

Trustees' report and accounts for the year ending 30th November 2020



- ✓ ***Bridge One completed***
- ✓ ***Water is under the bridge***
- ✓ ***Piling is removed.***

Agenda

Saturday 20th March 2021 by electronic meeting

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Apologies
- 3) Minutes
- 4) Matters Arising
- 5) Trustee's Report
- 6) Treasurer's Report Year ending 30.11.2020
- 7) Adoption of Accounts
- 8) Election of Trustees
- 9) Resolutions
- 10) Members' questions.
- 11) Any Other Business
- 12) Closing Remarks

Photographic copyright is acknowledged, and owners are identified by initials

CL Colin Levett
MF Mike Freeman
SM Steve Morley
RW Richard Winnett

AM Alan Mynard
TC Terry Cavender
KD Kate Dodington
UK unknown

Cosgrove Canal Bridge restoration

This bridge was originally built around 1795 and is being restored by volunteers from the Buckingham Canal Society.

This project is part funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development via a LEADER grant.



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
Europe Investing in rural areas



LEADER
Programme
Clay Vales

Bridge One "Gateway to Buckingham"

This project has been part funded by IWA through a legacy from John Faulkner who was a former member of IWA Northampton Branch committee.



Please scan the QR code or visit
www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/qr-bridge-1/

The trustees thank everyone involved in achieving this through donation, support, volunteering and partnership.



Canal & River Trust



November 2017

Above – LEADER and IWA plaques at Bridge 1, which is now completed
Front cover – Top - Bridge one first tractor crossing November 2020 (SM), Bottom left - Water under the bridge (MF)
Bottom right - piling removal (AM)

Chairman's Introduction



It is with great pleasure that I write the introduction for the Buckingham Canal Society's Annual General Meeting. I would normally add how good it is to see everybody, however with the use of technology I am not sure how many will have their cameras on or are sitting in their pyjamas so avoiding the camera. It has been a challenging year for the society as it has indeed been for everyone. Time lost due to COVID 19 and the lockdowns when we could only carry out our essential safety work, then the impact of tiers and social distancing including the loss of outside companies spending a day volunteering with us.

All is not doom and gloom. As you will have seen from social media and Navigator, those volunteers who have been able to get on site have achieved many impressive milestones. Standing out is the completion of the bridge at Cosgrove, removal of the pilings and water under the bridge. What does this mean for us? Well, we can now remove the old farm crossing and get on with opening the first stretch of navigation, from which arises the key question, which boat will be first under the bridge and who will she be carrying? We have had some outside groups brave the challenges and come along. I worked alongside the Church of the Latter-Day Saints, a fantastic group of young people who cheerfully threw themselves at every task, worked hard but with a sense of fun and community. Other groups have included Network Rail and Hallam Land Management.

As we look to a hopefully brighter future, we now have a new trustee who is a qualified archaeologist. Amanda will be looking at taking plans forward to carry out an archaeological survey of our proposed areas of development. More of this later.

Our community engagement has continued despite all the restrictions doing their best to trip her up and slow things down. We are in a good position to continue to enhance our community engagement across the board once things return to normal. Marketing has taken on a more coordinated and professional approach and is working closely with all areas of society to maximise our exposure.

We continue to work closely with Canal and River Trust (CRT) including our help to clear a manmade beach out of the Grand Union near to the tunnel entrance at Stoke Bruerne, as well as delivering bags of MOT1 for towpath work. This is a reciprocal relationship and CRT offers vast amounts of support, often behind the scenes, such as use of their tugs and hoppers without which we could have made the progress we have so far. This special relationship benefits both BCS and CRT alongside the general network of canal users in our area. It is a relationship the trustees and I are keen to maintain and develop.

Colin has again worked tirelessly in applying for grants. This is where those of our supporters who cannot come to site for numerous reasons can offer practical support that makes a real impact on our abilities to deliver the society's goals. Please like and follow us on Facebook, Twitter etc, forward our posts, re-tweet comment. If you don't follow us, please do - it's an immense help with grant applications especially when people like and share posts. If you are not on social media, then ask family and friends. The more activity on social media the more the society is known about and grows. Our future reflects these efforts, every single like or forward grows our support and helps advance the society's goals.

Rob

Rob Morris, Chairman BCS

This annual report

This document has been produced, printed and published by the Trustees of the Buckingham Canal Society which is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered number 1156662.

The Society's registered address is 2 Staters Pound, Pennyland,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK15 8A

Bridge one and rewatering under it - done!

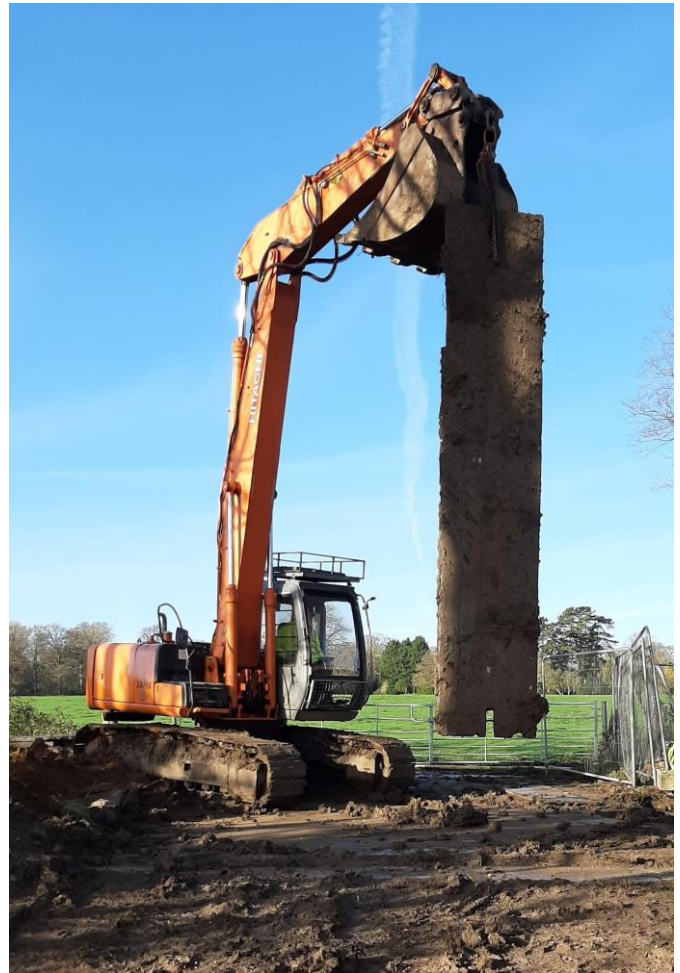


Despite everything the COVID pandemic threw at us in 2020, its done:

1. The bridge is completed
2. It is in use for the farmer's traffic as shown on the front cover. Well done to everyone as we have achieved this milestone.
3. The 65-year-old piling has been removed
4. Dredging is under way including the removal of the soil bund (dam)
5. The temporary farm crossing has already been partly removed and the gates replaced with fence and hedge. The remaining boards are now in use as a compound for repairing the towpath at that location

That's the five fingers for the high five 😊

Stop planks are now also in place under Bridge One to enable us to progress with the towpath bank repairs and plans are afoot to relocate the main bridge compound to bridge two.



