

Diary Dates

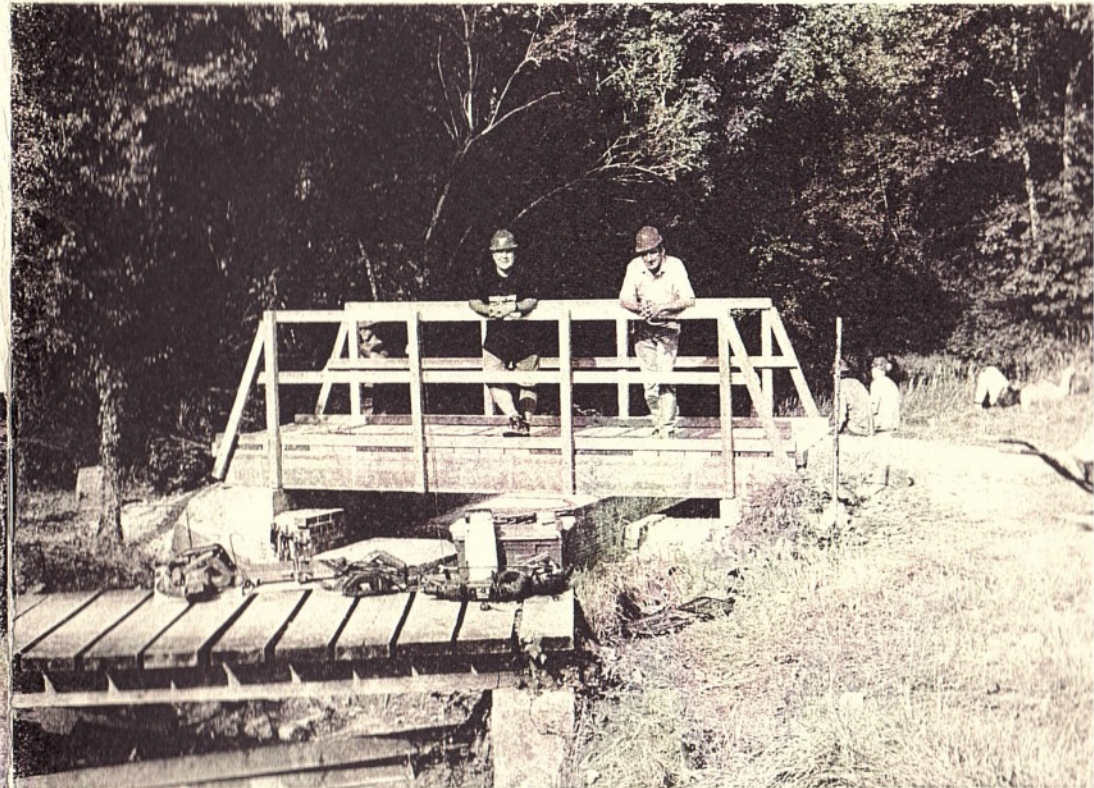
- 21st Nov IWA "Windmill Country". Talk & slides by John Lidbetter, Museum of Lincs. Life.
- 24th Nov SNT Work Party at Haverholme.
- 12th Dec IWA Pie & Pea Supper plus quiz. Booking required.
- 16th Jan IWA "Lincs Waterways & their future" by Mary Powell of Lincs Development.
- 20th Feb IWA "Britain's Woodlands, Past, Present and future" by Peter Cox of the Woodland Trust.
- 20th Mar IWA "The Fenland Waterways Links" - update.
- 27th Jun-4th July WRG Canal Camp, work to be finalised.

Meetings marked IWA are organised by the Lincolnshire branch of the Inland Waterways Association and are open to everyone. The venue is St Mary-le-Wigford Church Hall, Lincoln unless otherwise stated. For details contact Mrs V Longthorne on 01949 530138.



