

## **(ii) Work towards improving and safeguarding the Bury MBC stretch of the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal**

Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal is a fantastic wildlife corridor through Radcliffe and Bury. It extends as far as the border with Little Lever in the south and runs up to Elton Reservoir and into Redvales and Church ward at the north end. It is well loved by residents and in the lockdown period it served as a much-needed green space for residents. In recent years, the Bury MBC section has been looked after by Little Britain Anglers and Radcliffe Litter Pickers.

~~REMOVE [For many years there has been talk of restoring the canal but the Canal and Rivers Trust to consider the canal low priority. CRT are obliged to keep the MBB canal safe for public use, however they are under no obligation to make it navigable because it is classed as a 'remainder canal' (Transport Act 1968). As custodians of the canal the Council needs to find a way to work with CRT to improve the prospects for the canal.]~~

### **The Council notes:**

The canal suffers from being overgrown by several species including:

- Duckweed, which as well as being unsightly and in hot weather is smelly, if left to thrive, the weed can cause problems for other aquatic plants and wildlife by starving it of oxygen and sunlight.
- Himalayan Balsam, growing along the banks and in reed beds is outgrowing native species and reducing biodiversity by restricting native plant growth
- Giant hogweed growing on the upper reaches near the Elton Reservoir end, is a very dangerous plant for which the sap can cause serious skin burns. It contains furocoumarin, which makes skin extremely sensitive to sunlight (phytophotodermatitis).
- Trees growing into the structure of the canal and can cause damage to the sides and will eventually impact on the structural integrity.

~~REMOVE [In addition to the problem plants and invasive species listed above, there is a problem with litter being thrown into the canal which is often difficult to retrieve. This is especially true at places where pedestrian bridges cross the canal. The Council should help to reduce the problems caused by litter by addressing littering on Council owned land bordering the canal and pedestrian access to the canal across Council owned land.]~~

~~INSERT [The ongoing challenges of litter and fly-tipping and maintenance of trees and other growth along the canal and the responsibilities of all partners involved to keep the canal well maintained and prevent further deterioration.~~

The ambitious and exciting Restoration Feasibility Study commissioned in 2020 jointly by Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal Society, the Canal & Rivers Trust, Bury Council and Bolton Council for the full restoration of the 5-mile stretch of canal through Bury to Bolton.]

### **The Council resolves to**

Commit to the following:

~~REMOVE [- Carry out a feasibility study into renovation of the canal with the possibility of including it in the Radcliffe Regeneration plans. This should consider the ambition to use the canal as a facility for fishing and water sports and working with the Canal and Rivers Trust to improve the tow paths to give better access for walking and cycling.]~~

- Look at ways of preventing fly-tipping and littering from Council owned land such as car parks and bridges crossing the canal

- Work to ensure visibility in currently obscured areas of access to the canal to prevent risk of crime, anti-social behaviour, and damage to property such as graffiti
- Working with the police to address the safety concerns of residents accessing and using the tow path
- Call on the Canal and Rivers Trust to adopt a strategy to stop the water in the canal dropping to a level hazardous to wildlife

INSERT [

- Maintain our commitment to the full restoration of the canal through Bury and Radcliffe as expressed in the 2020 Restoration Feasibility Study.
- Write to the relevant Minister making the case for funding for the restoration, which our study estimates would bring £1 million per annum in socio-economic benefits to Bury and Radcliffe.
- Continue as an active partner in the maintenance and restoration of the canal through the participation of our officer and member representatives on the MBBC steering group.]