



## **MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL – CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP – 30TH NOVEMBER 2023**

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE CANAL**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Canal Working Group Members on all matters relating to the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 This report details the current and planned maintenance and any capital works planned for the remainder of this year. Details are provided on current funding availability and a general statement is provided outlining any current operational issues regarding the usage and the condition of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm.
- 2.2 Members of the working group are asked to note that ensuring the integrity of the canal channel and connecting culverts thus maintaining water flows and levels is the priority of the Council.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 That the working group note the contents of the report and the updates provided.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 To provide members with an update of details of the current and planned maintenance and any capital works planned for the remainder of this year.

### **5. THE REPORT**

#### **5.1 MAINTENANCE UPDATE**

##### **5.1.1 Canal Channel**

Weed cutting/channel maintenance for 2023 was undertaken in October. It should be noted that this year's weed maintenance operations was managed more appropriately with no complaints received in this respect. Thanks were passed onto

Parks Department for their efforts and attention to this operation.

#### **5.1.2 Grass Maintenance**

The first cut of the season was undertaken in March and then on a 3 to 4 weekly cycle up until the final cut that was undertaken in October 2023.

### **5.2. 2023/2024 WORKS PROGRAMME**

#### **5.2.1 Towpath**

There are no planned towpath works for 2023/2024.

#### **5.2.2 Access Enhancement**

There are no planned access maintenance works for 2023/24.

#### **5.2.3 Water Control**

The canal feed was switched off in October 2023 in readiness for the winter season. Officers continue to monitor water levels but in the interest of public safety and flood prevention, a freeboard of 500mm should be maintained throughout these months.

Infrastructure officers have initiated the process of obtaining an abstraction license with Natural Resources Wales. The council has been informed that due to the pressures of other abstraction licenses from the Ebbw River including the Newport Docks at Bassaleg Weir a hands-off flow equivalent to Q75 will be applied. This means that the council are only able to abstract water where levels are higher than 75% of normal or on an average rainfall year, equivalent to 274 days where water would be available.

Infrastructure officers are now tasked with calculating the current Q rates and if any adaptations to the Nant Carn Feed are required to meet the Q75 requirements.

Drainage upgrade/improvement works at Henry Roberts Bridge has been commissioned with a scheduled commencement date of January 8<sup>th</sup> 2024 with a 3week contract period. Works will be undertaken safely under a temporary road closure. Members will be notified of the works nearer the time.

With respect to Manor Road emergency feed, officers in Infrastructure have attempted contact several times with DCWW pollution prevention control officer but have not yet been able to secure a meeting.

#### **5.2.4 Dredging**

Dredging works at Fernlea remains a desire and will be scheduled for maintenance later in 2023/24 subject to available funding.

#### **5.2.5 Tree Maintenance**

Planned tree maintenance is progressing and being managed by the authority's Arboriculturalists. Reactive works to deal with tree falls is also ongoing.

#### **5.2.6 External Funding**

No external funding for use on the canal has been secured for 2023/24 however, officers within CCBC Planning and Regeneration Division continually seek opportunities where appropriate.

### **5.2.7 Channel Leak Repair**

Phase 5 re-lining works (from Greenmeadow Bridge approximately 500m north) remains a priority for the council (subject to securing external funding).

A works cost estimate within the order of £250k has been prepared to attend to the leaking aqueduct but subject to available funding.

### **5.2.8 Emergency Works**

No emergency works to report.

## **5.3. FUNDING**

### **5.3.1 Capital**

The capital budget allocation for 2023/24 was £181.7k, of which to date, circa £107k remains. The recent installation of Halls Road Terrace Slip Way was commissioned from the capital budget.

### **5.3.2 Revenue**

The budget allocation for 2023/24 is £105k with an allocation of £100k from agreed reserves, totalling £205k for the current year, of which to date, circa £145k remains. A replacement bench is on order together with a new length of fencing at Henry Roberts Bridge.

## **5.4. BOATS**

Licensing Department recently shared details of the authority's boat licensing regime with members of the trust of which, they are currently reviewing.

Prior to the boats relaunch, it has been agreed that an officer from Engineering and Parks Departments undertake a joint walkover from the Darran to Pontywaun. This is to ensure there are no broken branches obstructing the water in the canal channel.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

A full programme of works for the coming year is being developed subject to considerations relating to the aqueduct and subject to available funding from the Capital and Revenue budgets together with potential external funding to achieve objectives.

It should be noted however, that reactive/emergency works will be undertaken and take precedence over planned works with respect to time and budget.

Note: CCBC's 5-year Canal Management Plan will soon be reviewed/updated to record any works undertaken and any priority changes. Copies will be forwarded for consultation as required.

## **6. ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions have been made regarding the information contained in this report.

## **7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 Report is for information only.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The budget details are included in section 5.3 above and include a capital budget of £181.7k and revenue budget of £205k, of which £107k and £145k remains respectively.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no personnel implications.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 Consultation as below for information only.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 No requirements in this respect, information only.

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