

MARKET DRAYTON COMMUNITY CANAL DEVELOPMENT GROUP

ART & HERITAGE TRAIL

1. In July 2015 a report was produced by Market Drayton Community Partnership – MDCP - identifying a series of works which could improve and add value to the towpath area in and around Market Drayton .The Canal and River Trust – CRT – which owns and manages the canal and the associated towpath, and the Market Drayton Community Partnership – MDCP - agreed to produce an action plan for a series of , in the main, relatively small scale developments and improvements to the canal area towpath etc from Bridge 65 / Orwells yard to Tyrley locks .This plan would thus be “owned “by both organisations.
2. A copy of the action plan is attached and discussions are ongoing with regard to its implementations and the concepts are beginning to take shape. The basic objectives are to improve the appearance of this part of the canal, to make it more welcoming to local people boaters and tourists and to encourage use of the towpath as a local amenity, to raise awareness of the canal and to educate in its use .
3. This paper relates to ideas etc with regard to the proposed Art /Heritage trail.
4. At the time of writing , April 2016 , the main ideas and potential elements for the Art and Heritage trail, identified to date include the following , all to be located on or adjacent to the towpath :

4.1 A Shroppie art trail from bridge 64 to incorporate the urban area of the canal produced by Abientot \Art which might include Shroppie stones say 9” by 5” in ceramic /concrete incorporating the names of sponsors and a continuous design set into the concrete mooring and bridge areas. This might include individual people, groups , memorials or organisations and businesses.

4.2 Sculptors invited to work with the community to produce sculptures linked to and sympathetic to the local environment.

4.3 A travelling canal theatre interpretation of the work and life of the canal

4.4 A mural specifically located at bridge 64 which unlike the other bridges is an unattractive modern concrete structure, defaced by graffiti. The object of this would be in fact to provide two murals either side of the bridge ,using appropriate materials, one to welcome people to Market Drayton and the other to illustrate key points relating the canal ,the town etc . The tile / murals etc should seek to involve local people from the surrounding estate, encourage children and families to feel an ownership thereof and to develop skills and demonstrate the place of art in day to day life.

4.5. Other ideas that have been suggested recently include ;

- A lantern making workshop, leading to a lantern lit canal walk with a musical performance

- Workshops on e.g. . the importance of horses in transportation on the canal / traditional canal; crafts / the present day ecology of the canal

4.6 The Heritage elements of this proposal would include a series of “interpretation boards “located on the banks of the canal / towpath area and to include the following in their own right:

- the world war 2 pillbox at bridge 62,
- bridge 61 which is a classical structure of the period of construction in its own right
- a description of the canal and its construction at the area around bridge 61 ;
” the canal built like a railway
- the Talbot Wharf boatyard
- Tyrley Locks and their function

NB There will be other elements anticipated to be added to the Heritage component .

5. It is deliberately proposed to start relatively small with e.g. the above ideas, but to use this opportunity to encourage interests, to carry out a call for artists to be involved with this work and to see it as an ongoing project with considerable flexibility of approach.

6. Initial funding support to the value of £4900 has been confirmed by the Shropshire Housing Group, a local Housing Association responsible amongst other things for the Fairfields estate adjacent to part of the canal area. It is envisaged that these funds would be used to work with the design etc of the mural referred to in paragraph 4.4 above. The grantors have a clear expectation that work on this element should start later in 2016. It will also be important to ensure that professional artistic advice and project management skills are derived and available to ensure the quality of the project and that the processes and procedures of the CRT are satisfied..Other sources of funds being considered and to be explored would include the lottery “Awards for All “ up to £10000 which might relate to supporting the cost of interpretation boards, and to local Trusts and other potential sources etc .

7. This paper will be updated and added to as ideas and progress develops, but is meant to provide a snapshot of the project as at the date below.

Richard Priestley, Chairman Market Drayton Community Partnership

July 2016 v3