



## **Reinstating the canal and opening up new countryside walks in Surrey**

Following approval of its planning application, the Wey & Arun Canal Trust is starting work on a new restoration project south of Bramley in Surrey. The site is at Rooks Hill and extends for 800 metres south from a recently restored section at Birtley Green.

After completing the restoration of a section on the Wey & Arun canal south of Bramley in 2023 along with two lifting bridges and the creation of a circular walk connecting the canal and the Downslink, construction on a new section will start this summer.

Walkers who enjoy walking along Greensand Way which crosses the route of the canal today just see a grassy field as the canal was infilled and therefore not visible.

Phase I will see the construction of a bridge over which the Greensand Way will cross the canal. Along with the bridge construction, the banks and canal cut to the south of bridge alongside Fanesbridge Cottage will be created and a culvert under the canal will be repaired.

In Phase 2, a new canal cut will be constructed and connected up to the in water section just south of the Birtley 1 swing-bridge. A new towpath will be built providing public access from Greensand Way up to the completed Birtley bridges section and create new walking routes.

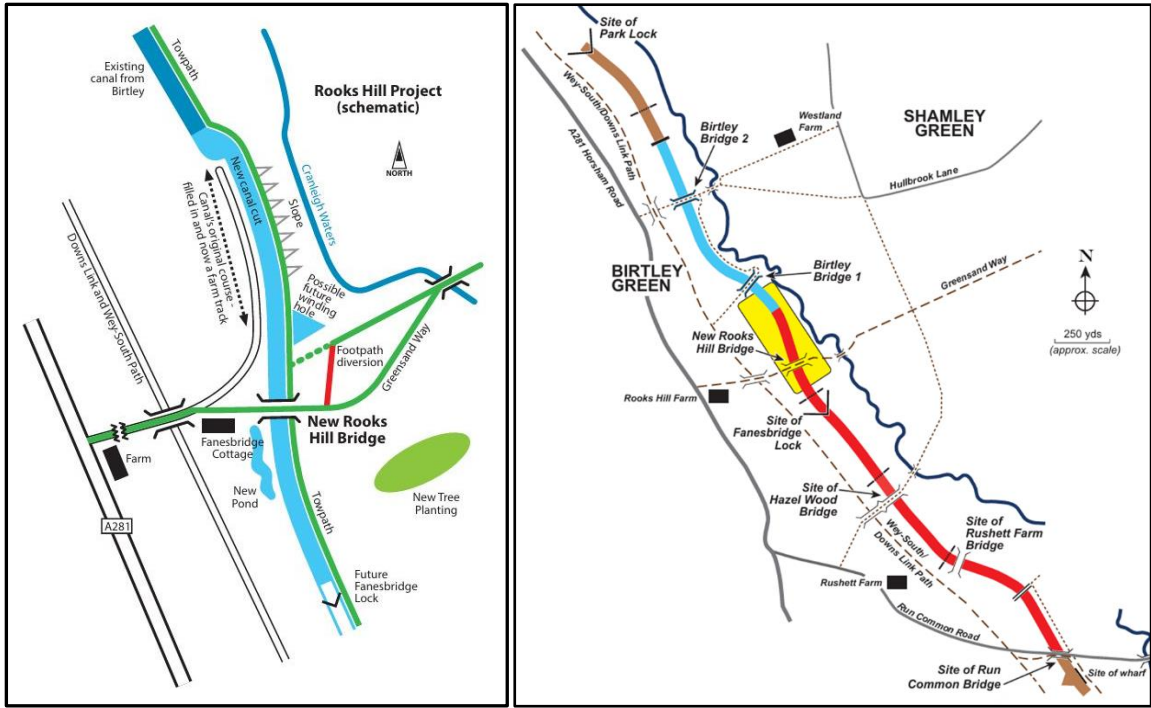
In Phase 3 a new lock will be constructed on the site of the original Fanesbridge Lock and the rest of the canal channel restored.

On completion of this section, a 1.6KM length of canal will have been restored and we are working on a new scheme to continue the restoration as far as Run Common Road.

The costs of phase 1 is estimated at £286k. The Trust already has donations of over £86k to start work, but is launching a fundraising appeal to complete phase 1 with a target to raise a further £200k.

Details of our appeal and how to donate can be found on our website

<https://weyarun.org.uk/backdrop/rooks-hill-appeal>



Schematic of Rooks Hill Project and location Map



Aerial Photograph (Red lines are boundaries of approved planning application)

**Note to editors:**

For more information and high resolution photographs, please contact Gordon Powell at [press@weyarun.org.uk](mailto:press@weyarun.org.uk) or telephone 07368 957256.

In 1973, the Wey & Arun Trust was formed with the aim of restoring the canal which runs through 23 miles of the most beautiful Surrey and Sussex countryside. Since then, we have purchased and leased 8 miles of the canal. Some 10 miles of towpath are accessible and the general route of the whole canal can be followed by walkers using the Wey South path.

There are a number of sections of the canal useable by small craft such as kayaks and paddle boards. We have restored 3 miles of the canal at Loxwood where it has an Information Centre and operates 3 Trip Boats. These carry about 10,000 passengers each year on cream tea cruises, private hirings and themed events.

Over the past 50 years, we have restored 11 locks, 24 bridges and 2 aqueducts.