SLEAFORD

NAVIGATION TRUST



NEWSLETTER

No 11 - November 2002

The Sleaford Navigation Trust

A non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales No: 3294818.
Registered Office 10 Chelmer Close, North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 8TH
Registered as a Charity, No: 1060234.
Web Page: www.sleafordnavigation.co.uk

Aims and Objectives

To stimulate public interest and appreciation of the history, structure and beauty of the waterway known as the Slea or the Sleaford Navigation and to restore, improve, maintain and conserve and make it fully navigable. To restore associated buildings and structures and to promote the use of the Sleaford Navigation by all appropriate kinds of waterborne traffic and to promote the use of towpaths and adjoining footpaths.

Executive Committee

Chairman : Chris Hayes 10 Chelmer Close, North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 8TH.
Tel. 01522 689460

Secretary : Steve Hayes as above. Email steve.hayes-kyme@ntlworld.com

Treasurer : David Turner Brownlow's House, Brownlow's Hill, Coddington, Newark, Notts. NG24 2QA. Tel. 01636 708781
E-mail d-turner@totalise.co.uk

Engineer : David Pullen Brinkburn House, Church Street, Scothern, Lincoln LN2 2UA. Tel. 01673 862278

Martin Chapman

Barbara MacKay : Tel. 01529 304355

Susan Sowerby : Tel. 01522 793149

Pat Taylor : Chairman : Sleaford Navigation (Sales) Ltd. Tel. 01522 790652

David Carnell : Nominee of Lincolnshire IWA

Non Committee Contacts

Membership Secretary : Jenny Osborne, Bank House, Ruskington Fen, Billinghay, Lincoln LN4 4DS. Tel. 01526 832256

Sleaford Sports Partnership Liaison : Norman Osborne, as above.

Editors: Izzie and David Turner, address above.

Articles and opinions in this newsletter are those of the authors concerned and do not necessarily reflect SNT policy or the opinions of the editors.

Front Cover Picture - the by-wash at Haverholme during the summer wrg Canal Camp. The people at the far end are building a slope for the water to fall out onto whilst in the foreground Dave Carnell and Brian are building the shuttering to contain the concrete on the "side bench" of the by-wash.

Back Cover Picture - The new footbridge at Haverholme, the offside slope not yet finished. Photos by Dave Turner.

Editorial

Firstly apologies for another late newsletter which was completely outside our control. We had set aside a few days to get the newsletter out following our return from a couple of weeks holiday in Scotland. So as to be able to get on with it as soon as we returned we gave instructions to several committee members to have their contributions e-mailed to us ready so as to be safely in our inbox for when we returned. And they did, a quick check of the email on the Friday evening of our return was not a disappointment but on trying to do something with it the next morning the computer had a "funny turn" (technical term!) and it was three weeks and a large bill later before we had it back in working order.

Part of our reason for holidaying in Scotland was to visit the new Millennium Wheel boat lift near Falkirk. It has only recently been completed as the last stage of the £88 million project to reopen the Forth & Clyde and Union canals. Its means of operation is unique in the world the two giant caissons into which craft float, being rotated through a circle to bring them alternately to the top and bottom of the wheel. We were aware that it would not be operating over the middle weekend of our holiday when we would be taking part in a couple of organised canal walks in the area but had assumed that the stoppage list could be believed and it would be back in operation on the Monday before we left the area. Sadly it was not and so we were prevented from enjoying a boat ride through the lift. The reason for the stoppage was to install slipways for the use of amphibious vehicles now on order to increase the enjoyment of visitors. And visitors there were aplenty. Even at the start of October with the lift closed hundreds, possibly thousands, of people were coming through the gates every day making the lift already one of Scotland's premier tourist attractions. It was well worth the visit even without the boat ride and is a great credit to BW who having turned adversity in the form of the lost lock flight into a flagship for canal restoration, regeneration and tourism. Rest assured we will be back for that boat ride another day.

