

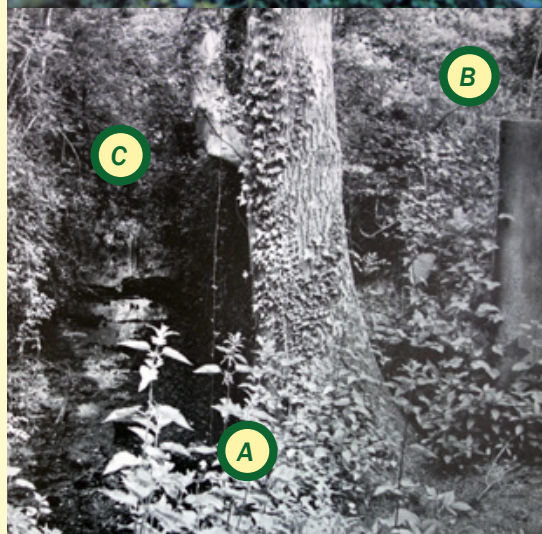
# WEY-SOUTH



Quarterly Magazine of the  
Wey & Arun Canal Trust

Issue 187 June/July/August 2019





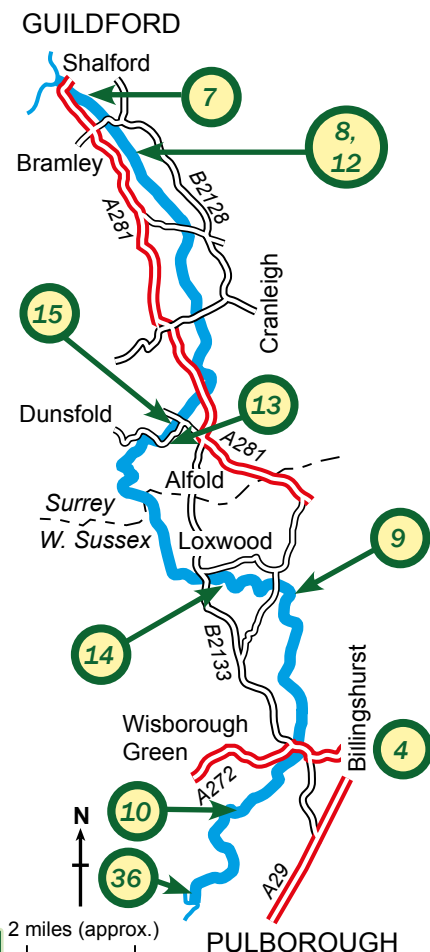
**Recognise this place? These photos were both taken in 1978 by P.J.G Ransom for his book, *The Archaeology of Canals*. The top photo shows the Loxwood section, pre-restoration. You can just make out the towpath on the right.**

**The second is of the remains of Brewhurst Lock, with a tree rooted in the sill of the top gates (A), a cast iron quoin on the right (B) and the remains of the lower gate just visible in the canal bed (C).**

**P.J.G Ransom sadly died earlier this year but *The Archaeology of Canals* is still available via Amazon.**

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**Front cover: The dredger in operation on the section between  
Compasses Bridge and the Thriscutt Slipway.**

## Annual Meeting points to exciting times ahead

Members who packed Billingshurst Village Hall on 27 April could not be left in any doubt about the Trust's ambitions and the scale of our plans for the next few years.

The 46th meeting demonstrated the Trust's restoration achievements over the past year and gave a glimpse what is yet to come, as project managers and board members outlined the projects set to get under way this year.

Chairman Sally Schupke described the past year as "particularly busy and exciting", with a strong financial position enabling the Trust to "be bold in our planning".

### Highlights of 2018

In her report, Sally revealed studies needed to create detailed plans for a possible new canal route in the Shalford/Bramley area had now been completed, and planning consent for a visitor centre at Hunt Nature Park in Shalford had been granted. At Birtley, the Trust has acquired a 900 metre section of canal and work has begun there (see page 10). Permission for a lift bridge has been granted. On the Summit, construction of the Thriscutt Slipway for small boats was officially opened in September and de-silting has started.

Further south, Gennets Bridge Lock and a new canal bridge for the Sussex Border Path were officially completed in April.

The Trust also completed the purchase of canal land near Wisborough Green, including Lordings Lock and waterwheel.

At Loxwood two new landing stages have been built.

Sally acknowledged that the Trust is largely dependent on volunteers, including directors, for its day-to-day activities. She thanked everyone who had supported the Trust's work throughout the year, including members, volunteers and donors.

### Who's who on the board of directors?

**Sally Schupke** (Chairman)

**Tony Tyrrell** (Hon. Secretary)

**Alan Johnson** (Vice-Chairman, Technical Liaison Officer)

**John Talbot** (Joint Finance Director, Health & Safety Director)

**Julian Morgan** (Joint Finance Director, IT and Publications)

**Margaret Darvill** (Sponsored Walk and Education)

**Tony Ford** (Summit Level Project Manager)

**Dennis Gillen** (Harsfold Bridge Project Manager)

**John Reynolds** (Conservation & Ecology)

**Philip Oliver** (Bramley Link Manager)

**Tony Coles** (Legal)

### Funding appeals

***The Annual Meeting saw the launch of two funding appeals; one in the north, and one in the south.***

***The Birtley Appeal aims to raise £150,000 for this new section, where work on a lift bridge will begin this summer.***

***The second appeal is for £85,000 for the completion of Harsfold Bridge, where permission is in place to remove a causeway. Work is due to begin later this year.***

***Support for these appeals will safeguard funds that Trust has put aside for larger projects.***

***For more information on how to donate, head to <https://weyarun.org.uk/restoration-appeals>, or see the leaflets inside this issue of Wey-South.***





**Members filled Billingshurst Village Hall for the Annual Meeting.**



**A guided walk to the site of the new Harsfold Bridge near Wisborough Green attracted a good crowd. Richard Meinertzhagen described the features of the new bridge and explained the work set to be carried out.**



## The Quarterly Magazine of **The Wey & Arun Canal Trust**

Registered Charity no. CC265331

The aim of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust is the preservation and restoration of the former inland waterway route between the Rivers Wey and Arun, with a view to re-opening this to navigation.

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If at all possible please e-mail copy by attachment in Microsoft Word format. Typed copy is also acceptable. Photos are always welcome – hi-res digital please.

**Issue 187**

**June/July/August 2019**

## Finances: an upbeat message



**F**inance Director Julian Morgan painted a positive picture of Trust finances, with 2018 being “a saving year”, in which the Trust received more than it spent.

Significant legacies, including more than £273,000 from former member Frank Sorrell, added to our resources.

However, Julian stressed that underlying income was not equal to the Trust’s ambitions, and grants and legacies cannot be relied upon. “We are sticking our necks out financially,” he said, pointing to the projects in the pipeline.

Expenditure last year included investment in equipment, land along the canal, surveys and studies, plus completion of Gennets Bridge Lock and the Thriscutt Slipway. The Tickner’s Heath depot required funds for its upgrade.

One unexpected setback came from the cool spring and hot summer temperatures, which took their toll on Boat Group income. The cancellation of summer boat trips due to low water levels hit merchandise sales and ticket sales, with income from boat trips down 40% on the previous year.

However, the disappointing figures are set against previous years of great success. “This was no one’s fault; volunteers worked as hard as they could,” Julian said.

He outlined recent changes within the Boat Group management, in which nine board directors retired from their roles, and took the opportunity to pay tribute to those who had made such an immense contribution.

