



Fibre Broadband comes to Mercia

The Marina is on the cusp of letting a contract for the installation and

supply of fibre broadband around the marina and this may well be operational by July.

It will provide the same service that most households now enjoy, namely a reliable, fast, low-cost internet

service to access Netflix, Amazon Prime, iPlayer, streaming YouTube, online gaming, etc.

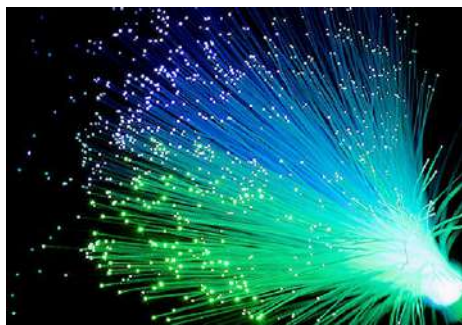
The final connection to the boat or lodge will be a copper lead from the electricity pedestal or, in the case of a lodge, from a nearby point. (This is just like the final connection from the street to a house which is also copper.)

The speed and quality of service will be the same if not better than in a city centre. The connection fee, at about £50, will cover the purchase of the router and the patch lead. If you move your boat and connect to a different pedestal in the marina, your identity on the router will travel with you to your new plug-in connection.

The Marina will act as the local service

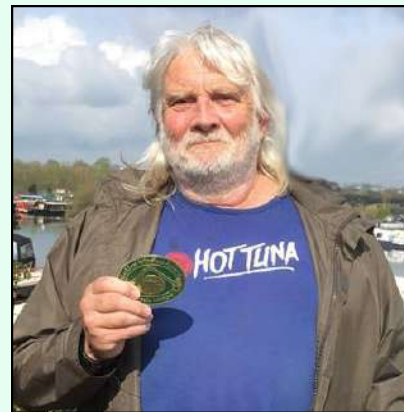
provider for the data packages, equipment and management of the service but

intend to out-source a help desk service with the actual Internet Service Provider (ISP) to provide professional support over the phone free of charge. The cost of data packages will be comparable to home broadband.



A traditional telephone (landline with area code) isn't possible with this fibre broadband but it may well be possible for individuals to add on a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) service (such as Vonage) which would give free calls to UK and some overseas landlines for an additional cost of around £15 per month.

We (the moorers and lodge owners) should appreciate this is a big investment by the Marina on our behalf and is being done in recognition that the technology has moved on quickly over the last ten years and it is right to offer a fast and reliable internet service as part of the Marina services. That doesn't stop us appreciating it and giving our thanks.



Golden Windlass

The latest recipient of the Marina's Golden Windlass award goes to Graham Gibbs for his tireless patrolling of the marina doing volunteer rubbish collection.

Want to be a Volunteer First Aider?

Previous experience is not necessary as everybody goes on a one-day certified First Aid Course paid for by the Marina, with ongoing support from the existing team. The ideal person will have a willingness to help people and be able to keep calm. To find out more, speak to Jules in the Marina Office or email events@merciamarina.co.uk

Bat Talk and Walk

A bat talk and walk has been arranged for 1 June. Given by Steve Roe, Vice Chair of Derby Bat Group, it starts at 8.15pm to fit in with sundown. £2 per person entry. It will be a fascinating evening but numbers are very limited. Please ask to put your name down in the Office.

Piscatorial Society AGM

The Society held its AGM on Saturday 30 March. Trophy winners were Nigel Hunt (Match League), Ian Carroll (Biggest Pike in a Match plus Pink Landing Net award), Rob Williams (Biggest Pike). The Society has raised a total of £463.80 from the Charity Auction at last year's AGM and the Neil Wakeham Memorial Match.

STREETHAY WHARF LTD Coventry Canal Lichfield

Streethay Engineering are now on site and operational. Pop by to say hello and generally give them a good welcome. For now the main contact number 01543 414808. This number will change as they settle in. You can enquire about work in person, so do drop by.

Whilst painting and major engineering work will continue to be done at Streethay Wharf (three miles down the Coventry Canal from Fradley or 18 miles and 11 locks from here!), the Mercia operation will be doing engineering,

partial fit out (bathrooms, kitchens), window replacement, some woodwork, blacking and anodes and minor welding etc.