Above top left Cosgrove Bridge One first tractor crossing (SM). Above bottom left WB LOUISE dredging near the bridge (TC). Above right our new excavator removing one of the bog mats from the bridge void (CL).

Agenda item 3

Draft minutes of the 28th Annual General Meeting on Saturday 21st March 2020, at Buckingham Community Centre

Trustees present: Rob Morris- BCS Chairman (via facetime), Terry Cavender- Executive Officer.
Colin Levett (Grants Officer), Richard Dwight (Treasurer), Gerry Millard

Members present: Ruth Millard, Steve Morley, Claire Cavender, Clare Tupman, Tony Purbrick
Alistair Palmer, Matthew Lane

Apologies: Alison Leighton, Lord Boswell, Phil Mulligan- CRT, Sarah Willetts- CRT
Jan Roffe- Grants Officer AVDC, Richard Parry- Chief Executive CRT

NB. As 11 members (including 4 Trustees were present, the meeting was deemed to be quorate.

Terry Cavender was appointed to Chair for the Meeting.

The following members had given their proxy vote for the Meeting to the Chairman, if required:

532 John Webber	596 Janet Davies	505 Alan Hall
579 John & Jan Halford	244 Athina Beckett	260 Rodney & Wendy Evans
391 Rima & Richard Scott	239 Jill & Don Allison	555 Bernard Page
407 Ros & Jeremy Woodford	249 Nigel Bromley	496 Richard Lewis
600 Richard Dwight	609 Les & Sheila Franklin	308 William Thomas
546 Alan Mynard	636 Robert Jones	501 Diane & Andrew Witts
428 Chris & Jean Beddard	562 Rhona & John Bate	463 Pat & Chris Durham
626 Ray & Margaret Titmus		

As the country (and the World)! was in the grip of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) epidemic, the AGM was conducted as a business meeting only. There were no guest speakers or refreshments, and the meeting was held in the car park so that the requisite safe spacing between persons could be achieved. Further, the pen was re-sanitised between each person signing in.

1. Annual Report for Year 2018/2019

This was presented by the Chairman who went through the Report in detail and answered several relevant questions.

2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 23 March 2019

These were agreed and unanimously accepted.

Proposed: Claire Cavender Seconded: Colin Levett

3. Treasurer's Report for Year 2018/19

These were presented, agreed and unanimously accepted.

Proposed: Steve Morley. Seconded: Clare Tupman

4. Election of Trustees

Proposed Candidate: Paul Sayer

This proposal was agreed and unanimously accepted.

Proposed: Terry Cavender. Seconded: Rob Morris.

5. Any Other Business. None

6. Close Meeting Closed at 1920hrs. .

Agenda Item 5 - Buckingham Canal Society Trustees Report

Overview

Despite the COVID19 challenges it has once again, been another great year for the Society. Bourton Meadow continues to flourish as a mature canal section with a rich range of biodiversity now fully established. Our work at the Cosgrove bridge has achieved a major milestone with the tractor crossing and the piling removed. The continuance of the in-water sections at Cosgrove have further demonstrated real progress. The solar pump remains operational and rewatering at Hyde Lane and our many great partnerships continue to firmly position the society for the short and medium term. Financially our health allows us to remain viable despite COVID and loss of income from events. Thanks to our members, donors, grantors and other benefactors for allowing us to keep our financial head above water. Thousands of hours of hard work have once again been given to the society by trustees current and past, volunteers, members, partners and supporters. The current trustees thank you all for your time, energy and funding to keep us on track to the reality of restoration.

We continue to enjoy support from MKDons as the significant adjacent landowner and are formalising the access track to the canal at Cosgrove following the granting of planning permission. This will ensure BCS has unrestricted access to the bridge and the canal channel. That will make materials and equipment access much easier as the current track through the farmyard is at risk of damaging the sewer that runs under it. Grateful thanks to the commercial team at MKDons for supporting us through the planning discussions for this.

Despite the COVID delays, we are continuing to progress discussions with a local quarry operator that should result in medium term restoration of around another 5 miles of the canal.

Crane boat LOUISE



Above WB LOUISE moored at Cosgrove with CRT tug 212 and a flat waiting to start unloading the hopper of dredging which is out of picture at the Buckingham Arm (TC).

As many of you will know, LOUISE the crane boat joined us last Christmas after BCS were lucky enough to be offered the boat by Rob Locatelli of Canal and River Services. Fitted with a HIAB crane, powerpack with pallet grab, grab bucket and a hook option.

We have used these items for a range of tasks during her life with BCS so far including:

- Removing the piling at Bridge One
- Dredging the Buckingham Arm with the grab bucket
- Recovering washed in gravel at Stoke Bruerne
- Offloading bags of grit at Long Buckby

She will also be used for the offloading of dredging's from the hopper at Cosgrove, removal of the bund (dam) materials at the bridge and transport to the bridge of materials when access track conditions are too wet.

At the time of writing we now have four qualified helmsmen plus four awaiting assessment. We also have two crane operators with plans to have another two go through certification.

Dredger PERSERVERANCE

BCS have now also been offered an additional purpose-built dredger formerly owned by the Environment Agency. Called PERSERVERANCE she is currently on the Basingstoke Canal and plans are afoot to bring her to Cosgrove in the Spring of 2021.

Our thanks to the CRT East Midlands Operations Team who have kindly arranged for the licence fees on both workboats to be discounted by 100% in recognition of the work we are able to do in assisting the Ops team and other voluntary groups in the Southern Area of the East Midlands Region

Inter-charity co-operation

In this Annual Report you will see the accounts and financial statements for the year. In addition to this we benefit from a range of gifts in kind which do not show up in the accounts, but which form a significant contribution to our aim of restoring the Buckingham Canal.

Thankfully the old negative attitudes of British Waterways to restoration are in the past and we can maintain a much more co-operative relationship with the Canal & River Trust (CRT). This relationship has positively flourished working with the Ops team in East Midlands. In the past year we have received

- The loan of a tug to go to Brentford and transport 'Louise' back to Cosgrove
- Registration and licence fees for the workboat
- Silt/soil environmental testing for the excavations at Cosgrove
- Training for work party members, including pole saw, woodchipper, boat handling and hedge laying.

