

A group of five people, three men and two women, are posing on a narrow metal bridge over a canal. They are all wearing high-visibility yellow and red safety vests, blue helmets, and gloves. The man on the far left is holding a rope. In the background, a green boat with the word 'WASP' on its side is on the canal. The canal is surrounded by trees and foliage. A large, stylized red and yellow logo is at the top of the image.

Wey & Arun

Quarterly Magazine of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust

Issue 198 March/April/May 2022



Some 300 mixed trees have been planted along the canal recently, with more to come over the next few months.

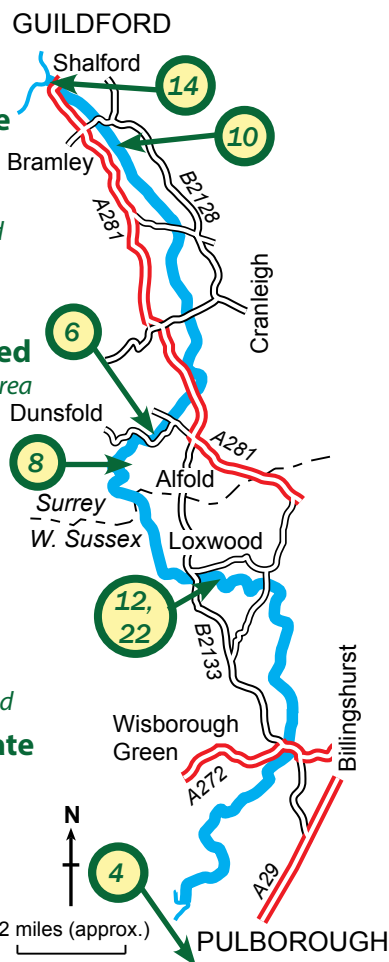
Chichester District Council has donated a mix of hazel, maple, blackthorn, black cherry, dog rose and dogwood as part of a scheme to increase the number of trees in the Chichester district. The saplings have been planted in the Arun Valley, between the Big Bend and Lee Place (Harsfold) Bridge.

Three horse chestnut and three oak trees have also gone in at the old compound area at Gennets Bridge Lock where the EWG have also enlarged the newt pond and plan to plant purple loosestrife plugs.

The Midweek Working Party will also be planting saplings at Birtley.

Contents

- 4 Notice of Annual Meeting**
The date is set for 23rd April at Pulborough
- 6 Tickner's Heath road crossing update**
Work begins on the temporary road diversion
- 8 All change at Gennets Bridge Lock**
A new section in water and towpath transformed
- 10 Birtley walk opens to the public**
The circular canal route is now ready for visitors
- 11 Poddle sponsored walk route revealed**
This year's event will take place in the Chichester area
- 12 Tree work gets underway**
Working parties help deal with ash dieback
- 14 Investigating Gun's Mouth Island**
Its history and role in future plans
- 17 The state of play with planning**
The applications waiting for approval
- 18 Long distance relationships**
The volunteers clocking up the miles to lend a hand
- 20 Letter to the editor: the railway debate**
- 22 Christmas on the canal**
- 25 Wildlife to spot in spring**
- 27 Len celebrates 20 years**
Marking Len Hasler's two decades of volunteering
- 28 Working Party Roundup**
All the news from our frontline teams



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Front cover: The workboat Wasp has been in action helping to transport volunteers and brushwood during tree work at Loxwood.

Notice of Annual Meeting on 23rd April 2022

The 49th Annual General Meeting of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust will take place at the Pulborough Village Hall, Swan View, Pulborough RH20 2BF on Saturday 23rd April 2022 at 2.30pm.