David and Isobel Turner

Membership Leaflet

Enclosed with the newsletter you will have received a copy of the new membership leaflet which has been sponsored jointly by Sleaford Town Council and The Barge and Bottle, Sleaford. We hope you will agree that the result gives initial information to interested people in a professional and appropriate way. We are very grateful for the sponsorship which has made a great deal of difference to the quality of leaflet we have been able to produce. Having the leaflets available at Huddersfield was particularly helpful.

Having looked at it, please don't simply put it to one side! Perhaps you could pass it on to someone else who would be interested and, who knows, we might get another new member! If you would like additional copies please let Steve Hayes know.

Tel. 01522 689460 e-mail address: steve.hayes-kyme@ntlworld.com

Steve Hayes

Lincolnshire Waterways Project

An informal partnership of 16 funders including all the local authorities, EMDA, British Waterways, Environment Agency, Lincolnshire Tourism, Church Tourism, Sustrans, IWA and the Slea Navigation Trust commissioned a Lincolnshire Waterways Development Framework. This 10 year document was to provide a shared vision and strategy for the improvement and management of the county's waterway corridors.

The last update that Members received was on the 17th January when this strategy document was still in production.

A well attended second Waterways Workshop was held on the 19th March where a first draft of the Development Framework was presented. The Framework identifies some 98 objectives within the following 8 key themes

- Improving the Existing Resource
- Extending the Network
- Developing Regional Links
- Developing Recreational Use of the Network
- Promoting the Waterways
- Business/Economic Development
- Engaging with Local Development
- Developing the Partnership

The workshop session attempted to grade these Objectives in terms of funding availability, strategic fit, delivery of jobs and delivery within the timescale. It soon became apparent that as many of the objectives were interlinked a zonal approach was the way forward. Six broad zones were defined as follows: Fens, Lower Witham, Fossey, Ancholme, Louth Canal and Grantham Canal.

The consensus of the workshop was that our ambitions were bold but complex and that progress in the zones would inevitably take place at different rates. In the first five years of the Development Framework priority would be in the Fens and Lower Witham zones.

There was an across the board acceptance of the complexity and complications of executing a project of this scale. The Workshop felt that it was vital to develop the partnership arrangements so that by demonstrating the commitment of all, potential funders will be better able to judge the robustness of the scheme.

The Environment Agency, British Waterways and Lincolnshire County Council are undoubtedly the major players at this stage and a series of tripartite meetings have taken place over the summer initially with the Economic Development and Tourism Portfolio Holder and subsequently at officer level.

A Memorandum of Agreement is being drawn up which outlines the commitment of the three partners to work together to regenerate the Waterways of Lincolnshire

The most encouraging result of these partnership discussions is that the Environment Agency Lincoln Office have restructured their operations. The Development Framework with its strategic county wide approach was the catalyst to their shift in focus. Navigation now has a higher profile within their operation, a series of customer care River Inspectors are being set up and most importantly a team leader (who will be our chief point of contact) for Lincolnshire Waterways is being created. The new structure is operational from 1st October, but the Team Leader has been in post for some weeks and has already met with the Tourism Officer.

The tripartite partnership whilst developing the Action Plan has further refined the zonal approach. It was felt that the Link should be the lead partnership project in the Transitional area, Fens Zone and the Lower Witham Zone should be the lead partnership project in the Objective 2 area. In the other zones, one of the agencies would take sole responsibility and would put forward just one relatively minor project for inclusion in the

Objective 2 bid.

- Fens Zone

The Fens Waterways Link Project which is within the Transitional Area aims to create a navigable link between the rivers Witham and Nene. The project is being led by the Environment Agency and partners include all the Local Authorities, EEDA, emda, Fens Tourism and the IWA.

The bid process has been complicated by the project being in two counties and separate bids have been submitted to make up the £200,000 of funding for the implementation study. The funding should be in place by December 2002 and the work to be completed by July 2003. This study would comprise Environmental Impact Assessment, Engineering Feasibility and a full Consultation Exercise, as well as undertaking preliminary work on the funding package for the implementation itself. The Environment Agency have indicated that the programme remains fully on track.