This is all in the spirit of mutual co-operation; for example, as soon as 'Louise' arrived at Cosgrove she was used to help re-float a sunken CRT maintenance boat. She has since been loaned to CRT for the distribution of materials to sites inaccessible by delivery truck for towpath repairs at Long Buckby, working with other local canal volunteer groups. CRT East Midlands do not maintain their own crane boat, preferring to hire in craft as necessary, and borrowing 'Louise' in exchange for other support is therefore to the mutual benefit of CRT and BCS.

A few years ago, BCS re-laid the towpath along the Buckingham Arm to Bridge One, which while this is CRT land, it has been to our benefit for transporting materials to site and for the boaters accessing their moorings.

Future scheduled collaborative work includes CRT providing 'soft' piling for the deteriorating bank at Cosgrove junction. BCS will set up this and use the area to deposit the dredgings and spoil from removing the bund in front of Bridge 1, enabling BCS to dredge the arm prior to connecting the wet and dry sections. Therefore, CRT get the canal bank repaired and BCS have somewhere to deposit the material which would otherwise cost many thousands to cart away and tip.

By looking at the bigger picture and working in partnership we can carry out work to enhance the waterways in ways which do not necessarily affect the balance sheet.

Steve Morley, work party volunteer

Community Engagement – Aimee

It has been a funny old year, started really well with a great session at Stoney Stratford library during February half term, after which I was asked to do more across the other libraries in MK, sadly though a few weeks later Lockdown version 1 hit just before the Easter holiday for schools and the time I would have been running them. The feedback from the first one was great from both the families attending and the staff at the library so at least I know that my ideas were well received.

Terry and I also visited both Northampton and Milton Keynes colleges early in the year, both were set to start work with us early in March; again, Covid thwarted those plans entirely as both cancelled the week they were due to begin. We have since hosted a day with The Milton Keynes students in November and plan to have them back after the Holidays end in January.

As you can imagine Covid has made getting to schools and such pretty much impossible as they are not currently allowing outside speakers in or school assemblies or offsite visits. Many scout groups and similar

groups are also suspending outside visits as well which has meant that I have not been able to organise events for them. This is a shame however I made use of a few training seminars and online courses and put most of my time into helping out the marketing team and looking at increasing our social media presence as a way to get people involved. There were a couple of excellent seminars about increasing volunteering and I will be excited to get my teeth into this hopefully this year as soon as restrictions allow.



Five-year grant 2019-2024



I attended the farmers market in Stony Stratford at the end of August (pictured above) which, although quiet, was overwhelmingly positive. I have tried to book a slot at the Buckingham one but to no avail yet. When restrictions ease in tier 4 I will be booking in to do Wolverton, Stony and some others closer to Buckingham as well. Unfortunately, the new restrictions make it harder to do this particularly when juggling school closures too!

The Social media presence was helped by sharing posts from the page into various local groups which did result in a lot of enquiries and 3 new volunteers for the week we did the dredging. This should be something we do now as a matter of course so I am periodically sharing important posts with them. Also, I attended the Leighton Buzzard Charity Christmas market, despite freezing conditions and a fog that did not lift all day! I gave out a fair amount of literature and made just over £75 on the stall, selling books and bric a brac that Athina kindly passed on to sell.

Most recently I have been planning and meeting with a Cosgrove local who happens to be a landscape gardener/builder about the proposed community garden on the Lock island at Cosgrove, he is very willing to help out as much as he can which is really good. I have also submitted some proposals for wildflower seeds and cutting equipment in order to run some family and youth-oriented workshops over the Spring and Summer

Thanks to our people

As always, a massive thankyou to all our partners, volunteers, members, supporters, neighbours and many others. A few examples of some of the less visible works are:

- Keith Rawlings – ongoing as our structural engineer. Keith is a seconded volunteer via the IWA and BCS fund the professional indemnity insurance for this secondment
- Colin Levett – amazing in managing the various grants. You will read in the accounts the grant income. We believe it's averages out to about 5 hours effort for each £1,000 of grant income and that's a lot of time and money
- Ian Matson – our newsletter editor. Although working remotely, Ian continues to help us with the excellent Navigator and various other posters etc

BCS Craft Group

The BCS Craft Group continues to create a range of items for sale although this has been affected by COVID. Subject to restrictions, the group meet on the last Thursday of each month usually in Stony Stratford or sometimes in Pennyland. Members can bring along any crafts they are working on to show and discuss with other members. The other main task is to help with the making of rag rugs which we sell at festivals for £25 each raising funds for the BCS. The group is also in need of a supply of old Tee shirts to keep the rag rugs going. If you can help in any way or want to join the group, please contact Athina athing.beckett@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Strategic Plan

We are fortunate to have the help from Geoff Lambert who has helped BCS develop a Strategic Plan. This sets out the 11 themes we are pursuing in re-creating the waterway to Buckingham. The plan is a living document and sets out the progress we expect to make in a rolling 2-3-year window with a focus on the progress we want to make in the next 12 months. This is designed to ensure we have a clearer understanding of the range of tasks we need to undertake and who we need to partner with in achieving our goals; the order in which events need to take place and ensure that we obtain the necessary authorities to proceed; protect the environment and biodiversity of the route; maximise landowner and Community involvement, and plan for appropriate income streams in the future.

If you would like a copy of the Strategic Plan or feel able to help in its maintenance as an important part of the restoration, please contact any of the trustees preferably by email to

Trustees@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

What's in a name?

We need a few names. The restoration programme has various phases and the use of phase 1 and phase 2 etc is a little boring. It's also a recommendation that we name the phases when applying for the large £1M+ funding. So, looking for suggestions of names for these phases

- Phase 1 – was Buckingham.
- Phase 2 – Cosgrove Bridge One to the A5
- Phase 3 – Cosgrove down to and under the A5 and along to Watling Street Bridge
- Phase 4 – Watling Street Bridge to Passenham Quarry
- Phase 5 – Passenham Quarry to Hyde Lane
- Phase 6 – Hyde Lane to Buckingham
- Phase 7 – Buckingham Terminus

We also have a new girl on the team affectionally known as “The Big Orange Beast”. A second-hand excavator bought with various grant contributions and donated funds. She is already in use helping move the “bog mats” as well as digging some serious holes.

