

Presentation – Basingstoke Canal Authority

Portfolio	Community
Ward(s) Affected:	All

Purpose

To receive a presentation from Fiona Shipp, on the work of the Basingstoke Canal Authority

1 Background

- 1.1 The Basingstoke Canal Authority (BCA) manages and maintains the 32 mile long canal which serves Mytchett, Deepcut, and Frimley and Camberley. The canal is a highly visible natural feature through Surrey Heath, improving the quality of life of local residents by giving unrestricted access to open space and leisure opportunities. The canal centre based in Mytchett also acts as a local tourist attraction providing historical interest with a range of events and activities for the public.
- 1.2 There are 4.2 million residents within a 60 minute drive of the canal and 700,000 within a 30 minute drive. It is estimated that 30% of Surrey Heath residents have benefitted from the organisation in the past 12 months (through activities such as dog walking, canoeing, running to keep fit etc.) but there is no accurate information. The SHBC section is a highly populated area of the canal with a high number of visits to the canal centre and Frimley Lodge Park areas.
- 1.3 Other benefits provided include a hugely diverse ecological benefit (the widest in England and Wales according to the BCA), the ability to manage water levels and take preventative action before storms, prevention of canal leaks onto the railway and a large volunteer programme – over 60 ‘lengthsmen’ walk a section of the canal every week and can be called upon in an emergency.
- 1.4 Recent work local to the borough includes the replacement of lock gates at Deepcut and soft bank protection near to the lakeside complex (costing £105k) including the introduction of ‘dog steps’.
- 1.5 The reserves for the BCA at 31/3/17 were £486,309.
- 1.6 The Executive awarded a Revenue Grant on the 9th January of £10,000 for the year 2018/19 subject to a service level agreement outlined below with the Council.
- Ensure the Basingstoke Canal is accessible, welcoming and safe
 - Improve biodiversity and landscape, working towards favourable SSSI condition
 - Improve supply and management of water to sustain navigation and biodiversity
 - Engage the community in understanding and appreciating the canal
 - Develop volunteering opportunities
 - Monitor feedback to improve services
 - Acknowledge the support of the Council in all its publicity.
 - Maintain audited accounts to be provided as requested by the Council

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider the presentation in relation to Surrey Heath and the Prevention Plan and to consider any future steps which Members would wish to recommend to the Executive and/or Council.

Background Papers:

None

Author:

Jayne Boitoult 01276 707464

e-mail: jayne.boitoult@surreyheath.gov.uk

Service Head:

Louise Livingston Executive Head of Transformation