1. Apologies for absence [see note 1 below].
2. To receive and adopt the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 31st July 2021 [see note 2 below].
3. To receive the Chairman's Report.
4. To adopt the Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 December 2021, together with the Directors' and Independent Examiner's Reports [see note 3 below].
5. To appoint the Independent Examiners for 2022 and to authorise the Council of Management to determine their remuneration.
6. Election of Directors:-
 - a. Sally Schupke, Julian Morgan and John Talbot, in accordance with Article 42 of the Trust's Articles of Association, retire and Sally Schupke and Julian Morgan

are willing to stand and eligible for re-election.

- b. Candidates nominated in accordance with section 45 of the Trust's Articles of Association [see note 4].
7. To receive a Report from W&A Enterprises Ltd.
 8. To transact any other business proper to an Annual General Meeting.
 9. Date of next meeting - date and venue to be confirmed.
 10. Close of formal meeting.

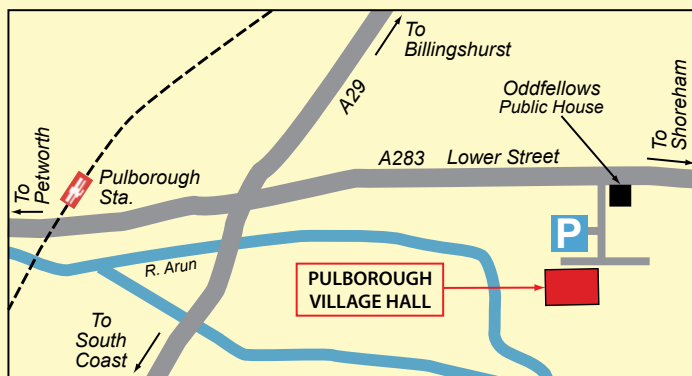
At this point the meeting will break for refreshments. You will have the chance to visit our displays, project plans and sale stands and to talk with project and group managers. After the refreshment break the programme (subject to alteration) is planned to be:

1. Update on northern section including Birtley Bridge 2.
2. Summit Level progress.
3. Gennets Farm.
4. Finance.

How to get there

The Village Hall is in Swan View, which is just south of Lower Street (A283), the main street of Pulborough. Take the turning by the Oddfellows pub, marked "Brooks Way, leading to Swan View". Very

shortly on the right is a public car park (pay & display, unless you have a Horsham District Council Annual Parking Disc). The Village Hall is next to the car park and has 40 parking spaces of its own. The railway station is about half a mile away.



Notes:

1. Apologies for absence should be sent to the Northern Office (support@weyandarun.co.uk) before the start of the meeting.
2. Copies of the previous (2021) Minutes will be available at the meeting.
3. Copies of the Report and Accounts will be available at the meeting; if you would like a copy in advance, please contact the Northern Office (support@weyandarun.co.uk).
4. The Trust warmly welcomes new candidates for election as Directors. The formal requirements are:
 - a. A paid-up member of the Trust must propose your election in writing (and you must agree to the proposal);
 - b. The proposal must reach the Northern Office at least 14 clear days before the meeting – that is, by 8th April 2022 (the Northern Office has a proposal form, although you are not obliged to use it).
5. Arrangements could be subject to change including being conducted online in the event of the imposition of any further Covid restrictions.

Make a day of it

As is our tradition, several extra events are held on the day of the Annual Meeting, allowing members to get together and experience different areas of the canal. This time there are two options:

1. A scenic guided walk in the Pallingham area

Members will be able to view the recent restoration work at Pallingham and take a guided walk through stunning scenery in the south.



2. Join a free boat trip at Loxwood

If it's been a while since you cruised the canal at Loxwood, here is your chance. The two-hour boat trip at 11am will allow time for lunch (maybe at the Onslow Arms) before heading to Pulborough. Numbers are limited so booking is essential and donations are welcome.

For more details on both events and to book your place, see our website at weyaran.org.uk.

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 reopening this to navigation.

All communications and copy either by post to:

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membership@weyandarun.co.uk

Material published in *Wey-South* represents the views of the contributors and should not, unless specifically indicated, be assumed to be the policy of the Trust.