- Lower Witham Zone

This zone is within the main Objective 2 area and it is defined as the river Witham from Stamp End to Boston including the crossroads formed by the Sleas Navigation and Horncastle Canal. Apart from the Fens Link which is in a different funding area, this zone has been identified as priority for the partnership to focus its Objective 2 bid. The Business Plan is being prepared and includes:

- Multi-user waterside path from Lincoln to Boston on the former railway line
- Restoration of the Sleas Navigation and Horncastle Canals
- Flood storage/habitat improvements
- Boston as one of the Lincolnshire Waterway's Gateways
- Interpretation of Witham Archaeology
- 'Setting the Standard' - the quality threshold that would be followed on the whole network in terms of moorings, safe havens, signage, interpretation etc.

Concentrating work in this zone will give a good fit with the Fens Link, as Lincolnshire's Waterways are being opened up from the south upwards. In terms of interest and the quality of facilities, the Lower Witham is the poorest section but will be the first area that new boaters will discover via the Link, it seems essential therefore to concentrate resources here.

- Fosdyke Zone

British Waterways would be the lead agency within this zone. The priority

project would be to create a Gateway site at Torksey and British Waterways have some funding allocated to this.

- Ancholme Zone

The Environment Agency would be the lead agency within this zone. The priority project would be to provide a Gateway site within the Ancholme Flood Alleviation Scheme. A mosaic of wet grassland, wet woodland, reed bed and shallow ponds will be created next to the Ancholme. Moorings will be provided to allow visitors to stop at the site by boat, a visitor centre would provide interpretation and a network of footpaths and cycle routes will

aid exploration. A partnership of interested organisations including the Environment Agency, English Nature, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and the County Council is looking at ways to develop the site. The Environment Agency plan to begin work on the site in 2004.

- Louth Canal Zone

Groundwork Lincolnshire would be the lead agency within this zone. At the present time discussions are ongoing and it is not possible to say what the priority project would be.

- Grantham Canal Zone

British Waterways are the lead agency within this zone. Grantham Canal is not in any European funded areas and is further complicated by crossing three counties. Bearing this in mind British Waterways are pursuing other funding avenues, so whilst the Grantham Canal is part of the Lincolnshire Waterways Development Framework it will not form part of the Objective 2 Business Plan.

Apart from developing the important tripartite partnership other consultation has also taken place. The Tourism Officer has met with the NFU and it is planned to hold a meeting with farmers who have an interest in the waterways project during November. The Tourism Officer has held individual meetings with all the Restoration Groups and with Bardney Parish Council. There has been much media interest and quite a number of enquiries from the general public have followed these interviews.

The Tourism Officer took a stand at the National Waterways Festival at Huddersfield over the August Bank Holiday and the Sleas Navigation Trust helped her to man it. The aim of the stand was to gauge the level of support and interest for what we want to achieve from a national audience of boat users. A leaflet was produced outlining the main points of the Development

Framework and a Visitors Book collected some 300 plus names and positive comments.

The Lincolnshire Waterways project has in fact from its inception received a remarkable degree of positive support. Rural communities often feel disenfranchised by regeneration initiatives, which frequently focus on urban areas. The great appeal of this project is the way it links the rural and urban, providing a range of economic generators but within an entirely 'Lincolnshire scale'.

Advance Funding Requirements

British Waterways and the Environment Agency have asked for the County Council to consider releasing some money for early project development requirements.

British Waterways have secured £80,000 internal funding for a Gateway site at Boston. A facility building at Grand Sluice including showers, toilets, visitor interpretation and cycle parking facilities is planned and is greatly needed by boaters here. It is estimated that such a scheme would cost in the region of £160,000. British Waterways need to spend or commit their funding by 31st March 2003. British Waterways have asked the County Council if it would consider match funding or contributing to the project. The scheme could provide a quick "early win" for the Lincolnshire Waterways Partnership in an area that is badly in need of investment.

