

Editorial

Great news - the protected species licence related to Gennets Bridge Lock has at last been received from Natural England, which means the Trust is now a significant step nearer to starting work in earnest at the lock site. I fondly remember being asked many years ago - I think it was for an interview on BBC Radio Brighton as it was then - why, when the canal was originally being built in three years, we were anticipating it taking at least 10 times as long to restore it. The bureaucracy involved in just this single work site goes a long way towards providing an answer.

Along rather similar lines, we have to provide environmental impact assessments (EIAs) as part of planning applications such as the first phase of the proposed Bramley Link, between the River Wey and the Gosden aqueduct site. Along with the Civil Engineering design study for the same area, this will take a full 12 months to complete, because, for the EIA, the site has to be observed and reported upon at all seasons. These studies have now started, which will enable the application to be submitted to the local planners in a year's time - another exciting development.

At the AGM on 18 April we were sorry to note that long-standing directors Jim Phillips and Eric Walker - both of whom have done so much to get the project to the stage it is at today - took their retirement, along with Alistair Smith. Happily, Eric plans to continue as TSG leader. Their replacements on the WACT board are expected to be announced soon.

Please note the dates for the annual Summer Camp, shown in the diary on page 2 of this newsletter. Work will take place in the Alfold/Dunsfold area. We believe that leader

George Whitehead still has a few vacancies.

George is looking for a freezer (working of course) in case anybody has one they can donate for the camp - if you can help please contact the northern office (as below) or ring George on 07721 684690.

George and his gang plan to install the deck on the Hunt Park viewing platform over the 4 May bank holiday weekend.

A reminder to anybody wanting to visit any of the Trust's sites - we welcome your interest and support, but please keep off the actual work site, and remain on the public right of way. This is particularly important at GBL.

Finally, Eric Walker suggests an addition to the bonfire precautions published in the last *WPN*: 'Choose a bonfire site which is not under tree branches or overhead lines'.

Bill

The Mrs Bucket Group (keeping up appearances on Mondays)

Sometimes, planning results in the expected being realised! On 30 March the group dug trenches, mixed and poured cement and then, having collected all the bits, set up the seats and picnic table at DHL. Roger Richards was a big help and lent us a huge kango hammer which worked a treat on the trenches for breaking up compressed flints. We also cleared some of the overhanging branches at DHL, mowed Loxwood repaired two deep potholes in the car park and undertook a litter pick.

Then on 13 April we returned to our regular sites at Run Common, Tickner's, and Drungewick aqueduct, brush cutting/stripping and mowing.

Name	Group/Project	Tel	e-mail
Julian Cheek	Maintenance coordination	01483 505566	julian_cheek@weyandarun.co.uk
David Daniels / Northern Office	Visiting working parties, MWWP etc	01483 505566 Mon-Thurs 8.30-12.30pm	support@weyandarun.co.uk
Vacant	Health & Safety Officer		Volunteer required please
Eric Walker	Loxwood Projects	07717 855340	tsg@weyandarun.co.uk
Vacant	MidWeek Working Party		Contact David Daniels (above)
John Empringham	Monday Group	01483 562657	mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk
Kev Baker	Loxwood Link	02380 861074	loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk
John Smith	Tickner's Depot	01903 235790	depot@weyandarun.co.uk
Tony Clear	Winston Group (Lordings)	01903 774 301	winstonsgroup@weyandarun.co.uk
Keith Nichols	Hedge laying	01403 753882	hedging@weyandarun.co.uk
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We found time to complete the outstanding odd jobs on the picnic table at DHL and gave Loxwood some more attention. On 27 April we continued at our sites and made the first visit of the season to Haybarn (the swing bridge still swings!) and Newbridge. Following an earlier discussion between the Chairman and a member of our Group out crewing on *Wiggonholt*, we also cut Drungewick lock in preparation for the bank holiday public trips. Another satisfying month!

We meet again on 11 May and 26 May, likely to be our normal sites plus a visit to lock 16 in Sidney Wood to complete our winter work.

Nick Wood

Thursday and Sunday Group

We eventually got the licence in relation to the protected species on 9 April. A fence was put up around the construction site, to stop more animals going in. Inside the fence are buckets (32 off) let into the ground (as pit fall traps) to catch anything that is small and moves. The bottom of the bucket is damp grass for them to hide beneath. There is also a small stick to enable the small animals to escape. The buckets have lids, which are fitted if the overnight temperature is less than 5deg C. Then there are pieces of roofing felt (50 off) for them to hide under. We have nine volunteers who have now been trained to deal with the creatures, and have authorisation that can be proved in case of any challenge. Each day one of these volunteers goes to the site, empties the buckets, photographs what has been found and fills in a report.

There was great excitement when an example of the protected species was found, under a pile of wood in the field. These animals are not particularly rare, but are protected.

In the early part of the month in anticipation of the protected species fence being put across the bridleway and farm track, there was a rush to clear the woods of the timber felled this last winter

by the landowner. The TSG did its part to get the cordwood out too.

As a multi skilled group the TSG started working on a 10ft trailer that was brought to the site. We were amazed; it must have shrunk as it came across the Surrey to Sussex border for when it got to GBL it was only 8ft long. Ours is really a civil engineering construction group, but this month did welding, rust removal and painting, replacing the plywood floor and lighting on the trailer.