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Wey-South is normally published in the 2nd week of March, June, September and December. Please submit copy by the end of January, April, July and October.

The Wey-South team always welcomes articles and pictures for possible use in the magazine.

Issue 198

March/April/May 2022

Tickner's Heath Road Crossing

Work at Tickner's Heath road crossing project is progressing, with the team preparing for the moment the green light is given to a temporary road diversion.

Volunteers have been pushing on to get as far as they can with creating the temporary road from the compound end northwards, ahead of receiving the Section 278 agreement from Surrey County Council. The work has involved the removal of many lorry loads of inert clay, typically about 100 tonnes a day.

The road base needs to be 1.2m thick before the final Tarmac can be laid as the road must meet the usual highways specifications. Many tons of recycled crushed hardcore have been placed onto a Terram lining and rolled in, then topped with a layer of Type 1 limestone. Contractors will lay the final Tarmac layer.

Meanwhile, the pedestrian footbridge is also being worked on, with brickwork on the four footbridge abutments complete and the piling caps on the wing walls installed. Formwork for the tricky curved section of the training wall



on the north side had to be reworked and a scaffold walkway was constructed to allow volunteers to reach this part safely. It was a laborious task wheeling in the barrows of concrete, and volunteers were rather thankful the new shuttering proved a success when it was removed in early February.



Working parties are cracking on with constructing the temporary road diversion that will allow work on the road crossing itself to begin.



It won't stay this clean for long, but the new (to us) JCB 360 was gleaming when we took delivery in February. The two-year-old five-tonne digger was sourced from a dealer in Farnham, replacing a JCB 8060 that we acquired in 2015. Here apprentice Adam Rayner gets to grips with the new piece of kit.

Gennets transformed

Extensive work below Gennets Bridge Lock has meant a section here is now in water, opening up views and providing a much improved towpath and better drainage.

Gennets Bridge Lock, completed in 2018, was an investment in the future as boats could not reach the lock from the south. However, we have now been able to remove the causeway below the lock. A new temporary causeway has been created just north of the next landowner's boundary to the south.

Dry weather and the low amount of water in the canal bed have allowed volunteers to use our heavy equipment to clear the winding hole and canal bed of shrubs, small trees and tree stumps as well as build up the towpath towards Southland with Fittleworth sandstone.

The EWG team has led the project, which has also involved installing drainage pipes under the towpath and repairing an original culvert which had become blocked by roots.



Removing the causeway and clearing the canal bed provides a clear view from Gennets Bridge Lock.



The section south of Gennets Bridge Lock with the improved towpath surface.



A hired-in Truxor has been put to good use at Drungewick to clear the proliferation of reeds. They have grown in the time the section has been closed to boats while volunteers worked on the leaks at Long Meadow and repaired Drungewick Lock. The machine was also used for some desilting around Baldwin's Knob Lock.



Beautiful Birtley walk opens

2022 got off to a bright start with the opening of the 1km canalside walk at Birtley, near Bramley.

Volunteers put the finishing touches to the temporary bridge deck on Birtley Bridge 1, as well as installing three new gates, allowing the public safe access to the new circular route.

The stretch of canal was purchased thanks to the generosity of an overseas member and work began back in 2018, with regular volunteers and visiting working parties putting in phenomenal effort to complete the abutments in just 12 months.

The temporary deck will be replaced in due course; we are working to get a design approved in principle for lifting bridges, which will then be used for Birtley Bridges 1 and 2.



Sign up for this year's Poddle on Sunday June 12th

The 49th annual Poddle will take place on Sunday June 12th with the picturesque Chichester area as this year's chosen venue, offering a route rich in nature, scenic views and history.

The 6-mile morning section begins at Sidlesham, taking in Sidlesham Quay and Pagham Harbour Nature Reserve before heading across country to the lunch stop in Hunston Village Hall. The afternoon continues along a short section of the former Selsey Tramway meeting the Chichester Canal at the site of a lifting bridge, the abutments of which can still be seen. The walk follows the scenic canal towpath for a short way to the lock at the end of the canal and Chichester Marina and its many yachts. Return to the start is via the picturesque village of Sidlesham.

