

## **RECENT AND FORTHCOMING WORKS ON THE POCKLINGTON CANAL**

During 2008 and early 2009, British Waterways have undertaken a variety of work on the Pocklington Canal.

The Canal Head pound was dredged in February 2008. Following on from this the adjacent field, which was used for disposal of the dredgings, has recently been cleared of weeds and ploughed in preparation for leasing to a local farmer. The gaps in the hedgerow have also been planted up and there has been management of some of the large trees to remove weight from their crowns to prolong their life. During September 2008 it was also necessary to call on the help of British Waterways' Confined Spaces Team to winch a 7ft tree trunk from the Canal Head feeder which had become wedged in the culvert.

In addition, the lock gates at Thornton Lock were lifted out during November 2007 to allow them to be replanked by British Waterways improving their water retaining ability and extending their useful life.

Also during 2008, British Waterways, in consultation with Natural England, employed specialist consultants to complete a water quality study for the canal to investigate this issue which is believed to be impacting on the ecological condition of the canal's Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). The results will now be taken forward by Natural England and British Waterways to identify possible solutions.

British Waterways is currently establishing a pilot Heritage Management Agreement (HMA) for the Pocklington Canal, working with English Heritage and East Riding of Yorkshire Council. The potential of these agreements is to assist better management of the heritage assets of the waterways and as such is of great value and interest to British Waterways. It is the intention that the Pocklington HMA will become a model for the management for other waterways on the network.

As part of the process, a rationalisation of the statutory protection is required. Currently the four road bridges are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, two are also listed structures. Eight of the nine locks are listed structures with only Gardham Lock remaining unlisted. English Heritage is reviewing the status of the protection along the canal and propose eliminating the dual designations on the bridges and adding protection to the unlisted Gardham Lock and extending the Top Lock listing to incorporate the Canal Basin at Canal Head.

British Waterways are currently organising the work necessary to replace both sets of lock gates at Cottingwith Lock to reopen the lock to boat traffic. The gates have already been made by British Waterways' workshop at Stanley Ferry. It is scheduled to install the gates during Spring/early Summer 2009, however, the exact start date is unavoidably dependent on suitable river levels in the Derwent. Listed Building Consent has been granted for the gate replacement including reinstating the canal's characteristic wheel gearing on the upstream gates. Copies of the original wheel gearing are being kindly donated by PCAS for the lock. Timber lock beams will also be reinstated to replace the current metal beams. The metal beams are former railway tracks reflecting the canal's previous owners. As such they are part of the Pocklington Canal's history and will be retained for display at Canal Head. The total cost of the works to reopen Cottingwith Lock is currently estimated to be in region of £180,000, approximately £60,000 of which is the cost of the new gates. British Waterways will be funding this work.