The trading company is currently being managed by Canal Trust directors and the focus now is on ensuring continuity for the summer season and, where possible, building on revenues from existing activities and exploiting new ones.

## The story on the Summit



**T**ony Ford brought the audience up to date with developments on the Summit Level.

### Dredging

Desilting between Compasses and the Thriscutt Slipway has begun (see page 15).

### Tickner’s Heath

The land transfer of the area adjacent to the planned bridge has been completed and the area hedged and fenced (see page 13). Results of ecological surveys are due soon, and it is hoped to make a planning

application this summer. Application for Common Land Consent also needs to be made to the Secretary of State.

### Elmbridge Road

Surrey County Council has identified the bottleneck at Elmbridge Road as a “priority project” and has set aside Section 106 funding from developments in Cranleigh. However, the council has insufficient land to undertake a “proper” road improvement (i.e. two-way road plus footway). The Trust is liaising with the adjacent landowner to release land for the road and for restoration of 200 metres of the canal. The aim is a joint project with the council to build the wider road and a new canal bridge.



## Bramley: an ambitious vision of the future



The vision for Bramley at the most northern end of the canal was unveiled by Philip Oliver, Bramley Link Project Manager.

The ambitious plans are the result of years of land negotiations, flood surveys and environmental studies – with much more to come before the vision can come to fruition. Yet Philip's presentation gave an exciting glimpse of what could be achieved.

The Trust has commissioned landscape architect drawings to show the draft proposals. The project will create a new canal approximately 1.2km long and comprise: a new lock, Tanglewood Lock; four new or replacement footbridges; a winding hole; fish pass/flood relief channel; and a new aqueduct.

Philip said the work would be split into two phases – “the difficult and the more difficult”. Linking to a SSSI and in a flood plain obviously create challenges, but the benefits to the environment and community will be marked.

The project takes in Gun's Mouth Island, where the ambition is to create a nature reserve not accessible by foot (or easily by boat).

Pre-application discussions have received a positive response from both planners and tree officer. The next step would be to finalise the land position, carry out a public consultation, and submit full planning application. Watch this space.



## Aims and objectives

- To extend the existing character of the canal, linking the SSSI water meadows via Gun's Mouth and the new canal to Gosden Aqueduct. The woodland character will be increased with further planting.
- To create a visual setting that enhances and protects the river and canal corridor.
- To integrate the canal engineering works into the landscape using gentle gradients, planting and traditional materials.
- To create new recreational trails and engaging sightlines throughout. Landing stages for canoes, bike racks for cyclists, seats and new paths for walkers will be added.
- To provide a reserve for wildlife and maintain and protect existing mature trees. The new fish pass on Gosden meadow will improve connectivity of wildlife habitats; ponds and scrapes will support amphibians; woodland will support badgers and otter holts. New trees provide for bat navigation and the waterways will attract ducks, swans and other birdlife.



## Birtley project gets underway

Bill Nicholson described the work done so far at Birtley, south of Bramley, and why a project in this area is so important for the Trust.

"In the short-term we're creating a public amenity, a circular footpath to connect with the Downs Link and create a section of canal for canoeing, fishing and the like. We want to show Bramley what a restored canal can look like and they will have one on their doorstep," Bill told members.

The acquisition of a 900-metre stretch of canal last year has allowed for the creation of the circular walk, and we now have planning permission for one of two planned lifting bridges.

Since last October working parties, including the visiting Newbury Working Party Group (NWPG), have created temporary surfacing for vehicle access from Birtley Courtyard to the canal, and prior to the NWPG weekend visit in May a 300-metre length of three metre-wide vehicle surfaced towpath had been made. "When we're creating towpaths you've got to be able to ensure you can get vehicle access for maintenance down them," Bill explained.

On top of this teams have erected 1km of stock-proof boundary fencing, including seven field gates – "no mean feat" – and the Midweek Working Party has cleared about 350m of canal.



**Top: The picturesque Birtley section. Right: One of seven field gates.**



Bill said the Trust's investment in equipment had been invaluable. "It speeds up the whole operation tremendously and we are now geared up to operate in an efficient way. I am personally grateful as it means I can do the same amount of canal restoration I did in my 20s now I am in my 60s."

The next step is building the first of two lifting bridges. Three weeks of Waterway Recovery Group camps in July aim to build the base of the lifting bridge. "We hope to have that substantially completed so that during the rest of the year we can erect the steelwork structure. I'd love to have this in place by the end of the year."

Beyond the first bridge, planning for a second will be submitted shortly. A gas main obstructs the area and discussions are underway with the gas company to divert this. The causeway also needs to be removed, and more fencing installed for the section north of the second bridge.

On the funding appeal that has been launched for the project, Bill said: "We need your support. We have the volunteers, the permissions and the equipment (and the enthusiasm) – now we just need the funds!"





## Stopping the leaks at Drungewick

Nigel Yarwood explained the problems at Drungewick Lock, and outlined the possible solutions.



***The close proximity of a hedge made investigation difficult.***

Excessive leakage was identified in early 2017 and a subsequent report found the west wall leaning inwards, and identified cracks and leakage in both east and west walls. As a result the lock was considered unsafe to remain operational and was closed.

The Trust was clear that any solution for the repair and strengthening of the existing wall needed to offer a permanent solution (50-100 years) and be compliant with current standards.

Investigation works were required to develop realistic options. The surveys set out to establish the position of counterfort walls lying behind the West wall, along with proper soil investigation and thickness of wall and depth of foundation. Monitoring measurements of the wall were also taken.

The work was not made easy, however, by the close proximity of a hedge on the boundary edge and an office building beyond

As a result of the site investigation a series of solutions have been identified. The first

is reconstruction, but this requires large scale excavation and temporary works. The second is to restore connection to existing counterforts, which had been found to have become detached. With this solution it would be difficult to achieve reliability and assurance of long-term performance.

The other options are to tie the wall back with ground anchors, or tie back using piled "counterforts". But a deep-piled retaining wall solution is not possible as a rock layer was discovered at a six-metre depth.

At the moment the ground anchor solution is the most favoured and discussions are underway for a Platipus anchor test.

The next stage is for the lock to be drained and temporary wooden props inserted over the next few months to allow for further wall investigation, the results of which will determine the best option. Whatever the way forward is, Nigel was clear that the aim is to ensure the lock is up and running for the 2020 boat trip season.

## Harsfold Bridge moves a step closer

**N**igel Harwood told the audience that Harsfold Bridge, near Wisborough Green, was all set to go, now that all the planning and legal requirements had been met.

To get this far, the Trust has had to carry out, among other requirements, a feasibility study (in 2015), a site investigation (in 2016), obtain landowner agreements (2015-2019) and get planning permission (2017-2018) and West Sussex County Council technical approval (2016-2018). The council needed approval as if it were a road bridge, Nigel explained.

The bridge itself will be of simple construction: foundations are plain concrete (no reinforcement); simple brickwork cladding; steel beams; and concrete deck with mesh reinforcement. It will be built completely by volunteers. It will carry hay trailers (weighing 32 tonnes and spanning four metres), and meet public bridleway requirements.

Before building can commence a compound needs to be installed and a bridleway diversion created. Construction can then begin as soon as harvest is complete – and needs to be finished before next year's harvest.