The first of the concrete coping stones for the GBL bridge have now been made and the full set of 48 will follow. The steel arches have been made and are with the galvanisers. When they are delivered to GBL they will be matched up with the centering recently received from Tickner's. One Sunday morning we had the bricks for the lock, some 30,000, transported from Drungewick Hill Farm to GBL, all in half a day's work. The quoins have been cast and delivery is expected in June.

The Thursday and Sunday Group meets at 09:30. The TSG has a work briefing form emailed out before the working day. Please email Eric Walker if you want to get on that circulation list.

Eric Walker



Boats at Stopham Bridge on the recent Arun Boat Rally (19 April)

Working Party Diary

Every Sunday and Thursday	Mainly construction work	Contact Eric Walker for details
Usually first & third Mondays of the month	'Mrs Bucket' - Keeping Up Appearances	Details from John Empringham
Every Wednesday	Mid-Week Working Party	Enquiries to David Daniels pending appointment of new leader
Every Wednesday (plus Thursday and Sunday as required)	Loxwood Link Maintenance	Check with Kev Baker
Every Wednesday	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Contact John Smith/Ken Bacon
Tuesdays or Fridays	Work in Lording's area	Contact Tony Clear for details
Various Tuesdays	Hedge Laying	Contact Keith Nichols
25 July to 1 August	WACT Summer Camp	www.weyandarun.co.uk/SummerCamp2015.php

Tickner's Heath Depot

April saw most of the team engaged in day trips to the slipway to help Peter Foulger return the dredger to its former glory. It had been found that one of the engine cylinders had blown its head gasket. On stripping the engine we found that the gasket, which was in effect a metal spacer, did indeed show signs of failure. A new repair kit was ordered and the gaskets (spacers) of both were replaced. The correct head clearance - obtained by the use of pieces of 1.5mm solder would you believe - gave the correct distance for inserting shims to prevent the piston hitting the valves. After Peter had charged the battery the old girl burst into life, much to the relief of all concerned. So one more string added to the team's bow.

Another task set by our lady chairperson was to find the trust's marquee, which was languishing somewhere in the depot (it was to be used for a trust event at Bridge End in May). Luckily it was found fairly easily with the help of Dave Kersley, who generally knows where most of the stuff lurks. The real surprise was that it seemed to be complete. Ken Bacon and Richard Powell then set about trying to assemble it. Initially this was hampered by a lack of instructions, but luckily Richard had a similar marquee and copied the instructions which made life a lot easier. Mind you, it took a lot of bending and stretching, and the guys have made sure that they will be elsewhere when the time comes to erect it on the great day.

We have of course been involved in the usual round of loading and unloading, aqua docks, Kwik Stage Scaffolding and cement to name but a few. Of course, Dave K has been busy running backwards and forwards catering for the needs of working parties and work camps.

Well that's about it for this month. All the best
John Smith

Summit Working Party

The first of our regular 'third Saturday' summit working parties was held on 18 April - AGM day! Five volunteers spent the day tackling jobs in preparation for the arrival of the piling contractor at Compasses Bridge.

The completed work included putting the mesh on the steel gates that will control access to the work site, and installing the steel gate post to support it; moving the scaffolding tree protection barrier further back from the trees and extending the temporary access road into the site. A very useful day's work which was well assisted by being fully mechanised.

Our next meeting is on 16 May. Why not join us? See details on page 1 of this newsletter.

Bill Nicholson

Hedgelaying Team

Guten Tag Alle. So who is superstitious? If you are, don't read this until after the full stop as I noticed it's the Hedgelaying Groups' 13th anniversary this autumn. Well, well, splosh, I missed the last well!

What has happened this last month apart from us all getting a month older? April has been spent digging up and transplanting trees from Brewhurst Lock area to Drungewick Slipways area. 10 were replanted at Brewhurst with 156 at the Slipways. There is now a very immature hedge on the offside bank from the turn into, up to the power box, at the main slipway. This, when mature (5 years?) will act as a windbreak for westerlies and northerlies, during boat maintenance on the slipway.

The rest of the time has been spent laying to produce a double hedge on the south side of Roger Dimmock Lane, i.e. one at the top and bottom of the Lane's bank. In fact Tuesday 28 April saw us lay 21 yards, with a nesting pair of robins being very grateful to us as we were producing a greater food resource with our actions. Believe it or not, and I didn't at first, the robins had their nest in the bank.

The wildlife has showed up with loads of tadpoles feeding at the Slipways shallows, a red kite flying over and the usual buzzards. Also, a mink trying to hide under my car and then another spotted trotting down the towpath to the Slipways landing stage, then slipping into the water to wreak havoc just like the 'U-Boats'.

That's it for now, and as the season is drawing to a close with all the warm, sunny weather on the way, we won't be doing much more until the autumn.

Auf Wiedersehen Pet.

Future gatherings of the clan will remain on Tuesdays for the time being.

Keith Nichols



New Compasses Bridge, 18 April: haul road under construction parallel with and to the east of the site of the new bridge, view looking south east. (Photo: Richard Crook)

Don't forget - 7th June - the Poddle.

Start and finish at Amberley. More information at www.weyandarun.co.uk/poddle/2015PoddleForms.pdf