Members will realise that the Fens Link is further ahead than the rest of the Waterways Project, the Implementation Study which is in essence the nuts and bolts of how the construction will take place being due to start in December. The Environment Agency feel that the Sleas Navigation is the most progressed of all the possible restorations and would like to consider producing an Implementation Study for the Sleas before the main Objective 2 bid is submitted. This would identify the problems but also provide the solutions and would enable the partnership to make a vital leap in the timetable of what we would like to achieve within the timetable of Objective 2. The Environment Agency have asked if the County Council would be willing to contribute £50,000 to such a study.

Editor's Note:- The above was taken from Mary Powell's progress report to Lincolnshire County Council. We understand that the Council agreed to contribute £80,000 as match funding for BW's new facilities block in Boston and £50,000 to E.A. for the implementation study on the Sleas.

Sleford Navigation (Sales) Ltd

Once again many thanks to everyone who has supported the sales stand over the last few months - and to all my faithful helpers - especially Rodney and his "taxi service".

We have been to Doncaster, Newark, Sleford, Lincoln, Washingborough and of course the IWA National Festival at Huddersfield, which was a wonderful weekend, so much interest shown.

Thank you all for all the Bric-a-brac given which I am always pleased to receive.

At last I have a new supply of Head of Navigation plaques at £6.50 each + £1 post & packing.

Please ring if you would like one or any other merchandise.

Pat Taylor

The Trust displays go hi-tech

As we said in a recent newsletter, as a result of an 'Awards for All' lottery grant, the Trust is now the proud owner of some really up to date equipment so that we can not only give more visually stimulating presentations to a wide variety of groups but we can also tailor the presentations to suit the audience with a great deal more ease than was formerly the case.

My first job on getting all the equipment was to learn how to use it! I have found that setting up the gear for a presentation is quite easy now that I have got used to it and the process can be carried out in quite a short time.

The next challenge was to learn not only how to use the presentation program, PowerPoint, but also to make the results into something that people will want to see. This process had quite a few false starts, blind alleys, and advice from the rest of the family. "Dad, I wouldn't have done it that way," springs to mind. However, the comments were generally very helpful and it was agreed that the end result was really quite good.

The first time that the system was used was at the National Waterways Festival at Huddersfield when I set the computer to run through a normal monitor screen and had three presentations running on a non stop basis as part of the display.

During September I have given two talks, one in Sleford to a school PTA group and another in Derby to the Derby and Sandiacre Canal Society. So far, so good.

Another of the aims of the lottery application was to create an archive of Sleaford photos that have been taken over the years, to scan them and then store them onto CD-ROM. The photos could be showing the restoration work that has been carried out either by the Trust or by visiting groups. We would also like any photos of social events, or even pre-restoration views of sites. What we would also really like to see is some pictures of working boats on the Navigation, as the Navigation was officially abandoned in 1888 these are going to be rare but somewhere, someone must have some in their possession.

Obviously scanning all these photos takes time so I should be grateful if you would let me know if you have suitable slides, photos or even negatives rather than just send them. That way I should be able to let you have them back more quickly. Any information as to dates and locations, if not obvious, would help too.

You can get in touch with me either by phone or by e-mail - see inside front cover. I promise that any material that you lend me will be treated with the greatest of care and returned as soon as possible.

Steve Hayes

Inland Waterways Festival - Huddersfield 2002

or

"Would you like to try a slice of Lincolnshire plum bread?"

Not as unrelated as they may at first seem to be, these two titles will be forever linked together in the minds of the Trust members manning the stall at Huddersfield. Speak of the Wakefield Festival and you will immediately evoke the memory of mud, speak of Huddersfield and to us it will be plum bread.

The stall in question was not merely promoting the Sleaford Navigation Trust but the whole Lincolnshire Waterways Project and was the first opportunity to explain the plans in a wider waterway's forum, that of the Festival. So why the plum bread? The exhibition was encouraging visitors to Lincolnshire by whatever means of transport and the plum bread, while ostensibly being a taster of the abundant delights in store for the tourist, was also a bribe to get the punters to slow down long enough to have the project outlined to them! It certainly worked! The only problem was we began to recognise some faces as they came back again and again for plum bread! They were usually shamed into buying raffle tickets though.