**Top: The site of the new Harsfold Bridge.  
Above: A bridleway diversion will need to be  
completed before bridge building begins.**



### **John East Cup: Mike Anderson**

*Mike was Treasurer of our trading company W&A Enterprises Ltd from 1996 [the company was founded in 1995] until 2019 – an exceptional record of service. His experience as a professional seafarer was valuable when it came to negotiating requirements for canal boats with the Maritime & Coastguard Agency.*

*For many years Mike played a leading role in training boat skippers and crew. In the mid-1990s he produced a very professional short film 'The Bargee', which is narrated by an actor playing the part of an original Wey & Arun Canal working boatman.*

*Mike recently said, whether jokingly or in earnest we are not sure, that he had been wanting to retire for 25 years - he richly deserves a break from the duties that he has carried out so conscientiously and for so long.*



### **Jack King Cup: Ian Edwards**

*The Elmbridge lengthsman is also a MWWP stalwart, having been a member of the group for 25 years. His long service and dedication make him a worthy recipient of this award.*



## Birtley weekend

*The early May Bank Holiday weekend saw a Newbury Working Party Group (NWPG) visit to Birtley.*

*Over three days an average of 14 volunteers, including Trust working party members, carried out various jobs needed ahead of the building of the new lift bridge later this summer.*

*A temporary spill weir was built close to the start of the new circular walk, while the towpath was extended by 300 metres further towards the site of the new bridge.*

*At the bridge site a temporary scaffold bridge was erected to allow easier transport of equipment and manpower.*







## Tickner's



***A team of volunteers from Southern Water gave the Trust a helping hand earlier this month in preparation for the planned project at Tickner's Heath.***

***Seven employees headed to the area on the Surrey/Sussex border, where they spent the day planting new hedges on land which the Trust has recently bought. The team managed to create a new hedgerow consisting of 720 plants, all native species - a mix of hawthorn, hazel, wild cherry and dog rose.***

***Swapping the office for the scenic countryside is part of the company's community volunteering programme, which allows employees to spend two days' paid leave working for their chosen charity or community project each year.***



## Loxwood



**Two new landing stages have been constructed by volunteers on the Loxwood stretch, below Brewhurst Lock and above Baldwin's Knob Lock. They allow easier access on and off for tripboat crews as well as kayakers and canoeists. The plan is to install the British Canoeing-funded landing stages at every lock on the section. Top: Chris Elphick and JJ Price finish the brickwork on the Brewhurst landing stage. Below left: The Baldwin's Knob landing stage. Right: Harry Noyes shows off the finished Brewhurst landing stage.**



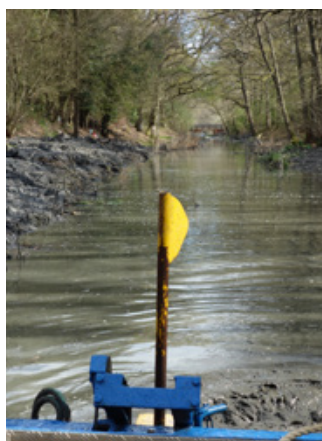
## The scoop on dredging

**D**esilting will never be described as a fast-moving business. Removing the decades of silt built up from broken branches and leaf litter is a job that can't be rushed. In fact, the Trust's current project of dredging an area of the Summit level is expected to be a three-year affair.

From March to the beginning of May, teams had covered about 400m of the 840m section from Compasses Bridge towards the new Thriscutt Slipway, working four days a week in pairs. Teams are in twos for safety – one drives, while the other waits in the wings for their turn – but also to stop what Charlie Coxwell and Brian Morgan describe as “brainache”. After 45-60 minutes of concentrated work, you'll need a break. Adds Brian: “Dredging is good fun, but it challenges your skills as you can't see what you're doing.”

The spoil is banked up along the side of the canal to keep it out of the way, and will eventually be collected by the barges which were bought along with the tugboat and dredger back in February. It is hoped to remove down to a 6ft depth in successive stages, going from Compasses Bridge to the slipway and back three times.

However, given Dunsfold Park's previous life as a military base, it is no surprise that the dredging teams are uncovering more than just silt in the canal. Huge lumps of concrete called for a specialist breaker, while the discovery of ordnance is posing its own (not unforeseen) challenges. While dredging may be slow, no one said it wasn't exciting.



### Important Warning

*Dredging is a potentially hazardous operation taking place on private land; anyone wishing to observe is welcome but must make previous arrangements with Tony Ford ([tony\\_ford@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:tony_ford@weyandarun.co.uk)) or Dave Evans ([dave\\_evans@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:dave_evans@weyandarun.co.uk)) or via the Northern Office. Trespassing is dangerous and could damage relations with our neighbours.*

***Clockwise from top: The dredger in action between Compasses Bridge and the Thriscutt Slipway; Charlie Coxwell at the helm; the view back towards Compasses Bridge.***





***The beginning of the year saw the Trust organise a series of three volunteer taster days, held to boost numbers among our working parties.***

***Those interested were invited to come along and see the Trust's recent achievements in building the Thriscutt Slipway and Compasses Bridge, and hear from existing volunteers what they can expect in giving up their free time to restoration.***

***The initiative was an overwhelming success with 40 attendees, and nearly half this number have now joined working parties.***





**Amanda and Neil Mariner spent 64 hours replacing the 330 Wey-South Path markers.**

## The Mariners marking the way for walkers

If you've walked any section of the Wey-South Path recently you would have noticed the shiny new waymarkers directing walkers around the walking route that closely follows the canal. The discs have been specially made, and installed by volunteers Amanda and Neil Mariner.

Recording and replacing the 330 waymarkers and reporting rotten or broken posts was no mean feat, as Neil explains: "We had already been walking the path from time to time, checking for broken or missing discs and replacing them where necessary."

"We started to replace all the Wey-South Path discs with new-style ones in the spring of 2018 and finished shortly before Christmas 2018. It took approximately 64 hours to complete the task, including travelling to and from the various locations."

The pair undertook the task in the evenings, describing the experience as an enjoyable one, providing them with the opportunity to view different parts of the route and spot wildlife such as barn owls and deer along the way.

"We have always enjoyed walking the path as it gives an interesting overall view of the canal. It takes you through some beautiful countryside while allowing the opportunity to see ongoing restoration work along the way," Neil says.

Amanda and Neil, who are both lifetime members and boat crew, also recorded any changes to the route that might need to be noted in the *Wey-South Path*.

"We hope the new discs will give clearer directions to walkers, especially when used in conjunction with the guidebook," Neil says.





## John Russell-Hayes, 1936 – 2019



**J**ohn Russell-Hayes, a long-time member of the Trust and well known for his artwork featuring the Wey & Arun Canal, died in March aged 83.

John's interest in canal restoration inspired many of his drawings,

and was a love that began some fifty years ago. "I have no idea what drew him to canal restoration, but I remember when our children were little trudging across fields looking for Pallingham Lock," recalls his widow Thelma. "John found the idea of recovering the lost route to the sea fascinating."

The family lived in London, but spent weekends in Middleton-on-Sea, West Sussex, and when John retired in 1994 and moved to

the area permanently, he had the opportunity to explore his interest further.

His talent for art was one that was discovered late in life – John's professional background was as a company director for a wholesale business, far removed from the tranquillity of the towpath. However, in retirement he could follow his enjoyment of art and went on to provide the Trust with drawings (his favourite medium) to frame, and adorn cards and calendars.

His art often focused on projects while they were undergoing restoration, rather than the finished article, illustrating his attraction to seeing the canal coming back to life.