“Big Orange Beast” is no title for a lady - she needs a name 😊. So thinking caps on please and email the trustees with suggestions to Trustees@buckinghamcanal.org.uk



Left is the “new” Hitachi 16 tonne ZX160-LC excavator

- She weighs in at 16 tonnes
- made in 2003
- has around 10,000 hours on the clock
- the 42” wide digging bucket lifts over a cubic metre of material out of the ground each bucket full
- 3 people can stand in the bucket!
- the grading bucket is the size of a bathtub

BCS Talks

Athina is hoping to continue giving talks in 2021. None were undertaken in 2020.

Hours and Work Parties

2020 has seen an amazing year for volunteer time despite COVID with over 5,000 hours on project sites. More than a further 3,000+ hours have been given by our trustees and management team outside of the project site work. That's a staggering total nearing 10,000 hours voluntary effort equivalent to over 1,400 person days and in lottery terms around £125,000 of match funding value in volunteer time! Given COVID "getting in the way", this is a remarkable achievement for the year.

This time on site has been achieved once again via companies, groups and Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) visits to work alongside our own volunteers. Without the assistance of the groups that have attended, much of work achieved during last year may not have happened.

BCS now run work parties on most Tuesdays and Thursdays as well as the 2nd Sunday and last Sunday each month. This makes a total of over 150 days when work is planned to happen each year. The work parties have a range of tasks and everyone is welcome to join any of them.

- The second Sunday and alternate Thursdays are usually run by Athina and focus on vegetation, painting, and towpath and similar work
- The Tuesday, "in between" Thursday and last Sunday focus on bricklaying, equipment maintenance and construction work.

Everyone is always welcome to come and join in!



Above left - hedge planting at the bridge steps and right Hyde Lane after a bit of a tidy up!

Membership

Membership numbers remain steady: although, with sadness, we have lost a few of our older members. With the aid of our online payment system provided by Golden Giving and our increased presence on Social Media, we have been able to attract some new members during the year. The online payment system works in co-operation with another charity, Golden Giving and can be used by people wishing to join for the first time or by existing members to renew their membership. For more information please visit: <https://www.goldengiving.com/wall/buckingham-canal-society>

Publicity & Re-Cycling Stall (formerly the Bric a Brac Stall)

Below is a list of outings for the Publicity and Re-Cycling stall in 2019 and the money raised for the Society. We are always looking of items to sell on the stall which includes books and jigsaws as well as bric-a-brac. It is hoped to continue this in 2021

Saturday 15th December Bucks Christmas Fair	£95.70
Wednesday 6th February Books Sale Bicester Tractors	£20.00
Saturday 23rd March BCS AGM	£19.00
Sunday 28th April Buckingham Spring Fair	£46.00
Saturday 8th June Stony Riverside Festival	£72.50
Sat 15th - Sun 16th June History Festival	£45.35
Sat 29 = Sun 30th June Braunston Historic Boats	£25.00
Sat 29 - Sun 30th June "	£315.30
Sat 29 - Sun 30th June "	£200.00
Saturday 20th - Sun 21st July BCS Cosgrove	£310.50
Saturday 27th July Linslade	£117.55
Sat 24th - Mon 26th August IWA Waltham Festival	£268.28
Saturday 14th September Braunston Literary Festival	£153.00
Monday 11th November Folding Bikes	£100.00
Total	£1,788.18

Our updated information and membership leaflet introduced last year, along with an additional leaflet focused on providing information for Corporate volunteer groups, are available. Increasing our membership numbers remains a continuing priority. Our thanks to Jean, Chris and Vernon for their work supporting the membership administration.

Social Media

We have again increased our presence on Social Media. Even if we don't use it in our personal lives, we all know people who are avid users of these services and it is a required outlet for information these days. We have considerably increased the scope of people who now know about the BCS. Our Facebook page continues to have an increasing number of followers (over 1,600 at time of writing) and is an important outlet for information concerning our activities and plans. We have also spread out onto Twitter and Instagram to post photos and snippets of information about what we are doing.

To find us:

Search Facebook for "Buckingham Canal Society": or go direct to

<https://www.facebook.com/BuckinghamCanalSociety/>

for Twitter: @BCSocietyUK

on Instagram: BuckinghamCanalSociety

And we have not forgotten our website either. Thanks to Alan for acting as Webmaster and making minor updates to the content of the website to ensure that it is up to date with the progress we have been making and our plans.

Projects and operational

The Projects group continues to meet monthly to cover all the operational aspect of BCS including maintenance, events and work party planning. We have a conference call each month currently on the 3rd Monday when we work our way through multiple tasks regarding each project and section of the canal. This also ensures we are prepared when opportunities arise that will further the canal restoration work, whilst at the same time ensuring focus around governance and strategy for the trustee meetings. If you would like to be involved, please contact any of the trustees Trustees@buckinghamcanal.org.uk.

Another much-valued member of our team is Keith Rawlings who is a structural engineer. Keith continues to kindly give us his time "pro bono" in this role and has been helping us in the design of the structural elements such as Bridge One at Cosgrove and the towpath wall.

We are always looking for further help both on the ground and in "back office" roles. Please think of everyone you know and how they could help us as we continue the drive for restoration. That help might be on a work party, fund raising, becoming a member, lobbying local councillors, or joining in the management of the society to help guide us to the next stages. We all believe in the aim of restoration and many discussions at early stages are driving this to become very real.

Site by site - Cosgrove

Alongside our major achievements of Bridge One at Cosgrove, we have also now started to rewater section two and beyond the oil pipeline into section three taking us towards Bridge two. Rewatering is under way to rehydrate the clay bed on these sections subject to water availability etc. In addition to this, work to finalise building up the towpath level to mitigate its erosion over the years is approved and can proceed subject to enough people and weather. All the sections in water to varying depths are thriving in terms of vegetation and wildlife.

We are hoping for a grant to form a new winding hole near bridge two. We also continue to finalise design solutions with CRT and relevant landowners. Meanwhile, the water level is being maintained and we aim, subject to COVID, to remediate this coming summer the small number of leaks that have not self-sealed. Then we will complete the bank raising and the towpath stone surface.



Above top left bridge one before completion with work in progress. Above top right is after completion. Above middle left "that's what a hundred and thirty tonnes of MOT/1 looks like". Above bottom right last of the parapet walls nearing completion. Below: Wildlife enjoying the offside wetlands at Cosgrove and the swans exploring the open water at Cosgrove



Site by site - Hyde Lane Nature Reserve

The solar panel, pump and control system continue to bring water into the old canal section and maintain levels subject to the depth of water in the reservoir and amount of sun. This is deliberately a slow process as we make efforts to repair tree roots and animal burrow damage to the clay with an aim to maintain the water level once rewatered. The slow rewatering also allows wildlife to adapt.

Most of the channel here is ready although will need leak remediation as it is gently rewatered to allow the clay to fully rehydrate and not wash through. We anticipate that rewatering will reduce the overall effort to manage the canal bed vegetation.



