



Swansea Canal Society

Cymdeithas Camlas Abertawe

Trustees' Summary Report and Accounts

for the year 6th April 2019 to 5th April 2020

The Society continues to maintain a close relationship with the Canal and River Trust, (CRT) who are the owners of the extant portion of the canal. We are also a member of the Inland Waterways Association (IWA), and liaise with a large number of other local and national bodies over the canal and its restoration including local councils, Swansea Bay Inland Waterway Partnership, the Neath and Tennant Canals Trust and Sustrans.

The Society is currently financially sound. The main current risks to the society are associated with accidents both during our maintenance and restoration work and relative to our canoe operation. These are mitigated by a close attention to safe practices combined with the proper levels of insurance, measures which have resulted in no significant problems.

The Society continues to advance its work to revitalise the canal -

- Funding:

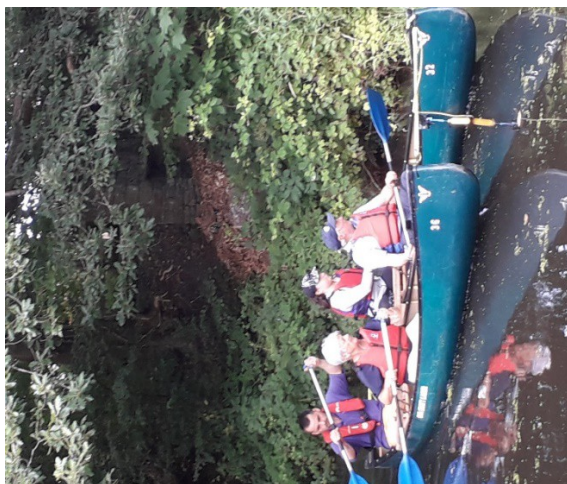
The joint application by the Canal and River Trust & Swansea Canal Society for grants from the Rural Communities Development Fund [funded by the European Union's European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government] was approved in December 2018. A total of £256,000 was awarded to be spent on dredging the canal between Clydach and Trebanos. Swansea Canal Society was required to contribute £43,000 match funding. £20,000 of this would be by "donation in kind" accumulated by volunteer hours worked. Our application to the Landfill Disposal Communities Fund for the remaining £23,00 was confirmed and the dredging commenced in October 2019 and completed in February 2020.

- The Hidden Lock, Clydach:

Work in the old Council Yard in Clydach, continued throughout the year. The site has been cleared extensively and the restoration work began with the construction of a tool shed and initial excavations to identify the future by wash. Detailed planning for the restoration of the lock and its environs continues under the guidance of our consultant Patrick Moss of Moss, Naylor, Young. This project will require substantial grant funding.

- Canoes and Kayaks:

Our Community Canoe and Kayak Hire Project entered its 6th season at Easter 2019. We were open every Sunday throughout the spring and summer and Tuesdays in school holidays. We also welcomed several Youth group bookings, with a total of 972 visitors to the canal. This included Gareth and Maureen Edwards who were filming for a BBC TV programme on the Canals of Wales. We are indebted to Veronica Fuller for organising and facilitating the project. The Canal and River Trust kindly loaned the society a workshop, where Annette Hudson, discussed and constructed designs to allow less able-bodied persons access to the water in the Canoes and Kayaks. This is an ongoing project called "Can Do Canoes".



- Waterway Recovery Group:

In August we welcomed a team of volunteers from the Waterway Recovery Group who over the week did much work to restore the Ynysmeudwy Upper

Lock. Society volunteers were on hand to assist and continue with the work commenced by the WRG.



- Green Flag Community Award:

We were excited to receive the Green Flag Community Award for the fourth consecutive year. This award was given in recognition of the value of the canal as a green space and of the outstanding work done by our volunteers.

- Birds and Bats:

Several bird and bat boxes, constructed by our volunteers, were installed in various locations along the canal. It is pleasing to note the number of birds that moved in during the breeding season.

- Volunteer Activities:

The cornerstone of the Society's endeavours continued to be the hours worked every Tuesday. Work continues come rain or shine and ranges from litter picking, through bank repairs to towpath resurfacing and everywhere between. The team of local, regular volunteers is often joined by clients of Whitethorns Adult Day Care Service and occasionally by teams from local commercial concerns. We are a hands-on society dedicated to continually honing our skills and passing them on to new volunteers. The benefits, both physical and mental, of outdoor community work are now acknowledged universally.

The society assisted with the clearing of a garden for one of the Whitethorns clients. Half a dozen of the canal society's volunteers cleared the garden allowing the client to remain living in his residence.

In December of 2019 the society was nominated for the Queens Award for Voluntary Service. Winners of the award are to be announced in June 2020. This award is the highest award that can be achieved by volunteers, equivalent to an MBE.

- The society was informed in June 2020 that they had won the award.



- Our long-term aim continues to be the joining up of the Swansea, Neath and Tennant canals together with the Tawe River navigation to form a 35-mile navigation waterway. The Swansea Bay Inland Waterway Partnership, of which we are a very active member, met at quarterly intervals throughout 2019-20 to pursue this aim. Every project on the Swansea Canal helps to bring this vision a little closer to reality.