Says Thelma: "He didn't always want to reproduce an accurate replica, but it was the restoration work and the people that were working on it that provided a fascination. John was very pleased to have seen the restoration achieved."

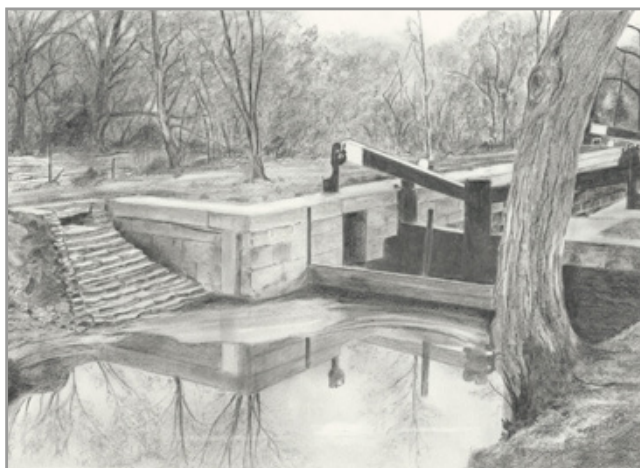




## John Russell-Hayes

*John, who had been a member since the 1970s, was always a keen supporter of the Wey & Arun Canal. From the start of the first restoration of Brewhurst Lock in 1999 he would phone me regularly, as Project Manager, to check on progress and give encouragement for the group of volunteers in their endeavours to restore the whole canal. It was a joy to him to see the restored Gennets Bridge Lock in 2018.*

*Using his artistic skills he created many very detailed*



*pictures of the restored canal structures, many with a red sun glow, symbolising a new beginning.*

*For a number of years, he produced Christmas cards, which gave details of the*

*canal to encourage the wider appreciation of the restoration of the Wey & Arun Canal. A quiet man and always a gentleman who will be missed.*

*Eric Walker*



## Walking the Wey-South Path, by Holly Worton

Holly Worton is the first to admit her book published this year, *Walking the Wey-South Path*, is no substitute for the Trust's own guidebook on the walk. For a start, her book doesn't include maps or grid references – but it's a deliberate omission.

Instead, Holly has set out to record her personal experience of walking the Wey-South Path, share her love of trail walking and promote the beauty and peace to be found in the countryside of Surrey and West Sussex.

"The book is designed as a companion guide, with practical information," explains Holly. "I see it as being complementary to it and certainly not a replacement."

This is Holly's fourth book on walking. "Every time I walk a trail I write a book about it," says the Californian business mentor. When walking the Downs Link I saw signs for the Wey-South Path and went home and did some research. I

decided to write the book even before walking the Path – that way it gives a fresh perspective. I love going on a new trail – you never know what you are going to come across."

The guide includes her planning notes: what to pack; where to stay; and how to get to either end of the walk. She explores the options of completing the walk in a day, two days or three, and doing the walk north to south or south to north.

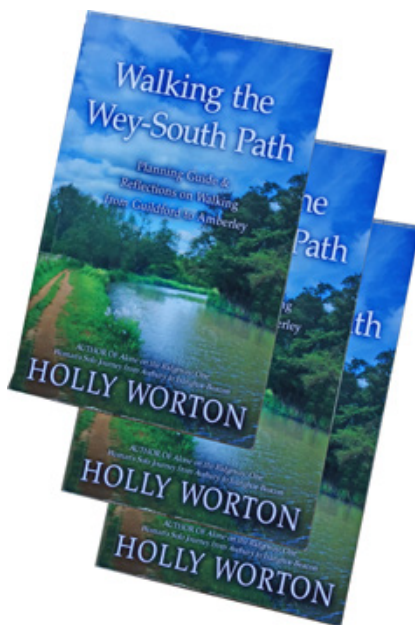
It also charts her experiences, from the surprise generosity of local businesses, to getting a little lost. "One of the reasons I write these walking books is to share my mistakes so you don't have to make them yourself," she states.

Holly walked the trail alone. "I love walking alone, it gives me time and space to think and reconnect, get to know myself better and relax - it's like mobile meditation. It's

a different experience walking with others – you don't see so much."

What she did see on her walk, and pays tribute to throughout the book, is the transformation of the canal thanks to the work of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust. "The enormous amount of work that they have completed is difficult to understand until you've walked the Wey-South Path and seen the results of their efforts," she writes.

"The Trust's work is absolutely vital," says Holly. "So many people can use the canal. I absolutely believe it is beneficial and important for people to get outdoors, more so now there's so much



technology which means we have lost touch with nature, leading us to disrespect it. The Trust's work inspires people to reconnect."

So which part of the Wey-South Path did she enjoy the most? "I like all of it – I love how the trail makes you feel in the middle of nowhere, it's beautiful and remote even though you really are not that far away from main roads."

*Walking the Wey-South Path* is available via Amazon, priced at £7.49. Holly has also donated some copies, which are on sale at the Canal Centre in Loxwood, with all proceeds going to the Trust.

### ***Boating with Buster, The Life and Times of a Barge Beagle, by Alison Alderton***

***The Trust also has a starring role in another new canal book, Boating with Buster, The Life and Times of a Barge Beagle, by Alison Alderton.***

***West Sussex local Alison describes her travels with her husband Roger and their boisterous puppy Buster as they take their replica Dutch barge Lily across the inland waterways of England, Ireland and Northern Europe.***

***Alison and Roger used the Wey & Arun Canal at Loxwood to prepare Buster for his life on the water, getting him used to boats and the towpath ahead of their big adventure.***

***The beautifully illustrated paperback book is described as a moving book of canine companionship that readers who enjoy animal stories, travel and boating will delight in.***



***Boating with Buster, The Life and Times of a Barge Beagle is available from bookshops, priced £15.98. Copies are also available at the Canal Centre in Loxwood, with all proceeds going to the Trust.***



## Training

### Why we're investing in our people

In the past year the Trust has spent £6,000 on training its staff and volunteers – no small amount for a charitable organisation. Yet while that amount may seem large, the benefits are huge.

Director Margaret Darvill is responsible for education within the Trust and is adamant it is money well spent. "There are lots of benefits from training volunteers," she says. "Of course, there are Health and Safety elements, but with training, a volunteer's confidence grows. Even on a refresher course you always learn something new."

She also believes training provides volunteers with a renewed interest in what they are doing. "Training helps working party leaders and the rest of the group have more confidence in what they do," she adds.

As leader of the Midweek Working Party, Margaret's team - along with EWG and boat crews – have undergone recent training on how to use a defibrillator. Each working party group now carries one.



"We're hoping no one will ever have to use one, but you need to be prepared," Margaret explains.

MWWP volunteer Mark Feeney has been a Trust member for about 28 years, and has been volunteering on the Wednesday working party since he retired in January. He recently attended a course to enable him to use a chainsaw for Trust work.

The course, with Land Skills Training and Assessment, gave Mark a City & Guilds and LANTRA certification, as required by the Trust insurers. It enables him to work on trees already felled. Training took place over three days, with the third day an assessment day.

"The course taught me the safe practices in the use and maintenance of a chainsaw.

"Training gives you confidence that you will not only keep yourself safe, but also everyone around you," Mark says.

He, too, is clear on how training benefits the Trust. "Without new skills being learnt by the members (and refresher courses for some safety-critical tasks), we run the risk of not having sufficient skill sets to carry on with the restoration in a safe and effective manner."