Top left and top right: previous volunteers at the Hyde Lane Lock

Site by site - Little Hill Farm

A mile of the canal has previously been cleared and the bridge restored. No work has been undertaken this past year at Little Hill Farm although we hope to return there soon to clear vegetation.



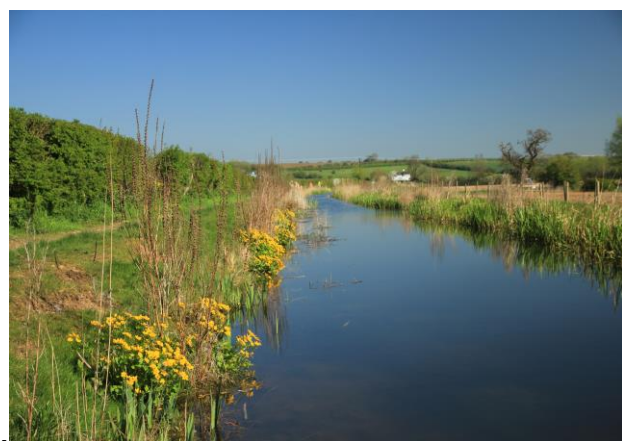
Above: the farm bridge restored by BCS at Little Hill Farm

Site by site - Bourton Meadow

Bourton Meadow remains as our flagship section of restoration and is very much in water. Other than too much or too little water, no issues have affected this stretch other than the virulent growth of the planting. The wildlife continues to thrive with further sightings of rare butterflies, dragon flies and birds being reported to name but some.

This section of canal continues to receive much praise from the residents, dog walkers and others, who make use of this blue-green space on the fringe of Buckingham. Much effort has gone in to pruning some of the enthusiastic plants and plans are still in hand to harvest seeds of locally prevalent plants for use

elsewhere in the canal network both in Buckingham and potentially beyond. We are extremely grateful for the support from Nick Hawes of ATN Farms in allowing us to retain this section of the canal.



Above top: wildflowers attracting many insects and birds; Bottom right: one of our residents smiling for the camera at Bourton Meadow after its reeds had been cleared (bottom left).

BCS Festival and craft fair

Our long running and ever popular annual event, the Cosgrove Canal Festival and Craft Fair regrettably both fell foul of COVID. The trustees await guidance from Government and CRT before planning this year's events.

BCS Fundraising

Our income has been severely reduced due to COVID both directly through cancelled events and indirectly through grant bodies targeting different criteria.

However, we have been fortunate to receive during the year further grants including the below. We are especially grateful to Colin in his work as grants officer.

Please note that some of these figures are different to the grant funding amounts shown in the accounts. This is because not all awarded amounts have been processed &/or expended in the 2019/20 financial year

Funder	Value £	Purpose
Vales of Aylesbury COVID 19 Fund	2,000	Contribution for core costs
Bucks Local Authority Discretionary Grant	1,358	Contribution for core costs
HDH Wills	500	Wildlife support
Heart of Bucks Coronavirus Fund	5,000	Contribution for core costs
Total	6,858	

Marketing and Communication

I discovered the Buckingham Canal close to my home in Buckingham, during Lockdown #1 – having lived in the town for nearly 3 years, I had no idea of its existence! Whilst being furloughed from my role as a Head of Local Sales and Marketing for a large UK restaurant chain, I decided to find out more – and found the proposed plan fascinating as it includes much diversity across not just restoring a waterway, but historic architecture in the form of the bridges and buildings, wildlife, tourism potential, and so much more. So a phone call later, and I volunteered to ‘help’ with publicity to tell more local people along the length of the canal about what BCS do – and within a very short space of time took on the full marketing role, with a small team of volunteers in support, and also have now become a trustee.

Covid inevitably put much activity on hold during 2020, but there are now plans to increase our exposure to people and businesses, in the form of:

- A comprehensive marketing plan to encourage new volunteers, members, supporters and just general interest in what we do
- A robust social media plan, to increase our following and engagement to a wider audience
- Engagement and interaction with other historic waterways / canal restoration groups, to share learnings and best practice
- Increasing the already great work carried out in our local communities via Aimee, our Community Engagement Officer
- Improved way fair and general signage, and interpretation boards along the length of the Canal

Another big piece of work undertaken in my early stewardship of the marketing team, is to ensure we remain compliant and legal in terms of GDPR. In renewing your membership, or interacting as volunteers, you will have been contacted to ‘opt in’ or ‘opt out’ of receiving communications from us, to ensure we are only sending you what you want to hear about. This would include all forms of communication, such as receiving the Buckingham Navigator, our new regular bulletin, volunteering opportunities and details of work party groups, and so on.

As mentioned previously in this report, our social media following is increasing and reaching a wider audience across the entire UK canal network, which is important for us in terms of interaction with other canal groups, businesses and of course people, whether they are local to our Canal, or further afield. If you are a social media user, please do follow us, like, comment or share our posts – and help us spread the word further. It really does help!

Jo Lynch, Trustee ; Marketing and Communication

Heritage and Archaeology

During a rather difficult year for the society and its volunteers, an immense amount of progress has been made with regards to the conservation and heritage of the canal.

At Cosgrove, the rebuilding and restoration of bridge one has been completed with a clear distinction made between the original bridge and the restorative building of the new bridge including the flanking drystone walls, which took volunteers several hundred volunteer hours to complete. There is also a Buckingham gate in place along the wall to give us access to different areas, those who would like to know what a Buckingham gate is, are encouraged to visit Cosgrove to view it.

The Chairman and I spent many hours collaboratively writing an archaeology plan that will cover us across all sites requiring archaeological investigations and possible excavation. The society hopes to start the preliminary archaeological investigations early in 2021 with a view to starting excavations in late spring to early summer, subject to consent from the landowners. This work will be conducted in phases, which are explained in the archaeology plan.

Throughout 2020, we have conducted site visits to all the sites that will be investigated as part of the planning applications to allow continuing work on the restoration of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal. These sites include but are not limited to: Passenham, Little Hill Farm and Thornton Bridge. We have made several attempts to contact the local authority to meet with the heritage officer with a view

to having Thornton Bridge included on the local heritage at risk register, unfortunately this has not yet been achieved although we hope to be able to update you on progress for this soon.

In early 2021, the society hope to start clearing the overgrowth at Bridge two. This will enable us to conduct a more detailed survey of the area and develop a plan of action as to how to protect her in the best possible way both for the society, the landowner and the local community.

It is the society's desire to create a heritage trail along the canal showing historic information and pictures as to how and when the canal was built, what it was used to transport, and when each section was closed.