Lunch and refreshments are provided and transport will be available for those who would prefer to do just the morning or lunchtime routes.

The Poddle is our main fundraising event for the year and a great way to support us. Non-members are invited, as are well-behaved dogs. Full details, a registration form and a sponsor form can be found on our website.



The route includes the Chichester Canal and its varied wildlife as well as Chichester marina.



These fabulous canal boat art-inspired decorations were made by Diana Briault for a WACT Christmas tree on display at St Mary's Shalford. The tree was on display as part of a special festival at the church.



Tree work gets underway at Loxwood

A programme of tree work has begun at Loxwood following an independent survey that identified diseased and dying ash trees. Ash dieback has battered the UK's ash tree population with estimates it will kill 80% of trees. The disease is caused by a fungus that originated in Asia. The fungal spores penetrate a tree's leaves and eventually affect its water transport system and kill it.

Diseased trees can present a danger to the public and boat passengers, so sadly the only option is to remove them.

Visitors from KESCRG and NWPG have been lending regular working party members and our Duke of Edinburgh's Award students a hand in safely removing trees and dealing with them once felled. This group of 20 volunteers formed a production



line of chainsawing, splitting and loading felled logs for removal.

The workboat Wasp was also put into action to transport felled trees. This is a project that may last several years as tree work can't be carried out in bird nesting season, except if it is an emergency.





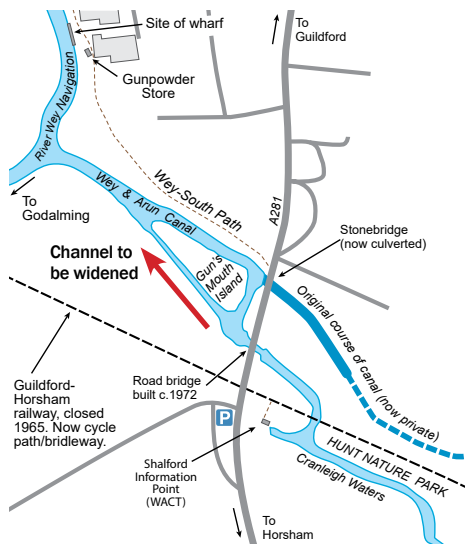
Island hoping: big ambitions for a small piece of land

Gun's Mouth is where the northernmost stretch of the Wey & Arun Canal joins the Godalming Navigation (River Wey). Accessible only by boat, it is for the most part left to its own devices, neglected you could even say.

The island isn't open to visitors and working parties visit rarely, usually just to keep on top of fallen trees, non-native species and control vegetation growth of several years. Indeed, the recent visit in December by the Midweek Working Party (see photos) was the first for a long while.

On first sight it seems an insignificant pocket of land, but this is a golden triangle for us, playing a major part in our plans for restoration of the canal in the North and the holy grail of linking with the national inland waterway system.

The island, which is leased to us by the National Trust, is surrounded on two sides by the Cranleigh Waters river. Along the north side the Cranleigh Waters are part of the Wey & Arun Canal. On the south-west side is a narrow channel (the Wey Connector Channel). The Bramley Link Phase 1 planning application currently being considered by Guildford



Borough Council proposes widening and deepening the Wey Connector Channel to the south-west of the island, allowing canal boats to reach the junction with the River Wey. It's the easiest of all options considered for restoration here. The National Trust owns and manages the 200m of moorings on the Gun's Mouth Channel and excavating a new channel



isn't possible, so widening and deepening an existing channel is a sensible way forward.

The work isn't designed to change the character of the island – it will still be cut off from visitors and left alone – and any trees or stumps that may need to be removed will be cut, stacked and left on the island to encourage biodiversity.