Fellow MWWP member Mike Tucker may not have been with the Trust for long, but he has already been on two courses: a hedgcutting course last autumn and this



***Far left: Mike Tucker shows off the safety equipment needed for spraying.***

***Left: Margaret Darvill sees plenty of benefits from investing in training for volunteers.***

spring a PA1 and PA6 Safe Use of Pesticides Award.

The Merrist Wood course took three days including a day's practical and theory assessment. It qualifies Mike to spray towpaths and tackle weeds, including the dreaded Giant Hogweed which plagues parts of the canal.

Mike acknowledges that the course was demanding and being tested on his knowledge on the third day a little nerve-racking, but was worth the end result.

"The training has benefits beyond the obligatory health and safety," he says. "I know how to minimise the effect on the environment and get the right proportions of chemicals.

"The training also means I have learnt how to keep the equipment in good working order, so there are benefits all round for the Trust."

### **Keen to learn**

Volunteers are clearly keen on increasing their skills, if the recent response to dredging training is anything to go by.

For this, Land & Water trained six Trust members who then handed on their knowledge and trained other members of the dredging teams. The education involved ordnance training (procedures to follow in case WW2 munitions were discovered), use of the radio system, plus oil spills awareness.

Summit Site Supervisor Dave Evans underwent the training

and is about to undergo a five-day Site Manager safety course. "It's important to keep skills up to date to meet changing industry standards," he says, "but training also gives a wider skills set and we all get more enjoyment out of the job."

For Mike, the advantages of training don't stop there. Whenever he is stopped by members of the public he can now talk knowledgeably about what he is doing and why – and dressed head to foot in white industrial safety overalls, mask and gloves means he does draw the public's attention. "Being able to answer queries confidently definitely shows the Trust in a good light," he says.

## Boat Trips

*The season began on a high with a full house for the special Mother's Day Cruises in March, with public trips beginning shortly after.*

*This year's later Easter provided a stark contrast to last March, with glorious sunshine for the long bank holiday weekend – not so good for our Easter Bunny who may have found the record-breaking temperatures a tad too warm.*

*Alongside weekend trips, the public can enjoy a packed programme of special events. Tickets are on sale online for Cream Tea Voyages, Picnic & Pimm's and Ploughman's & Pimm's events.*

*Clockwise from top left: Mothering Sunday cruises were a sellout; Easter brought fine, warm Spring sunshine; the Easter Bunny was kept busy handing out treats for the children; a scary chicken (guess who); the only thing Canal Centre Manager Lyn Nash and Roger Penny were likely to catch was the sun; crew Linda Green, Wendy Hill and Nicki Wells taking a breather after serving fizz and hot cross buns to customers.*







*Pictures by Julian Morgan, Julian Nowell, and Dave Verrall.*



## Wildlife to spot in summer

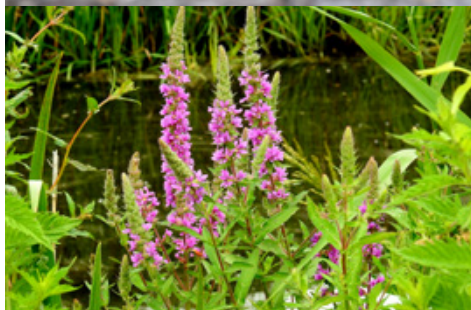
**D**uring summer, colourful butterflies flutter along the hedgerows and may often be found on the brambles and wild flowers. Look out for Gatekeepers, Meadow Browns, Common Blues among others.

Damselflies and dragonflies can be spotted on the reeds and other plants on the edge of the canal bank at this time of year. Look out for banded and beautiful demoiselles, Azure, Large Red, Blue-tailed and Red-eyed damselflies, as well as Broad-bodied chaser, Four-spotted chaser, Brown Hawker, Emperor and Common Darter dragonflies.

In summer, it is often difficult to see birds through the leaves of the trees, but Grey Wagtails are sometimes seen feeding on insects on the sills and walls of the locks. If you are lucky, you may spot a Song Thrush looking for worms in the grass.

Purple Loosestrife and other flowers add a splash of colour to the banks of the canal.

**Dave Verrall**  
**[dv@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:dv@weyandarun.co.uk)**







**Opposite page (clockwise from top):  
Common Darter dragonfly; Song  
Thrush, Purple Loosestrife.**

**This page (clockwise from top): Beautiful  
demoiselle damselfly; Common Blue  
butterfly; Meadow Brown butterfly.**



## Working Party Roundup

It was fascinating to see a news item on the Trust's website mentioning that The Wey & Arun Canal Trust has been praised in a new report by the Inland Waterways Association (IWA), designed to show how well thought-out, partial restoration initiatives can deliver benefits to communities from the very beginning.

This took me back to the 1970s, when the project began, and through the following decade, when we were frantically trying to raise the profile of the canal within the national waterways movement. When the idea was first floated, it met with some quite derisory comments from the direction of the IWA, some of whom felt that we were wasting time and money on something that could never be reopened (fortunately some felt otherwise). Some of us even managed to infiltrate committees of the IWA and its Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) restoration arm.

Our point obviously got through – as the 'easier' schemes neared completion the national movement looked towards the more difficult ones like ours. We were determined to show the way. There were hiccups along the route, but the Wey & Arun Canal progressed and now is an example of a successful restoration project – even if it does only exist in parts. But we know the whole route can be reborn, even if it does involve small deviations from the original.

The IWA's *Waterways in Progress* report takes the same view that we did - waterway restoration benefits the local communities, offering benefits even if full restoration is still far off.

IWA chairman and actor David Suchet said: "One restored, short stretch of water can host a tripboat, which may offer people their first ever taste of life on the water. A new towpath can encourage us to get out and about, improving both our physical and mental health." Just what we were saying 30 or more years ago.



The report uses case studies from across the UK to illustrate the gains to be had from canal restoration, from volunteers' increased personal wellbeing, to creating community spaces and enhancing heritage and the natural habitat.

The IWA's report gives a particular mention to the Wey-South Path, which makes use of as much of the towpath as possible and showcases the restoration work that can be seen from public rights of way. There are still parts, even some where work has been done by the Trust, which are on private land – this caused more than a little adverse comment back then from the IWA, but all counts towards the final reopening date, and everything has worked out well so far.

The path is an excellent way to keep up to date with restoration progress. Another is the *Working Party News* e-mail newsletter. WPN can be sent straight to your inbox at the beginning of each month. You can view the current issue and back numbers on the Trust website, or if you prefer paper copies these are sent out by the office. Just e-mail [listadmin@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:listadmin@weyandarun.co.uk) to get on the mailing list, or send a supply of stamped addressed envelopes to the Loxwood office.

**Bill Thomson**



## Monday Group

As mentioned in the last *Wey-South* we did return to Sidney Wood in early February to complete the tidying up both sides of the canal between Firtree Copse and Lock 16, writes Nick Wood.

We spent two Mondays at Gosden Aqueduct building a new fence on the downstream side, thereby replacing the temporary Heras fencing. We also repaired the vandalised noticeboard and created a compound for the bricklayer who will repair the upstream side of the aqueduct.

With a number of outstanding tasks and the onset of the growing season, visits to our 'regular' sites resumed in March and April. Haybarn swing bridge and towpath northwards, Newbridge (A272), Drungewick Aqueduct site, Loxwood, Devil's Hole, Southland and Gennets Bridge locks, Tickner's, Compasses Bridge and Hunt Park all received our attention, all on more than one occasion.