Amanda Robinson, Trustee; Archaeology and Heritage

GDPR

New data protection legislation came into force in May 2018. The law applies to all public bodies, businesses and other organisations that process personal data, which includes the BCS.

1. Our GDPR principles

- a. we will process all personal data fairly and lawfully
- b. we will only process personal data for specified and lawful purposes
- c. we will endeavour to hold relevant and accurate personal data, and where practical, we will keep it up to date
- d. we will not keep personal data for longer than is necessary
- e. we will keep all personal data secure
- f. we will endeavour to ensure that personal data is not transferred to countries outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) without adequate protection

2. GDPR compliance

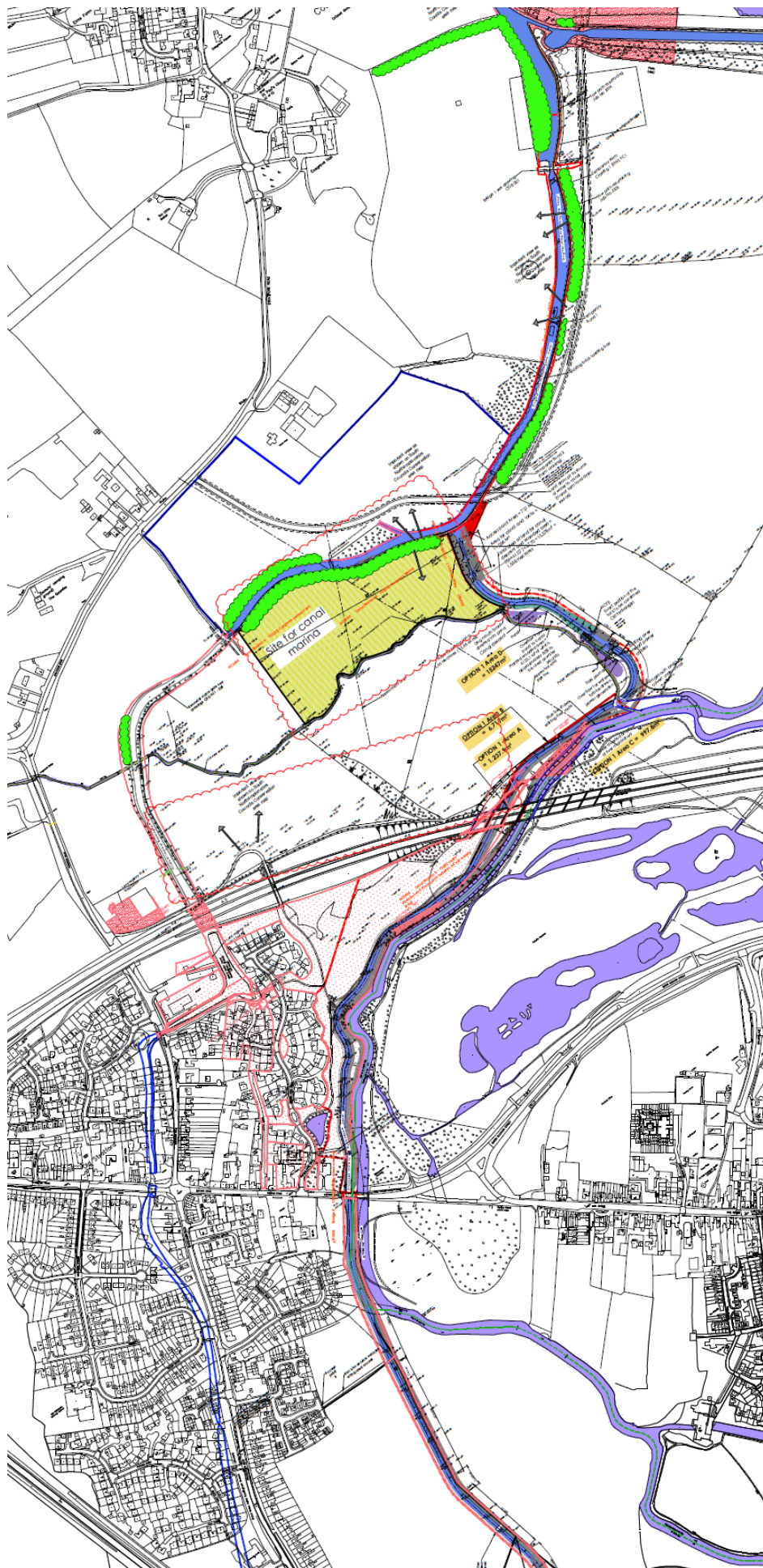
BCS will be complying with the GDPR as a controller and processor of data.

We will implement the relevant policies and practices to ensure we protect any data handled by the BCS – for its employees, customers, suppliers, partners and stakeholders.

Further details can be found on our website



Above left one of the amazing rebuilt stone walls on the bridge approach ramps.
Above right the piling being told its days are numbered and prepared for extraction.



Probable restoration route from the Cosgrove bridge westwards

Agenda item 6 and 7 –Treasurer’s Report and Accounts

We are all very tired of Covid and it is a common theme running through our annual report. Whilst the worst of the pandemic may appear to be over by the time you read this, the financial affects will rumble on for some time. We have been lucky enough to receive some Covid related funding, but not enough to offset our usual levels of income. We are looking at ways to increase income to cover our core costs. As this is the less glamorous aspect of our work it can be more difficult to find grants for, but without which we would cease to operate.

While costs in general remained static in the last year, one area where they are rising is insurance, a market where fewer companies are operating in this sphere owing to poor returns. Unfortunately, we cannot achieve our goals without it, as we would not be able to perform many of our more technical restoration tasks. It is our biggest single overhead which we have little control over.

The second claim under the LEADER Grant for the bridge reconstruction at Cosgrove was successful, which has made up the bulk of our income this year. As referred to elsewhere, most of the work has been completed.

Thank you to those of you who have agreed to Gift-Aid your membership fees and donations to us. The sum received is well worth having. As a reminder, Gift Aid forms are available on our website, or through contacting any of our trustees or other officers. It is important to tell us if you are no longer a UK tax-payer, or if your name or address details have changed.

As our AGM is online this year it may be more difficult to deal with questions, so if there is anything you would like information on or have explained, then please do get in touch via our website.

