

Press Statement

Boat Owners Rally at Bevans Bridge 46 – South Sebastopol Cwmbran

A boat rally has been organised by boat owners on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal for the 5th September 2020.

Our Trust supports boaters on the canal who have been forced into this protest action by the unreasonable behaviour of the housing developer Taylor Wimpey. The housing developers have left the canal in an appalling state and prevented navigation down the Five locks un navigable for the last few years.

Richard Dommett MBE, Regeneration Manger for the Monmouthshire Brecon & Abergavenny Canals Trust said.....*“The developers constructed “temporary” clay dams across the canal some years ago which allowed them to construct a new road bridge to serve the western half of their extensive new housing development. The dams have rendered the canal unnavigable to the south toward Five Locks, and have also prevented proper water flows in the channel resulting in a deterioration of the canals ecological quality and visual appearance. We applaud the provision of new boat mooring by Torfaen CBC to the south of he new bridge, but these are also made inaccessible by the temporary dams. Whilst the road bridge has been completed for some time, there has been no movement by the developers to remove the obstructions...”*

Our trust is also concerned about the developers proposal to thrust-bore a drainage pipe under the canal. Failure of culverts passing under the canal has in the past resulted in catastrophic failures resulting in large sections of the canal being drained, flooding local properties and roads. The careful design and execution of this culvert is crucial, as if it failed in years to come it could drain the whole canal from Llangynidr. The developers wish to install the pipe/culvert at a shallower depth under the canal than recommended in Canal and River Trust national guidance.

The canal at this location is owned and managed by Torfaen County Borough Council. The Council has been very supportive of our Trust aims and has in the past secured substantial funding via the Heritage Lottery Fund and European tourism grants for restoration.

About the Monmouthshire Brecon & Abergavenny Canals Trust

We are a local South-East-Wales based registered charity, run by volunteers, which campaigns and works to improve and sustainably restore the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal for the benefit of our local community.

Along with campaigning for restoration, we undertake on-the-ground works and run a successful interpretation centre at Fourteen Locks, Newport, where we have run an “Education through Restoration” project with 60 local schools in partnership with Newport City Council. We work in partnership with the canal owners, Glandwr Cymru, the Canal and Rivers Trust in Wales, Torfaen County Borough Council, Newport City Council and Caerphilly County Borough Council. Whist our main base is at Fourteen Locks, we operate two eco-friendly electrically driven Community Boats at Goytre Wharf Llanover, a beautiful location within the Brecon Beacons National Park.

The canal is a 200-year old historical, leisure and economic resource, running from Brecon to Newport. About 35 miles at its northern end is navigable and a popular tourist attraction, with the remaining 5 miles from Cwmbran to Newport, and 4 miles from Newport to Cwmcarn, left to be restored. The unrestored section is well placed to serve the local urban communities of Cwmbran, Newport and Risca.