Apart from the usual brushcutting, strimming and tidying up, this included:

- Extensive repairs to the fencing at Haybarn;
- Part construction of the new fence at the bottom of the overflow car park at Loxwood;
- Towpath clearance between the canoe landing stage at Loxwood and Brewhurst Lock and around the lock;
- Mowing the towpath north of Gennets Bridge Lock as far as the spill weir and the path to and over Barberry Bridge.

In mid-April we spent a productive day at Lordings Lock and the flood lock. We cleared around both locks, repaired the towpath edging above the lock itself and mowed the towpath from the flood lock all the way to the Harsfold Bridge site.

A most enjoyable three months' work, living up to our group 'Mrs Bucket' nickname – keeping up appearances on Mondays.

**Contact John Empringham, 01483 562657,  
mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk**



**The Monday Group gave Lordings a spruce-up.**

Photos by Martin Burgess and Roger Wilson.



***The final day of hedgelaying at Brewhurst with the May Upton being loaded with 'arising'.***

## Midweek Working Party

The group recently carried out the annual clearance of Rooks Hill Farm and Rushetts. There was considerable growth of willows and brambles. While we were there we received a talk on how to use the defibrillator unit which we carry with us to site.

The group did not finish clearing all the brambles at Rooks Hill so we went back two weeks later. We then cleared some of the overgrown hedge between Southland and Hillcroft. It is looking much tidier there.

The following week we split between four people working with Dave Evans at Compasses Bridge clearing branches so that the dredger can easily get through the channel without the crew hitting their faces, and the others tidying up the rest of Rooks Hill and Birtley, south of the bridge.

Finally, we spent a day clearing willows north of Birtley. The Tirfor winch definitely came into its own.

**Contact Margaret Darvill, 01483 894606, [margaret\\_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:margaret_darvill@weyandarun.co.uk)**

## Hedgelaying Group

Following the completion of the hedge at Haybarn, near Pulborough, the team moved up to Brewhurst to relay the hedge adjacent to, and downstream from, the lock.

First, we had to cut stakes and binders, with many thanks due to Peter Foulger for allowing us to rework some of his hazel coppice. Subsequently, we have laid a section of hedge of around 80 yards, highly visible from the trip boat as it waits to enter the lock, and opening up views across the fields from the towpath.

This was an interesting exercise, as the hedge had previously been laid about 10 or 12 years ago, and the decision was taken this time to reverse the direction of laying to point upstream - meaning that our one left-handed hedgelayers was suddenly in high demand!

For us, working on the restored section of canal meant that we could use the *May Upton* workboat to transport cut material away from the towpath, making us feel like real canal workers (especially as we had to





**Richard Powell with  
a stripped Green  
Goddess down ready  
for her final journey.**



**Photos by Mick Jones.**

pole it along the canal - also maintaining our green credentials)!

A profusion of cowslips and lady's smock on the canal bank in April, prompted by the very warm weather, showed that spring was on its way, and so hedgelaying was then necessarily stopped until next season (late October onwards).

New prospective hedgelayers are always welcome - no experience necessary, as full training will be given.

**Contact Nick Baxter,  
hedgelaying@weyandarun.co.uk**

## Tickner's Heath Depot

**A**s many of you know great things have been happening at the depot of late; most of it being done by the boys from the Eric Walker Group (EWG), but we at the depot have also had a hand in some of it.

In February we spent most of the month preparing and then moving out of our old workshop into a new workshop adapted to our needs from one of the old buildings. The asbestos roof had been sealed, and this made

the building waterproof. The move also gave us time to consider in detail what items we really needed, but even after this exercise we still had an awful amount of equipment. So we have spent a lot of time trying to find a home for the items we did decide to retain.

Then most of March saw us trying to fit all our stuff onto the various storage racks while trying not to get in the way of the electrician who was doing the ground work for the new lighting and power for the work space. We now await the great day when the supply company gives us a meter so that electricity can be coupled up to the depot.

After the electrician had finished, we then painted the walls a delicate shade of magnolia, which made the place a lot lighter. Our chums from the EWG then installed a water supply along with a sink and waste pipe so that we could wash our hands in relative comfort.

During April, at the request of Dennis Gillen, we were asked to reduce the weight of the old six-inch pump that we lovingly called the 'Green Goddess' - this was so that it could be loaded onto our friendly scrappie's wagon. It

seemed a shame as members of the team had slaved hard to restore the old girl, but as she had become rather unreliable and had not been used seriously for some years, she had outlasted her usefulness and had to go.

Over the past quarter we have had a few troubles with the Trust's Land Rover loaned to us by Harwoods of Pulborough. On our first Wednesday back, in January, the beastie decided that as the handbrake had been left on over the Christmas recess then it would rather like to keep it that way. So when yours truly attempted to refuel the beast nothing I could do would persuade the old girl to move. Luckily the chaps at Harwoods in Pulborough decided they needed a change of scenery and so paid the depot a visit. Although they managed to free off the handbrake the beastie still needed extensive repairs, so it was taken to Pulborough for a short stay.

Then again in April it misbehaved. When Dennis Gillen went to use the vehicle he found that there was no power. The team at



***Our loaned Land Rover has needed some TLC from Harwoods of late.***

Pulborough again came up trumps and after a quick application of a jump starter off it went to Harwoods for repairs, where a new battery was fitted and returned to us ready for use.

**Contact John Smith 01903 235790  
[depot@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:depot@weyandarun.co.uk)**



***A great deal of day-to-day canal restoration involves moving materials from one place to another. Doing this type of work manually is unexciting and can be backbreaking. The latest addition to our fleet, seen here on the towpath at Birtley, is a secondhand telehandler enabling many moving jobs to be done by machine - as Bill Nicholson said at the Annual Meeting, "[thanks to this type of equipment] I can do the same amount of canal restoration I did in my 20s now I am in my 60s."***

## Compasses Bridge scoops design accolade

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust has scooped a highly commended place in the prestigious Waverley Design Awards for its Compasses Bridge project.

Project engineer Tony Ford was presented with the award in the Environment and Landscape category by Councillor David Else at a ceremony in Farnham, Surrey.

The awards, which celebrate good design in planning, architecture, sustainable development and landscaping, are organised by Waverley Borough Council and sponsored by The Haslemere Society.

Judges said: "The Wey & Arun Canal Trust's work at Compasses Bridge has opened the whole area up to the light and created a canalside haven. We have been impressed with the passion of the volunteers and that the whole community has been involved, and hope this commitment is mirrored in future projects."



**Councillor David Else with Compasses Bridge project engineer Tony Ford.**

## Step back in time with Heritage Open Days walk

The Trust is taking part in England's biggest heritage festival with a free event on Sunday 15th September. As part of the Heritage Open Days scheme, the public is being invited to take a trip back in time with a guided walk from the Gunpowder Store at Stonebridge Wharf in Shalford, Surrey, to the former Bramley Wharf.

Participants will learn about the role of the Wey & Arun Canal in the risky business of transporting gunpowder by barge. Walkers will also get a chance to stop off and admire the beauty of Hunt Nature Park via the viewing platform recently built by the Trust.

Other highlights of the 2.5km walk include Tannery Lane Bridge (the only roving bridge built on the canal, enabling a horse pulling a barge to follow the towpath without the need for the towrope to be

unhitched), Gosden Aqueduct and Wharf Cottage. To book your free place on the walk, which takes place at 2.30pm, go to <https://weyandrun.org.uk/events47> or email [events@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:events@weyandarun.co.uk).



