

More about the Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal Society

Q: When was the Society formed?

- In July 1987.

Q: What are the aims of the Society?

- To restore, reconstruct, preserve, maintain and improve the canal between Salford, Bolton and Bury. The Society works actively and constructively to achieve these aims and is not just a protest group.

Q: What has the Society achieved so far?

- The Society has brought and kept the canal in the public eye, not least by continuous contact with the three local authorities and British Waterways/Canal & River Trust.
- The Society continues to publicise the canal through its magazine, publications, website, talks, press releases, and its Facebook pages.
- In practical terms it has run working parties since 1988, mainly concentrating on towpath improvements.
- It helped ensure that two bridges were rebuilt at full navigable height and width; it had a strong input into the design of the restored length at Middlewood. It has concentrated its efforts at Nob End, notably building the Meccano Bridge and excavating the lock chambers.
- The Society organises Open Meetings throughout the year.
- The Society has published numerous books about the canal, including a *Towpath Guide* (revised in 2024).
- The Society has substantial display and sales stands to promote the Society and the restoration of the canal.

Q: What does the Society offer its members?

- Membership helps support the Society financially, and thus helps our campaign for full restoration.
- Members receive a full-colour quarterly magazine, and they have the right to attend and vote at AGMs and to stand for Council.
- The Society usually has six Open Meetings each year with canal-related speakers.

Q: What plans does the Society have for restoration?

- Discussions are ongoing with the Canal & River Trust.
- A Restoration Feasibility Study for the summit level from Hall Lane to Bury was undertaken in 2020, suggesting a cost of just over £6M.
- Restoration will almost certainly go hand in hand with canal-side developments rather than through outside grant funding. Full restoration is likely to be well over £100M. Medium and long-term plans are being formulated to spread the cost over several decades, so that our plans for restoration will be realistic.
- The roles of C&RT and the local authorities will be vital, and we have a Restoration Partnership Group which meets with these bodies several times each year.

And now the legal stuff:

Q: What is the legal status of the Society?

- It is a Company limited by guarantee with Companies House (No. 3074574).
- It is a Registered Charity with the Charity Commission (No. 1048407).
- Both bodies require directors/trustees to be vetted and listed.
- Annual financial returns have to be made to both bodies.

Q: What documents govern the running of the Society?

- The *Articles of Association* and *Memorandum of Association* were agreed when the Society was incorporated under the Companies Acts in 1995.

Q: Who runs the Society?

- It is run by a Council whose members are elected at Annual General Meetings. Any member of the Society may stand for membership of Council. Each Council member normally retires every three years, but may stand for re-election.
- Once elected the various roles within Council are decided by agreement; the roles are listed in each quarterly magazine.
- Each member of Council is simultaneously a Director of the Company and a Trustee of the Charity.

Q: What financial controls govern the running of the Society?

- The Society's accounts are run on a daily basis by the Society's Treasurer.
- The accounts are audited annually by an external Senior Statutory Auditor (currently at Harts Chartered Accountants in Macclesfield).
- Summarised annual financial statements are published in the August edition of the Society's magazine.
- The Society's activities are fully insured.