have contributed towards over the years and a real boost for Southsea."

The first phase of work to start will be between Long Curtain Moat and Clarence Pier, while detailed designs for other sections are being developed.

Cllr Luke Stubbs, another member of the project's cross-party working group, said: "This project is huge for Southsea and Portsmouth as a whole. It's the biggest

local authority delivered coastal defence project in the country. It's great that work will be underway soon and as plans are developed for the other phases residents will have more opportunities to get involved."

*[Maritime Journal](#) - 9 June 2020*



*[Canal & River Trust](#) - 2 & 24 June 2020*