**The Gunpowder Store in Shalford is one of the highlights of the walk.**



## Numbers Game

The Numbers Game makes a useful contribution to Trust funds as well as giving subscribers a chance to win £100 each month. There are three winners a month and members contribute £3 by standing order for each number they hold. If you would like to join, contact Tim Lewis, the game's administrator, via the Northern Office (see page 3).

## Building a bigger presence

The Trust is keen to raise its profile in the media and has appointed Press & Publications Assistant Gill Davies to help with the task. Gill's role also includes putting together *Wey-South* and writing news stories for the Trust's website and social media.

If you have a story to tell or photo that you think is worth sharing, e-mail [gill\\_davies@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:gill_davies@weyandarun.co.uk).



## Membership Report

Our membership stands at 2866. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following new members.

Alan Adams  
David Beadman  
Jennifer Farmer  
Rodney Hardwick  
Derek Horsnell  
Keith Mapp  
Peter & Lynn Nelson  
Clive & Maxine Phelan  
Emma Snipp  
Owen & Diane Whitehorn

Alex Agombar  
Max Byfield  
George Fielder  
Peter & Ursula Harman  
Kirstie Leighton & David Pummell  
Sandra Martin  
Stephen & Yvonne Pennington  
Julie & Michael Senior  
Michael Walton

Paul Aylward  
Chris & Iona Everett  
Michael & Anne Hampson  
Kay & Andy Hewat  
Ian & Sandra Lower  
Rodney Morrison  
Malcolm Pheasey  
Philip Short  
Keith Relleen

We have learned with regret of the death of:

Anthony Allen  
Mr J.A. Collett  
John Russell-Hayes

Dudley Barrow  
Daniel Knight  
Mr D.J. Stocker-Harris

Mr S R Boley  
Peter & Margaret Lyon  
Mr R.V. Tilbury

Graham Butler  
Kathleen Pugh

***John Tovell, Membership Secretary***  
***([membership@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:membership@weyandarun.co.uk))***



## Introducing our new membership secretary

**J**ohn Tovell is the Trust's new Membership Secretary. John has been a member for more than a decade, with his interest in restoration fostered by volunteering on the Kennet & Avon and Basingstoke Canals, among others.

The former accountant takes over from Alan Dyer, who did a sterling job for many years. The Trust would like to thank Alan for all his hard work and his smooth handover to John.

## Get your 2020 calendars now

**T**he Trust has produced its calendar for 2020, which this year features the wildlife seen around the length of the canal.

The stunning shots make it the perfect gift, so get in early and order yours now. Copies are available from the Canal Centre in Loxwood, or online at <https://weyarun.org.uk/shop/2-home>. It is priced at £8.00.

## Paul Vine

**T**he Canal Trust has learned with sadness that its Vice-President Paul Vine died in April.

Paul Vine was the author of the book *London's Lost Route to the Sea*, first published in 1965, as well as a number of other books featuring the Wey & Arun Canal.

He took a close interest in the Trust's work and attended many of its events. His deep research into the canal's history will be his permanent memorial. A full obituary will appear in the next edition of *Wey-South*.

## Dates for your Diary

**Friday 21st June \***

**Thursday 27th June \***

**Friday 5th July \***

**Saturday 6th July**

**Tuesday 16th July \***

**Friday 19th July \***

**Friday 2nd August \***

**Tuesday 6th August \***

**Thursday 8th August \***

**Friday 16th August \***

**Wednesday 21st August \***

**Wednesdays 4th & 18th September \***

**Saturday 15th September**

**Ploughman's & Pimm's Solstice Celebration Cruise at 7.30pm.**

**Cream Tea Voyages at 2.15 and 4.30pm.**

**Picnic & Pimm's Supper Cruise at 7.30pm.**

**Coach Trip to Bedford and River Ouse - organised by Mark Anderson - contact [markwanderson@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:markwanderson@hotmail.co.uk) for details.**

**Cream Tea Voyages at 2.15 and 4.30pm.**

**Ploughman's & Pimm's Relaxer Cruise at 7.30pm.**

**Picnic & Pimm's Special Cruise at 7.30pm.**

**Cream Tea Voyages at 2.15 and 4.30pm.**

**Pirates & Princesses Adventures at 11am and 2pm.**

**Ploughman's & Pimm's Finale Cruise at 7.30pm.**

**Pirates & Princesses Adventures at 11am and 2pm.**

**Cream Tea Voyages at 2.15 and 4.30pm..**

**Heritage Open Day guided walk from Gunpowder Store (Shalford) to Bramley at 2.30pm. Free but please book at [weyarun.org.uk](http://weyarun.org.uk).**

**\*For all boat trip information please contact the Loxwood Office (details on page 3). Bookings can be made with the office or online at [weyarun.org.uk/trips](http://weyarun.org.uk/trips). Booking is essential for all special trips.**



***Our River Arun Rally on 19th May attracted a record number of boaters (more than 80 registered). Above: The top of Pulborough Slipway was busy as the ideal launch time (to catch the rising tide) approached - Kev Baker was on hand to give information and assistance.***

***Below: This year several boaters deployed light 'push poles' to deal with the rapids approaching Pallingham (the farm bridge that traditionally marks the tidal limit is just round the corner to the right).***





# The Wey & Arun 2020 Calendar is now on sale



The Wey & Arun Canal Trust 2020 Calendar



Male Banded Demoiselle

by Dave Verra

August 2020

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
|        |         |           |          |        | 1        | 2      |
| 3      | 4       | 5         | 6        | 7      | 8        | 9      |
| 10     | 11      | 12        | 13       | 14     | 15       | 16     |
| 17     | 18      | 19        | 20       | 21     | 22       | 23     |
| 24     | 25      | 26        | 27       | 28     | 29       | 30     |
| 31     |         |           |          |        |          |        |

August Bank Holiday

Wey & Arun Canal Trust

www.weyandarun.co.uk

- ★ Large (A4 size) wall calendar
- ★ Features wildlife and seasonal landscapes along the Wey & Arun Canal
- ★ Printed on high-quality paper
- ★ One page for each month with a large box for each date
- ★ Limited edition - order yours now to avoid disappointment
- ★ Supplied with envelope for posting

⇒ On sale at the Loxwood Canal Centre (01403 753999, [canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk), Open Tuesday to Sunday 11am-4pm [3pm on Wednesday], until the end of October).

⇒ Or visit the Trust's website, and buy online: [www.weyandarun.org.uk/shop](http://www.weyandarun.org.uk/shop)

⇒ Or to order by post please contact the Loxwood Office (01403 752403, [office@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:office@weyandarun.co.uk), Mon-Fri 9.30am-1.30pm) or use the order slip below.

**Price: £8.00**

To: Wey & Arun Canal Trust, The Granary, Flitchfold Farm, Loxwood RH14 0RH  
Please supply \_\_\_\_ Wey & Arun Canal Trust 2020 Calendars at £8.00 each.

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

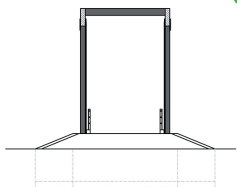
Telephone: ..... E-mail: .....

Please add £3.00 postage for up to 3 calendars - for more than 3, contact the Granary office to confirm postage).

