

MONMOUTHSHIRE, BRECON AND ABERGAVENNY CANALS TRUST

Regeneration Managers Report - 21st June 2013

1. **The Waterway National Renaissance Awards 2013**

In 2012 the MBC200 marked the 200th anniversary of the completion of the 55-miles of waterway from Brecon to Newport and Crumlin (Now Cwmcarn). The MBC community partnership was set to celebrate the event. A special logo was introduced. A total of 45 events took place attracting a very large audience including walks, talks, fun days and exhibitions, open days, dinners, church bell ringing, lantern processions, and schools workshop.

Our project has been Awarded National Winner of the Community Section.

2. **Heritage Lottery Fund Project 'Waterworks (Gareth Jones TCBC will report on this project)**

Work is concentrating on Ty Coch Bottom Lock, Lower Brake and Shop Lock due to the programme of funding.

De-watering of the two lock chambers and lock pounds was completed during March.

Tree stumps and the face stone work has been removed from spillway weirs.

Scaffolding has been erected, brick and stone courses have been clean, re-pointing is nearing completion place in Lower Brake Lock. The top gate chamber has been cleared of materials including the old cill timbers.

HLF Progress inspection meeting took place on Wednesday 1st May. The assessors were happy with progress and advised that they preferred to see the mortar flush with the stone & brick work and will make comment on the new design of modular lock gate in preference to a traditional gate at there next visit.

An alternative safe site access and compound is being planned off Holly Bush Way. Which would give a safe and sustainable access/maintenance facility at centre of project site including lock gate workshop.

LANTRA Awards, providers of national accredited training qualification have responded to review a range of heritage/environment training modules linked to environmental regeneration skills with the partnership and Torfaen Training.

The project will also be funding the following:-

Waterway Recovery Group Summer Camp booked for August 2013

Site meeting has taking place on Friday 10th May with Ralph Mills the camp leader which included a site visit to view the accommodation.

3. **General Maintenance of restored Waterway**

The regeneration partnership Steering and Officer group have met and reviewed the importance of agreeing and put into action a programme of maintenance over the restored section of waterway including a way in which funds can be provided to finance the annual works undertaken by experienced community volunteers.

Newport Waste have offered a grant through the (LCF-Landfill Community Fund) of £50K towards carrying out works to the Top Gate area of lock 20 Fourteen Locks.

A progress/planning meeting has taken place.

4. **Funding**

Biff award Flagship (Landfill Community Fund) Grant scheme is open to application. The length of canal in the ownership of CCBC qualifies. Project value range from £150,000 to £500,000 pounds.

A project must focus on either biodiversity restoration or improving cultural community facilities and can be incorporated in the repair works which are planned at Pontywaun. The officers representing the MBC regeneration partnership have agreed that CCBC should be given the first opportunity to submit a project.

Please bring your ideas to the meeting and proposed volunteer to write the application.

5. Welsh Waterways Conference

The role of waterways in delivering Wales' priorities.

The conference was very well attended by council officers, councillors, members of canal trusts and societies and other waterway interested groups.

Topic covered ranged from:

- The impact waterway led regeneration has had on people, places and prosperity.
- The value of the waterways in health and well being of people who use the facility and those that plan to use it.
- The waterways in the context of Europe as a whole. (The Trust has been offered an opportunity to speak at the World Canal Conference on behalf of the MBC Regeneration Partnership in
- Wild Swimming and Healthy walking, Rivers, Canals and Reservoirs
- The Brecon Passport Scheme

6. Events

The Trust has provided its portable trip boat operated by volunteers to assist a schools Education 2 Day event at Goytre Wharf.

Cwmbrans 'Big Event' was held on Saturday 8th, very useful community event attended by approximately 12,000 people. The Trust were present with its sales, information, and volunteer recruitment stand.

In partnership with TCBC the stand also had a demonstration on the use of stone and brick in the construction of arches and walls, children were encouraged to participate.

Torfaen Canal Group shared the Trusts stand to promote the work community volunteers are achieving in Cwmbran.

The Trust will be attending the 'Big Cheese' and other events.

7. Crumlin Arm Water Supply

A professional engineer /Trust volunteer has undertaken a survey of water courses entering the canal with the support of Kevin (CCBC engineer)

First results have found a supply of water from Newport Golf Course which over time and lack of maintenance had silted up, blocking the flow to the canal. The silt has now been cleared with a moderate flow of water returning to the canal.

Welsh water are investigating how the flow of water to the canal from the Manor Road feeder has become contaminated and how it can be cleansed so the flow can be returned to the canal.

Author: R J Dommett MBE - Regeneration Manager