

# ASHBY CANAL ASSOCIATION

Registered Charity No 1063566 Company No 3396198  
Reg. office: 48 The Ridgeway, Burbage, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 2NR

## TRUSTEES REPORT and ANNUAL REVIEW YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2009

### Administrative Details and Trustees

The trustees during the year were:

J.A Boston (chairman)	D.Bews	L. Wright	P. Oakden
C.W.Blackford (secretary)	R. Smith	S. Leary	
J.E.Roddis (treasurer)	T.G. Wright	D Billings	
C. Aston (membership sec.)	G. Cokayne	I.L.Reid (social sec.)	

The Association's bankers are HSBC Bank plc, Hinckley; The Association's solicitors are GS Solicitors incorporating Pilgrim & Webster, Station Rd., Hinckley.

Directors of the Association's trading company, The Ashby Canal Co. Ltd, were: J. E. Roddis (chairman), C.W.Blackford (secretary), T.G.Wright, J. Dillon (non-executive), N. Smith (non-executive).

### Structure, Governance and Management

The Association is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 2nd July 1997, and governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 10th June 1997. The trustees, elected from within the membership, form the management committee, with overall responsibility for the management of the Association's affairs, and decision-making. Any member can be nominated for election as a trustee. Trustees serve for a period of three years, and retire by rotation. The management committee met monthly throughout the year. Also attending meetings by invitation were: T.Henshaw in his capacity as President of the Association, G.Pursglove in an advisory capacity as Leics. County Council Canal Restoration Project Officer, and M. Bird as newsletter editor and web-master. No committee member received any remuneration for their services. The Management Committee have identified and reviewed the major risks facing the Association. For events involving access by the public, risk assessment procedures were carried out. Appropriate financial controls and policies are in place to prevent financial irregularities, and the accounts have been subject to independent examination. Work-party safety issues have been considered, with a safety policy in place. Major risks are covered by appropriate insurance.

### Relationships with other organisations and charities

The Association maintained working relations and dialogue with British Waterways, The Inland Waterways Association, The Ashby Canal Trust, Shackerstone Festivals Ltd, local MPs, Measham Parish Council, Leicestershire County Council, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and other local District Councils. The Association is a corporate member of the Inland Waterways Association, a member of the Association of Waterways Cruising Clubs, and has two seats on the board of the Ashby Canal Trust.

### Objects

The principal objects of the Association are to improve the condition of, preserve, promote and enhance the Ashby-de-la-Zouch Canal, for the benefit of all, and to assist the restoration of the northern reaches of the canal. Fund raising is undertaken for its charitable aims, and the Association's trading company, the Ashby Canal Company Limited promotes boating events, and sells merchandise and advertising. The surplus generated by this company is paid to the Association under the Gift Aid scheme.

### Activities, achievements and performance

Development proposals and planning applications affecting the canal and its environment have been scrutinized, and comments made where appropriate, to local authorities. A proposal by UK Coal for a surface mine on the former Minorca Colliery site near the line of the canal has been examined and initial meetings have taken place to establish the effect on the canal restoration scheme. The outcome of UK Coal's planning application is awaited.

During the year Leicestershire County Council contractors, working under the management of British Waterways, constructed a stop gate chamber, an off-line nature-reserve, a new winding hole, and a temporary slipway at Snarestone, as the first stage in the restoration of the canal towards Measham. Some of the Association's land was compulsorily acquired by the County Council for these works, under the terms of the Transport and Works Act Order. A celebratory event, attended by the Chairman of Leicestershire County Council, was held in February, with representatives of East Midlands Development Agency and the National Forest also in attendance. This resulted in much beneficial publicity. The Association granted £5061 towards the cost of the works. A public meeting was held by the County Council, assisted by the Association, at Measham to explain the nature of the restoration works to the local residents.

Volunteer Work parties at Snarestone have been held, including site preparation work, and planting up of the nature reserve. Voluntary work, including rubbish clearance, bank and lock maintenance, has also been done at Moira, using the Association's work-boat "Firefly". This workboat has also received some repair and maintenance work during the year by volunteers, and Ashby Canal Trust has contributed towards its running costs.

Members' meetings, open to the public, were held throughout the winter and spring months to promote interest in the canal and its historic and social environment.

Representations were made to British Waterways about the need to patrol visitor mooring sites, and the problem of over-staying on short-term visitor moorings. A meeting with BW enforcement staff was held in May, and action and feedback was promised.

The Association helped with, and supported the successful IWA National Trailboat Festival at Moira in May, and had a presence at Measham's Heart of the Forest Festival in June, and the IWA National Festival at Redhill, Notts., in August 2009. In September 2009, the Shackerstone Family Festival, was held. A record number of historic working boats attended, together with around 90 pleasure craft, and the event was very well supported by the public. All these events helped raise the profile of the canal and the restoration scheme.

A newsletter, 'the Spout', was published quarterly, to communicate with members about issues of current and historic interest relating to the canal. The Association's web-site was expanded to include more archive material. New display panels publicising the Association's work and the features of the canal have been created for use at exhibitions

The historic ice-breaker was relocated to a site adjacent to Measham Museum (the old Station), where it was placed on public display on a newly built cradle. The Association's collection of Measham-ware, bequeathed by the late Joan Stretton, was also placed on display at Measham museum.

## **Financial review**

Subscriptions from members formed a large part of the Association's revenue. The Ashby Canal Co. Ltd. also raised income for the Association through fund raising activities including the sale of merchandise and sale of magazine advertising. Donations were received from many individuals for which the Association records its thanks. A grant of £5000 was received in September from Measham Development Trust specifically towards the restoration of the canal - this has been designated as Restricted Funds. In September, the Association's trustees decided to earmark £20,000 from the Association's reserves as Designated Funds to be used for the restoration of the canal. The Gift Aid scheme continued to be well used. Gifts in kind were received, and the Association wishes to thank Hanson Red Bank Manufacturing, The Globe Inn at Snarestone, and MIRA Sports & Social Club, for these.

The severe economic downturn in the UK has had an impact on most charities, and this Association has not escaped its effects, with subscription income, donations and bank interest all reduced. The closure of the canal terminus at Snarestone for the restoration works during the early summer meant that the Ashby Canal Co's sales kiosk was out of use for a major part of the holiday season - thus reducing our income from this important fund-raising activity. Despite these setbacks, the trustees have endeavoured to keep reserves at a prudent level, sufficient in their view to meet anticipated revenue expenditure in the short term, and also to contribute capital sums towards the restoration project over the long term. The detailed financial results are set out in the statement of accounts for the year. There are no funds in deficit. No funds were held on behalf of others. All funds are deposited in a UK bank.

## **Membership**

There has been a small reduction in membership this year.

At 30th September 2009 there were 426 members (comprising 384 ordinary members, 38 life members, 4 group members)  
*(at 30 Sept 2008: 445 members (comprising 402 ordinary members, 39 life members, 4 group members)*

## **BY ORDER OF THE TRUSTEES**

**J. A. Boston**, Chairman

**C.W.Blackford**, Secretary

9th November 2009