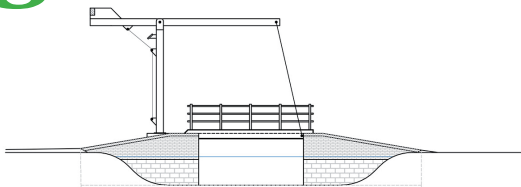
Please make cheques payable to W&A Enterprises Ltd (for card payment, contact the Loxwood Office or Canal Centre).

# Birtley Bridge

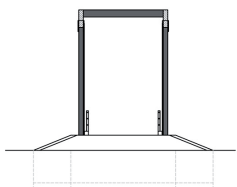
NORTH  
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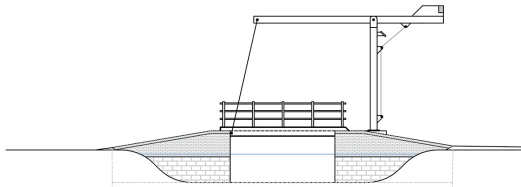
North-east Elevation  
(1:100)



North-west Elevation  
(1:100)



South-West Elevation  
(1:100)



South-east Elevation  
(1:100)



The Trust is aiming to raise **£150,000** for its Birtley project, near Bramley, allowing it to create a new circular walk in this picturesque area. The first phase of the work is to construct a lift bridge, for which planning permission was granted in April. Visiting working parties and volunteers have already created an access road and fenced off the adjacent farmland. It is hoped the bridge will be completed by Christmas.



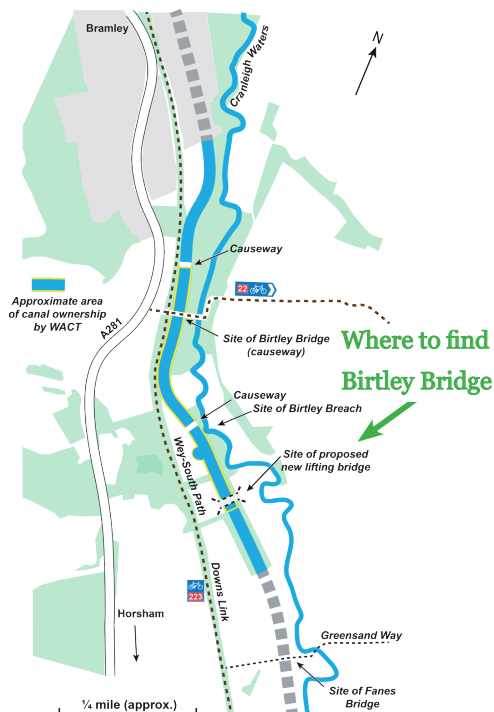
## About the first lift bridge

The bridge will be built entirely by volunteers and is a traditional counter-weight lift bridge, operated by a manually wound mechanical system. It will be largely constructed of steel, with some aluminum or timber components; the ramps will be blockwork below the waterline and brick-clad above.



The Trust has acquired the 900m stretch at Birtley

In the short term the bridge will provide a new access to the land-locked agricultural land to the south-west and act as the replacement for the existing causeway which prohibits the free flow of traffic along the canal. In the longer term it will open up a circular route proposed to connect with the Downs Link.

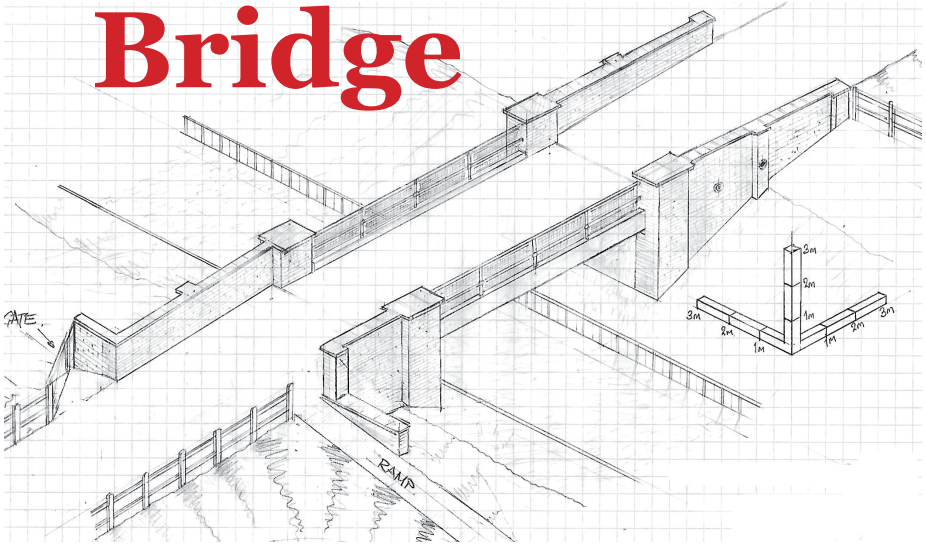


HOW TO  
-donate-

Go to: <https://weyarun.org.uk/restoration-appeals>,  
or send a cheque made payable to  
**Wey & Arun Canal Trust to: Birtley Bridge Appeal, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Guildford GU4 8EQ.**

**Registered Charity  
number 265331**





The Trust is aiming to raise **£85,000** to build a bridge at Harsfold, near Wisborough Green, replacing a causeway blocking the canal route.

A legal agreement with West Sussex County Council and local landowners has been completed and the next step is to create a bridleway diversion. Work on the bridge is expected to begin in the autumn.



Julian Nowell

## About the bridge

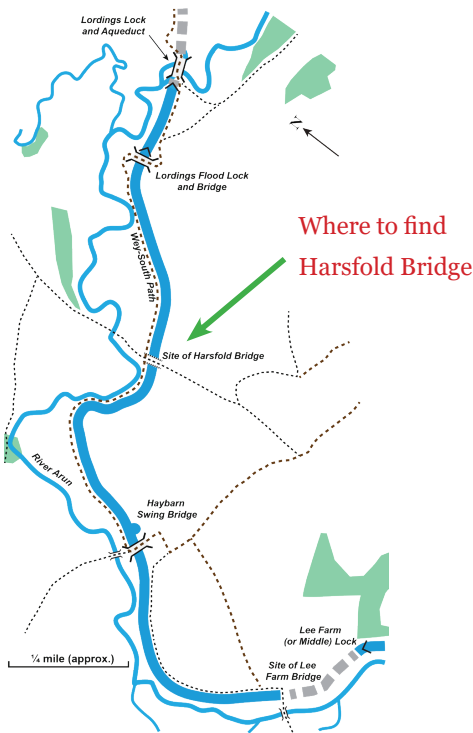
The bridge will be built entirely by volunteers and will carry the farm access track and bridleway path over the restored canal. It will feature a simple concrete bridge deck reinforced using steel beams embedded in the concrete. The proposed clear span of the bridge is

7 metres between abutments to span over the 4.4 metre wide standard canal. The extended span allows the foundations to be constructed at a level higher than the base of the canal, reducing the depth of excavation required during construction and enabling the canal to be formed at a later date.



The Harsfold stretch in water

Exposed brickwork will cover the exposed faces of the wing walls and wrap around to the front of the abutments. The abutment face will be plain concrete cast against timber formwork. The top surface of the approach wing walls will be formed using coping stones.



HOW TO  
-donate-

Go to: <https://weyarun.org.uk/restoration-appeals>,  
or send a cheque made payable to  
**Wey & Arun Canal Trust**  
to: **Harsfold Bridge Appeal, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Guildford GU4 8EQ.**

**Registered Charity**  
**number 265331**