Richard Dwight, Treasurer

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2020

		<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Income	Note	£	£
Festivals/Events/Functions		381	1,887
General Sales (Events, Goods & Services, including advertising)		52	2,948
Grants/Donations (Unrestricted Use)	1	5,886	17,131
Grants/Donations (Designated Use)	2	1,358	8,500
Grants/Donations (Restricted Use)	3	51,766	56,404
HMRC Gift Aid		2,717	1,941
Interest		108	285
Membership Subscriptions		1,651	1,987
Raffles/Lotteries		251	379
		<u>64,170</u>	<u>91,462</u>
Payments			
Administration/Overheads (Excludes IT costs)	4	6,723	6,951
Festivals/Events/Functions		218	835
IT Costs (Software licences, web access etc.)		794	337
Newsletter/Magazine/Printing/Postage/Stationery		718	1,521
Publicity (excluding Events & Functions)		146	346
Hospitality/Refreshments/Expenses for guests at meetings etc.		231	199
Restoration (Unrestricted)	5	5,736	12,198
Restoration (Designated)	6	29,608	2,401
Restoration (Restricted) Including Support Workers	7	34,316	33,514
Training and Development		0	527
		<u>78,490</u>	<u>58,829</u>

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2020 (cont'd)

	2020	2019
	£	£
Balance of Income over Expenditure	-14,320	32,633
This inbalance was incurred as a result of the match-funding required as a condition of the LEADER grant and to complete the works on Cosgrove bridge		
Reconciliation		
Bank and cash balances at 01/12/2019	59,621	26,988
Expenditure in excess of income for the year	-14,320	32,633
Bank and cash balances at 30/11/2020	45,301	59,621
Designated/Restricted Funds	17,887	28,687
Unrestricted Funds	27,414	30,934
	45,301	59,621

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**1 Grants/Donations Received (Unrestricted Use)**

Braunston Marina	0	30
Buckinghamshire Council	0	100
Charities Trust	0	50
Co-op Local Fund R4	0	2,788
Internet-based anonymous donation sites	245	53
IWA	0	300
Mark Master Masons	0	200
Pitney Bowes (LCVS)	4,292	3,913
Private Donors	849	9,697
VW Group	500	0
	5,886	17,131

2 Grants/Donations (Designated Use)

Foyle Foundation (Plant sinking fund)	0	5,000
M J Camp Charitable foundation (Plant sinking fund)	0	2,500
Rank Foundation (Plant sinking fund)	0	1,000
Buckinghamshire Council Covid Grant	1,358	0
	1,358	8,500

3 Grants/Donations (Restricted Use)

Alpkit Foundation - Benches	0	250
Big Lottery Fund - Reaching Communities	5,000	5,000
Buckingham Town Council (Tools and equipment)	0	1,150
D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust	0	3,000
Foundation for Social Improvement	0	60
HDH Wills Wildlife Grant	500	0
Heart of Bucks Covid Grant	5,000	0
LEADER Fund (Cosgrove Bridge)	39,266	31,272
MK Heritage Association (Ouse Valley Walk leaflet)	0	276
NHB Micro Grant	0	1,058
Radcliffe Trust	0	2,500
Santander	0	500
South Northants Community Fund	0	1,007
Tesco Bags of Help	0	1,000
Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust	2,000	9,331
	51,766	56,404

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2020 (cont'd)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

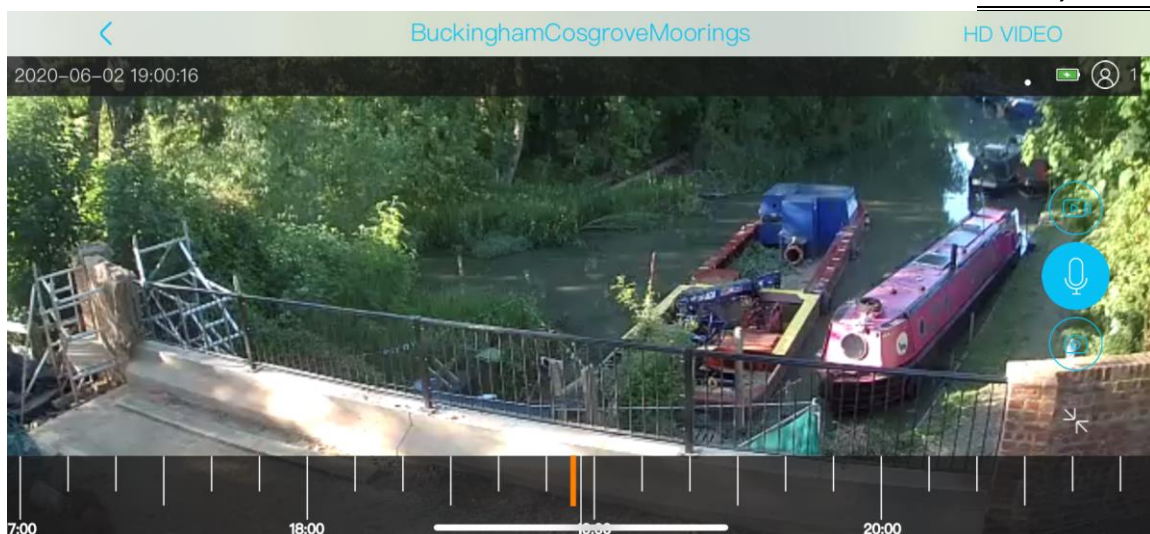
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
	£	£
4 Administrative Expenditure		
General Marketing & Advertising	0	0
Insurance Premiums	4,461	2,513
Membership of other organisations	99	99
Miscellaneous (Premises hire, legal fees)	1,167	483
Office equipment & furniture	0	9
Printing & Photocopying (Includes magazine, events and projects)	985	0
Trustees Expenses	11	3,847
	6,723	6,951

5 Restoration (Unrestricted Funds)

Bourton Meadow Re-watering Project	0	15
Cosgrove Access Track	0	285
Cosgrove Bridge enabling works	259	868
Cosgrove Channel Re-watering Project	115	3,644
Cosgrove Marina (£2000 Partial refund of planning fees)	0	-1,544
Cosgrove Storage Facility	147	135
Plant, Tools, PPE, Vehicles & Equipment	2,686	3,624
Routine Works & Maintenance, Running Costs, Fuel	2,529	5,171
	5,736	12,198

6 Restoration (Designated Funds)

BCS Excavator Fund	6,560	0
Cosgrove Bridge BCS match funding for LEADER Grant	14,564	2,401
Foyle Trust	5,000	0
MJ Camp Charitable Foundation	2,484	0
Rank Trust	1,000	0
	29,608	2,401



Above CCTV cameras mounted on Bridge One.