The team is headed by Tom Holmes (Gas Safe) with engineering backup from Paul and Genedi (likely to be here all the time). You may well know many of them from your visits to Streethay. Tina and Nick Bellamy will also be here at times during the week.

There are plans for an information evening a bit later in the year when they can talk about what they can do for you (here or at Streethay) and you get an opportunity to meet many of them in person and ask your questions.



Let's Take A Walk in The Park

The eighteenth century saw a very formal approach to the development of English Landscape parks, a style that was virtually eliminated by Capability Brown.

He swept away almost all the remnants of previous formally patterned styles in favour of his own style of smooth undulating grass and lawns and serpentine lakes set against clumps, belts and scatterings of trees. This “gardenless” form of landscape gardening rapidly became a ‘must have’ for those who could afford it and Capability Brown designed over 170 gardens of the finest country houses and estates such as Harewood House, Belvoir Castle, Blenheim Palace and Hampton Court.

Transformation

Mercia Marina's parkland on the west side of the Marina is undergoing an amazing transformation and over the next few years the longer term vision of The Park will become increasingly evident as a modern interpretation of that naturalistic form. You will walk across a leisure garden, through the soft landscaping, wander amongst the trees and enjoy the dappled shade in summer or the architectural splendour in winter;



you could sit by shrubs and wildflower meadows and little woodlands, join a pathway to walk onto a bund or foraging trail; stop and watch the wildlife on the lake and its islands. You might like to walk the perimeter, looking in and across as the displays change. As the seasons move one into another, textures and colours will shift because of the variety in bark, foliage and blossom types, offering differing views as you look around, and – we expect – an abundance of wildlife benefitting from the specialist planting and habitats. The Park will offer you, your family and visitors space, interest, peace and time for yourself.

Planning

A lot of thought and planning has gone into The Park. John Thornton's concept and ideas are beginning to take on shape and form through discussions with Robert Neff, David Boddy's professional advice and the hard work being done by the estates' team (Ian, Matt, Rick, Dan and – now – Alan, with support from Stuart). The vision and planning for the leisure ground go well beyond any standard design or requirements. We are being given an exceptional area to enjoy which will be both beautiful and a unique enhancement to what most of us believe is the finest Marina in the land.

For comment and contributions, please contact
Jo on 07973 711431 or at jojames46@gmail.com

The Detail

Early work is well underway with the lake, its three islands planted with willow and ornamental blackberry, rosehips, cotoneaster and areas ('scrapes') left bare for nesting birds such as the tern and oyster catcher with the marginals going in on the water's edge. The hedge-rows - marked for now with the wooden fencing - already have more than 500m of mixed native hedging. There are 400 whips planted in groups to create mixed native woodlands, wildflower areas planted with 350m² of bee and butterfly-friendly perennials and, most impressive of all at this early stage, 58 native trees including Acacia, Chestnut, Pine, Rowan, Silver Birch and Ash. These semi-mature



trees are already seven years' old and their planting has allowed for their fully-grown size in 30 years' time. There are new land drains and irrigation to make sure the water is where it needs to be and the grass will be kept down but not 'manicured'. For now there is no plan to add any formal pathways; it is hoped The Park will do well allowing people to wander as they choose. Dogs (with the usual provisos about behaviour and owners picking up) will be welcome off the lead. The pond, connected to the Marina, is probably large enough to ensure its own aeration will keep it healthy but, if needed, it could be treated with barley extract and oxygenated as has been done with the Marina waters.



A Way With Wood

Have you visited South Field recently and seen the log seats which reflect life on the canals - the narrowboat, bridge, canal and lock? Have you noticed the Tower and Dragon at the gateway to The Park on the east side of the Marina? And the carved leaves of the local plants?

Alistair Farson has been at work with his chain saws over recent weeks, creating wonderful art which is partly from his imagination and partly from local flora. His background is in conservation but he has been fascinated by wood carving for a long time and it has gradually taken over his professional life as his ideas have grown and his reputation has spread.

He says: "I've been creating furniture, carvings and small buildings for a fair few years. I like to source the wood locally, so I know where it's come from."



Our thanks to
Midland Chandlers
for their support with this
newsletter

Andy Winebloom's band, The Treble
Fours are playing at the Moira
Canal Festival on 18 & 19 May.
The festival raises funds to extend this
section of the Ashby and is centred at
Moira Furnace.
So if any Mercians are visiting the
festival, pop over and say hi to Andy.