The response to the project was as favourable to that of the plum bread!

We asked those in support of the plans to sign a visitors book to that effect and collected approximately three hundred signatures. Indeed some pages read rather like a Who's Who of the Waterways!

The Festival also gave Mary Powell of Lincolnshire Development, who is heading the project for the County Council, the opportunity to meet face to face some of the people she had been in correspondence with and to extend her knowledge of the workings of IWA. The whole promotion was funded by the County Council with display material provided by them and by us.

Thanks are due to all those who gave their time in helping to slice and butter the plum bread, transport the display materials, set up and dismantle the stall, as well as man it over the four days of the Festival. It was hard work but very worthwhile for the extremely positive feedback we received.

Interestingly we very soon sold out of Head of Navigation plaques. What had seemed an appropriate number had been taken but boaters kept arriving and telling us of their trip to Cobbler's Lock and the supply soon went. This just goes to show that monitoring boat movement on the Sleaford is not an exact science and we are often unaware of how many people have already benefited from the restoration so far.

Multi-talented Junior Members

Following tradition, the junior members of the Trust achieved success in the Festival competitions. This year Ellie Sowerby of Wigford, won the prize in the junior section for the best cake baked at the Festival and was duly presented with the silver cup. Well done Ellie!

On the Monday evening in the Beer Tent there was a musical evening/talent competition which resulted in a variety of performances from those attending the Festival and, of course, from WRG. Earlier in the evening though, Edward Sowerby and Alexandra Boddy stole the show with their duet on saxophone and flute. At first only going to perform one number, they ended up doing three to a well-deserved, enthusiastic reception from the large audience.

Chris Hayes

Water Capacity Study

In September we learnt from Dave Fisher at EA that they have confirmed that the WS Atkins Peterborough office have been appointed to conduct a study of the Slea from Rauceby to the bypass. They will re-survey the banks and re-calculate the maximum water yield from the Slea and the Nine Foot Drain. They will also calculate the maximum flow that can be passed through the Sleaford culverts.

Dave Fisher re-stated his understanding that when the Sleaford culverts were worked on in the 70's that the design capacity is 8 cumecs.

Even if this is so the Binnie's report for the Trust calculated that the banks between Sleaford and Cogglesford will overtop at 5 cumecs. Atkins have been asked to consult the Trust when carrying out the study so we should have the chance to put this point directly to them.

The study is due for completion in December/January.

David Pullen

WRG Canal Camp Report

This year's Waterway Recovery Group (wrg) work camp, or canal camp as wrg prefer to call them these days, took place in sunny August. The scene of the action was again Haverholme advancing the work on the by-wash and various associated jobs. The first big job was to cast a concrete finish to the bench part of the by-wash channel so the Sunday saw some of us erecting shuttering and trainee dumper drivers and a team of labourers bringing materials up from the car park to site. The pour took place in one on the Monday with all the concrete mixed on site in our small mixer - not a bad achievement. Dave Carnell did most of the brain work to devise the shuttering and also returned to site on several evenings to prevent vandalism.

Attention was then turned to the main task for the camp, building a new bridge across the by-wash. It is built of tandalised timber to a standard design of NKDC who also footed the bill. The timber was supplied direct from the wood yard to Haverholme Estates who kindly allowed their farm to be used for storage until the timbers were required on site. John Jackson, a relatively new Trust volunteer, stepped in to take the lead on this project and the result is a worthy tribute to all the hard work by John and the campers. After the easy bit following the plans sawing, drilling, nailing etc., the bridge itself was in place but the harder bit was devising suitable access ramps for either end which involved a bit of head scratching before it was

decided to use all the remaining hard core for the lock side end and part of the old bridge for the other.

