



EAST MIDLANDS ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING

15 November 2017

Points raised during the discussion:

Travelling through Leicester is now a much-improved experience, thanks to the efforts of the Trust's volunteer lock keepers

This is great to hear – many thanks for such positive feedback which we will feed this back to our volunteers.

More work on improving towpath surfaces would be very beneficial in increasing levels of activity

As well as larger towpath improvement schemes such as those recently completed in Leicester and Ilkeston, we're also working with local volunteers to improve shorter stretches. We're always limited by the availability of resources but have already made a big difference to sections in Retford and Willington, and have worked with the Waterway Recovery Group and Friends of the Cromford Canal to improve a section at Ironville. If you'd like to work with us to improve sections in your area, please get in touch with your volunteering team leader or the Newark office to discuss this further.

Boaters attending the IWA Festival of Water in Ilkeston were very impressed with the improvements to the towpath along the Erewash Canal.

Thank you very much. This is the result of a joint effort between the Trust and the local authority over a number of years and we hope this partnership can continue.

Are there any plans to remove chicane barriers along the towpaths?

We're aware that many cyclists using our towpaths would prefer not to see chicane barriers: where possible, and where resources allow we are now installing "K" barriers which allow access for cyclists and wheelchairs, including motorised wheelchairs. Not all locations are suitable – in most cases, the chicane barriers are in place to restrict unauthorised motorcycle use which can pose a significant safety risk to other towpath users. We are currently working to replace the existing barrier at King's Lock on the Leicester Line.

Are there any plans for work on the Loughborough / Soar navigation? We've heard a lot about other areas but nothing about our local area

It wasn't possible to include all the work that has taken place over the last year in a short presentation. Our works cover a large geographical area and are prioritised based upon risk so sometimes we need to work in some areas more than other. This coming winter we'll be undertaking repairs at Bishop's Meadow Lock, Junction Lock and Cossington Lock.

Is there any intention to postpone works along the Leicester Line to allow boaters through, and what are your plans for compensating marina owners for a reduction in income as a result of the closures?

The works on the Soar this winter may coincide with the closure of the Grand Union and for this we apologise. We would rather not postpone our works on the Soar as any delay could cause further deterioration and unplanned closures may ensue.

Would like to congratulate the local team on improving signage along the River Soar / Leicester Line – used to be a number of hire boaters taking the wrong channel and getting into difficulty but the new signage is very clear and has removed the problem

Thanks for the positive feedback which will be passed onto the local team.

What is the long-term plan to ensure the Leicester Line can be opened again? Many local tourism businesses depend on the navigation and it seems a little short-sighted to pin all your hopes on more rain to fill the reservoirs.

It's a last resort to have to close a navigation; by doing so in this case we will allow water levels in our reservoirs to rise and so reduce the risk of closures during parts of the year when boat movements are higher. We have also repaired leaks at locks and culverts so that when the navigation is re-opened we will be in a better position to retain the water we have. We're also providing advice to boaters, encouraging the sharing of locks wherever possible, and maintaining our feeder channels and reservoirs to ensure that the right amount of water can reach the navigation.