This allows us to remote monitor security and safety of the site and equipment

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2020 (cont'd)**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS****7 Restoration (Restricted Funds)**

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
	£	£
Adviza BBF (Support Worker employment costs)	0	36
Alpkit Foundation - Benches	0	250
Beds and Luton Community Foundation (solar pump)	0	53
Big Lottery Fund - Reaching Communities	5,468	2,110
Co-op Local Fund	137	0
Cosgrove Bridge Project (LEADER Grant)	20,161	18,451
D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust	0	250
Foundation for Social Improvement	0	60
Heart of Bucks Covid Grant	900	0
Heart of Bucks Grant 1	0	136
Heart of Bucks Grant 2	1,179	0
MK Heritage Association (Ouse Valley Walk leaflet)	0	276
NHB Micro Grant	1,058	0
People's Postcode Local Trust Grant	2,500	846
Santander	0	526
South Northants Community Fund	0	1,022
Tesco Bags of Help (Tools and equipment)	0	225
Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust (Community Chest)	601	0
Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust (Thriving Communities)	2,312	9,273
	<u>34,316</u>	<u>33,514</u>

Donations in kind

We are pleased to record the following donations in kind, from organisations that have provided us with valuable services during the year rather than direct financial contributions:

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>value</u>
Buckinghamshire Council	Raster and vector map data for canal route	£20,000
Salesforce.com	Project Management software	£14,400
Canal & River Trust	Training and equipment	£10,340
Cosgrove Marina	Portacabins and materials storage facility plus mooring and Wi-Fi	£5,500
MKSET	Storage adjacent to bridge 1 and at canal side field at Cosgrove	£4,000
Microsoft via TT Exchange	Microsoft software	£44,000
	Total	£98,240



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Buckingham Canal Society

On accounts for the year
ended

30 November 2020

Charity no
(if any)

1156662

Set out on pages

1 to 4

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 30 / 11 / 2020.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

~~The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]. Delete [] if not applicable.~~

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination ~~(other than that disclosed below)~~ which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

[Redacted Signature]

Date:

11/2/2021

Name:

Dr Sean Paul Barber

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body

Retired Chartered Accountant

(if any):

Address: 1000 TULLY ROAD, ASPECT COURT
MILTON KEYNES MK17 5EW

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.



The trustees are pleased to confirm that the accounts have been reviewed and approved by an independent examiner and no issues of concern found. The examiner's statement above page is from the form which will be submitted to the Charity's Commission after the AGM. John's signature and address has been redacted for the purpose of this report.

We are grateful for the continued support of our patron Lord Boswell of Aynho

Discussions with relevant organisations are ongoing to establish further partnerships both formal and informal. We have existing partnerships with the following:

- Inland Waterways Association (IWA)
- Buckinghamshire Council (BC)
- Deanshangar Parish Council
- Northamptonshire County Council (NCC)
- Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)
- Buckingham Town Council
- Canal & River Trust (CRT)
- Environment Agency (EA)
- South Northamptonshire District Council

We are very grateful for the ongoing support of:

- Inland Waterways Association (IWA) Milton Keynes Branch
- Inland Waterways Association (IWA) Northampton Branch
- Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) and their regional volunteers

We have been recognised by the following:

- Cosgrove Parish Council
- Maids Moreton Parish Council
- Thornborough Parish Council
- Milton Keynes Council
- Foscote Parish Meeting
- Old Stratford Parish Council
- Thornton Parish Meeting
- Deanshangar Parish Council

We thank our corporate members for their continued support as well as WRG, IWA and Canal & River Trust for their ongoing support, help, and partnership.

Wyvern Shipping Co.



Nikon Optical UK. Ltd.



**Canal &
River Trust**

Making life better by water

Taverners Boat Club



Braunston Marina



**INLAND
WATERWAYS
ASSOCIATION**



**WATERWAY
RECOVERY
GROUP**



LIONHEARTS CRUISING CLUB

Agenda item 8 – election of trustees

In accordance with our constitution, one third of the trustees must stand down each year and may stand for re-election.

During the year, Jo Lynch and Amanda Robinson were co-opted and hence stand for re-election. Alan Mynard stepped down as trustee and continues as Webmaster. Hence there are 2 trustees for election.

Nominee	Proposer	Seconded	Comment
Jo Lynch	Terence Cavender	Rob Morris	Re-election as trustee
Amanda Robinson	Terence Cavender	Rob Morris	Re-election as trustee

Full list of trustees for completeness are:

Trustee	Role	(re)elected
Rob Morris	Chairman	March 2018
Colin Levett	Grants Officer	March 2018
Richard Dwight	Treasurer	March 2018
Terence (Terry) Cavender	Executive Officer	March 2018
Anthony Smith-Roberts	Health and Safety Officer	March 2017
Lee Whiting	Trustee and equipment manager	September 2018
Athina Beckett	Trustee	March 2017
Gerry Millard	Trustee and construction manager	March 2019
Paul Sayer	Trustee and construction engineer	March 2020
Jo Lynch	Trustee; Marketing and Communications	November 2020
Amanda Robinson	Trustee; Archaeology and Heritage	November 2020

Agenda item 9 – resolution

The Constitution was originally established 20 years ago, there are more objectives now. The trustees propose to amend the Society's constitution.

- To promote the restoration of the Old Stratford and Buckingham Arms of the Grand Union Canal to full navigable order and to promote the maintenance and improvement of the Waterway in the interests of heritage, conservation, biodiversity, water betterment and the local quality of life.
- To promote the fullest use of the Waterway by all forms of waterborne traffic and for all forms of water-related commercial, local amenity, tourist and recreational activity for the public benefit and to use the restoration as a catalyst or wider social, economic and environmental regeneration in areas neighbouring the canal.
- To promote the education of the public in the history and use of the canals and waterways and Buckingham Canal in particular.

If approved by the members, this will be referred to the Charity Commissioners for their ratification.



Above the 2019 AGM held March 2020 outside the hall due to COVID



Above left Parapet wall work on Bridge One. Above right Athina at the history festival in 2019 which was sadly cancelled this year due to COVID.



Above left Hallam Land Management staff are one of the corporate groups to have helped seen at Bourton Meadow (AB). Right starting the work scraping the bed at section three near Bridge Two



Do you dig canals? *We do!*

Thank you for joining us for our Annual Meeting. Do you feel you could help us further? Below are just some of the things we do that you can get involved in. Please come and have a chat with any of the members of the committee. If you already are part of it, then thank you and please show this to someone new so they can get involved as well.

Publicity	Planning	Projects	Event organiser
Fundraising	Become a trustee	Conservation	Restoration
Brickwork	Maintenance	Digging	Hedge Laying
Grant writing	Budgeting	Recruiting	Heritage
Lengths-person	Journalist	Editor	Project Manager
And many others!			

Please use this document, which incorporates a variety of information about some of our activities, to promote the work of the Buckingham Canal Society to a friend / neighbour / colleague / relative or other interested people.



Above left rewatering section 2 towards the oil pipeline crossing
Above right Cosgrove preparing to start towpath repairs now bridge is opened