Another fairly big job was altering the bottom end of the by-wash where the water enters the downstream reach of the river. Without some means of arresting the force of the stream, water descending the by-wash would have soon dug a hole in the river bed, possibly undermining the tail of the lock structure. The work involved cutting back the hard tufa-like, possibly natural, accretions to form a smooth slope which was then capped with several inches of concrete as a base for a brick topping. A concrete foundation beam was also cast and work begun on some rather complicated bricklaying to achieve an acceptable surface finish - see below.



Friday, the last day of the camp, was very hot and there was no shortage of volunteers to cool off in the lock chamber clearing it of some of the larger stones and brick that have found their way in over the years. Following this up with a bit of digging it was possible to locate the old cill for the north side bottom gate - the top of which was just 2 feet below water level at the time and 14 feet from coping level. Its partner on the southern side has obviously been removed at some point in the past. A bit of lateral thinking saw the remains of the old by-wash bridge used upside-down as a boat to assist with clearing rubble out of the chamber.

Back on the by-wash the final job was making a start on coping stones for the two walls. We had managed to acquire enough second hand paving stones for reuse as copings to furnish more than one side of the by-wash and these were brought to site on the Thursday. Ernest used a hired stone saw to cut them to size and then lead the installation team working on until 6.00 pm on Friday to complete the first side before the end of camp.

Our thanks to wrg and the volunteer especially camp leaders Izzy and Steve for another successful camp with lots of work completed. Next year's camp will run from late June to early July so check the dates in the diary section and come and help the work along and have lots of fun too.

Dave T

Towing-path Trials and Tribulations

At 10.00 am sharp on Wednesday 30th October 2002 Mrs H D Slade opened her inquiry into the alleged public right of way along the towing path between Bottom Bridge and the wooden foot bridge in the middle of South Kyme. This, with any luck, will be one of the last stages in a dispute that has been going on since the 1980's between villagers who believe there to be a public right of way along this section of towing path and the landowners who do not.

The towing path both up and down stream from the section in question is designated as public footpath - this is not in dispute. Lincolnshire County Council who are leading in this action believe the section in between was missed off the original definitive map through a clerical oversight of which they were not aware until brought to their attention by local residents in 1989. Subsequently several village residents completed "Application for Definitive Map Modification" orders following a change in ownership of adjacent farmland and the appearance of "Private - Not a Public Right of Way" notices. The landowner has from that time attempted to stop and turn back walkers.

The County Council, whose responsibilities include rights of way, completed its enquiries in 1992 and issued a 'Definitive Map Modification Order'. As 11 objectors came forward it then became necessary to hold a public inquiry but no hint was given as to why it had taken ten years for this to come about. Several of the original objectors have since withdrawn and two have died but none made an appearance at the Inquiry.

The Inquiry heard from several witnesses who claimed to have used the towing path without hindrance and had always thought it to be a public right of way. Some of them had memories going back to childhood in the 1940's even recalling boats on the river collecting sugar beet for delivery to Bardney works. Within the volumes of paper work was evidence from over 30 people who lived or had lived in the village and used the path extensively. Evidence was also heard from The Open Spaces Society and the Parish Council which had recently voted unanimously to support the order confirming the towpath as a public right of way.

Only one objector made an appearance at the Inquiry, a tenant of a cottage fronting onto the towing path, who has lived in the village for only 3 months who was concerned about security and intrusion. It was well for the Inquiry that she did attend because without an objector present it appears Mrs Slade would have been obliged to terminate the proceedings leaving the County Council with even more bureaucracy before a decision could be made.

The Inquiry closed soon after 2.00 pm although the village hall clock still working to British Summer Time did cause a bit of confusion at this point. The main participants took Mrs Slade on a short walk to view the towpath and we were promised her decision in due course, generally taken to mean in about three months time.

Talking to some of those involved during the lunch break it is apparent that ownership of the towing path is not without question. Evidence presented to the Inquiry confirmed that the Crown as owners of two properties situated in Low Road and backing onto the towing path do not claim ownership of the path.

Dave Turner