Should the green light be given to the application (which would add 1km of canal from the Wey Navigation to a point next to the historic aqueduct on Gosden Meadow by Tannery Lane) it would be a major step forward for us. This little piece of land has a big role to play.



Opposite page: The island is on the left with the section of canal used for National Trust moorings on the right.

This page: Three men in a boat? A small group from the Midweek Working Party paid a visit to Gun's Mouth at the end of last year. The outboard motor was put through its paces on the journey across Cranleigh Waters as water levels were high.

The history of Gun's Mouth and its surroundings

Gun's Mouth takes its name from the task of loading gunpowder barrels at Stonebridge Wharf. Gunpowder made at Chilworth was brought by wagon to the riverside and – if awaiting a barge – placed in the gunpowder store that adjoins the wharf (see photo, right). The wooden building – which, like traditional granaries, is raised on staddle stones, in this case to keep its contents dry – survives at the location shown in a survey of the wharf made in 1834.

Given the long history of gunpowder manufacture at Chilworth it is no surprise to find a plaque, installed on site by the National Trust, noting that transhipment of gunpowder barrels started here in 1764, shortly after the opening of the Godalming Navigation a year earlier. From the store the barrels were loaded on to barges for the voyage to a magazine close to the confluence of Barking Creek with the River Thames in east London.

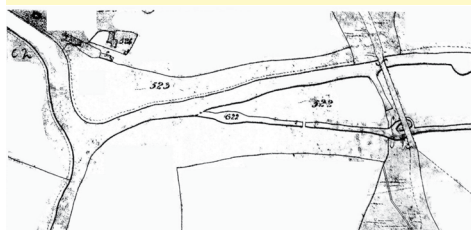
Gun's Mouth island owes its existence to construction of the Wey & Arun Junction Canal, commencing at Shalford in 1813. Viewing long-established bridges which crossed the Cranleigh Waters (or Bramley Stream) Josias Jessop, consulting civil engineer and designer of the canal, seems to have concluded that it would be better to retain, adapt and reuse some of these to accommodate the canal channel rather than build new; a policy adopted at Tannery Lane, Gosden and at Stonebridge, east of Gun's Mouth, which carries Horsham Road.

Jessop's tactics are described in my article on Stonebridge in WS 192: '...to achieve a length of temporarily dry river channel simplifying the rebuilding of Stonebridge, a by-pass channel was dug to take the entire flow of the Cranleigh Waters. The western end of this cut joined the former river channel (soon to be converted into canal) a little way east of its junction with the Godalming Navigation.'

This channel survives, takes some flow from the Cranleigh Waters and divides Gun's Mouth island from the Wey Valley meadows



Top: The gunpowder store alongside Stonebridge Wharf when open on a Heritage Open Day c2011. Below: Shalford Parish tithe map (excerpt) 1839 (Courtesy John Steeds).



to the south. 'Some flow' is today's condition because for most of the nineteenth century the island was a peninsula.

The Shalford Parish tithe map of 1839 shows the layout in place from 1813. Quite obvious is the condition that the land south of the canal and east of Gun's Mouth was a peninsula not yet severed from the embankment of Horsham Road. Instead a water-filled hammerhead running north-south lay alongside the embankment, perhaps for the purpose of turning barges. This hammerhead was not connected to the diverted flow of the Cranleigh Waters until around the end of the nineteenth century, probably to alleviate flooding upstream. Today's arrangement is a short channel linking the Gun's Mouth moorings to the Cranleigh Waters.

Alan Johnson

The state of play with planning in 2022

Behind the scenes, many, many hours are put into lining up the next stretch of canal for restoration. Once an application is submitted, the journey to getting the go-ahead isn't usually swift, particularly today when planners are playing catch-up after Covid delays. Here are the plans before the relevant councils awaiting a full approval as *Wey-South* went to press.

1. Where? Bramley Link Phase 1 from Gun's Mouth Island, Shalford, to Gosden Meadow, Tannery Lane, Bramley (Guildford Borough Council).

