



Friends of the Cromford Canal e-Newsletter

FCC primary aim is "The restoration, reconstruction, preservation & maintenance of the Cromford Canal, its associated buildings, towing path, structures & craft & the conservation of its natural character as a navigable inland waterway system for the benefit of the public."

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Q: how does a mouse eat an elephant?

A: very slowly and bit by bit!

This is how it feels trying to achieve our restoration aims....a bit like pushing water uphill...speaking of which...



FCC core & general updates:

Trustees held a ZOOM meeting on 8th November, the next one is planned for 13th December, and the 2023 AGM has been set for 17th April. The September social was cancelled due to the Queen's funeral, but the October & November events have been held: the next social is on 16th January as usual at Ironville church hall. We've forged two important strategic relationships in the last month or so: we've met with the new CEO of the Arkwright Society to discuss areas of common interest and we've re-engaged with the Chair of Derbyshire County Council who attended our October Trustee meeting. Keeping the Cromford Canal in the public eye is crucial, so communicating with all our stakeholders is vital, whether they be FCC members or individual owners of parts of our canal or the wider public. FCC's "Portal" is sent to about 500 FCC members, but wider communications include regular updates of our website, extensive use of our social media, email "pushes" to our database of nearly 1000 contacts (including press) and provision of articles for other publications: recently this has included material for Chesterfield Canal, the Inland Waterways Association, and Derwent Valley Mills' newsletter. Our website now includes things like information on Pubs local to the canal, DCC's rules for canoeists, and a dedicated section on our Donations page on how to leave a legacy to us in your will! If you have migrated to our Direct Debit facility for your annual FCC membership subscription don't forget to cancel your old Standing Order: if you haven't migrated yet – why not!

FCC Conservation and Restoration:

Our professional fund-raising partner has now submitted over ninety funding applications, valued at £550,000, with many others in the pipeline: so far, we have had a total of £21,000 grants from eight of these bids, and we await the results from others. These grants have been for quite small amounts but the process of grant applications has been a good learning experience and one which stands the charity in good stead for future bids. We are planning on spending these grants on small projects (the Waterloo Bridge renovation was one of those), so watch this space. John Barker's FCC tactical work parties have been hard at it as usual: the majority of their activity has been on our adopted section at Ironville where the teams have cleared masses of brambles and willow weed from the banking. The work parties have now also started work on Beggerlee project by clearing vegetation from the Bailey Bridge and the white land. Newly fabricated boat stands have been delivered to Cromford. Planned work includes work on the Butterley spillway - vegetation needs clearing near the reservoir C&RT will likely help with this work.

FCC's trading operations (boat & shop):

The trading season has mainly closed – our activities have ended although we're still open for online sales. Remember, the primary aim of our trading activities is the generation of surpluses that we can use on restoration and conservation: we're on track for having our most successful trading season yet – this despite us having to cancel several days cruises due to low water levels. This year, we have given more than 4,000 passengers a fantastic experience that they will not forget on Birdwood, and booking enquiries are already coming in for next year! We face several challenges though before we can be confident of next years operation, BUT we've cleared one significant hurdle - we've passed the in-water inspection of the Birdwood by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. Mike Kelley is aiming to use the boat for some judicious tree pruning on a couple of days in December. Stock taking in the shop is planned for later this month and a new lease for the shop is being negotiated with the Arkwright Society.



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