What? Creation of 1km of new canal and construction of a new lock and bridges. The aim is to re-establish the link between the canal and the national waterway system.

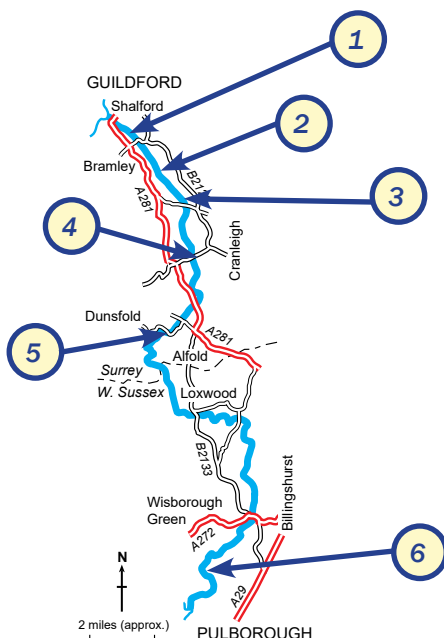
2. Where? Between Birtley Road, Bramley and Rushett Common, in the vicinity of Rooks Hill and Fanesbridge, starting just south of the new Birtley Bridge 1 (Waverley Borough Council).

What? Some 450m of new canal channel will be created, along with reinstatement of 530m of existing canal channel. The project includes construction of a brick-faced brideway overbridge and lock.

3. Where? Rushett Common Bridge to Run Common Bridge (Waverley Borough Council).

What? The creation of 600m of canal. The canal will run within the corridor of the former railway between Guildford and Cranleigh, now occupied by the Downs Link brideway, and will pass through the existing openings at the two bridges. The Downs Link will remain within the corridor but will be widened and repositioned a little to the south to run alongside the canal.

4. Where? Elmbridge Road, Cranleigh (Waverley Borough Council).



What? Improvements to the B2130 Elmbridge Road to remove the existing single-lane and replace it with a full-width two-way road and footway over a replacement canal bridge. The plan will see restoration of 350m of canal. This will include a new lock to lower the level of the canal where it passes below Elmbridge Road.

5. Where? Tickner's Heath, Alfold, Cranleigh (Waverley Borough Council).

What? The second phase of the road crossing project currently underway. It will connect the Stage 1 canal to the existing canal west of Dunsfold Road and a new arched bridge to carry the forest track to Sidney Wood across the new canal cut. A new footpath link will also be created to run alongside Dunsfold Road.

6. Where? Lee Farm Bridge in the Arun Valley south of Billingshurst (Horsham District Council).

What? The construction of a swing bridge to allow restoration of the infilled canal here and carry a farm access track and brideway path.

Clocking up the miles in the pursuit of canal restoration



Above: Nick Wood spent 16 years travelling from Essex to volunteer with the Monday Group. Below: Rod Smith is happy to make the journey from Dorking to skipper.

Opposite: JJ Price is a familiar face on restoration projects across the canal.



When you have a canal right on your doorstep it is not surprising WACT is an obvious choice for those living locally looking for volunteer opportunities. However, for some ultra-dedicated enthusiasts, geography is no barrier to helping out.

For 16 years Nick Wood braved the M25 each Monday morning, travelling from his home in Essex (some 90-odd miles away) to wherever the Monday Group was operating. Nick has been a Life Member since 1993, initially finding his way to the waterway in Surrey and Sussex through a work colleague. "They were a WACT member and knew I was interested in canals and so introduced me to the canal," he explains.

So it was that Nick came to make the weekly commute to the Wey & Arun from Thaxted, a journey that would typically take two to three hours each way (depending on traffic) to join his fellow working party members and keep the most visited areas of the canal tidy.

For Nick it was the company of the other volunteers and the satisfaction of a good job done that made the long commute worthwhile. "The reason I would travel so far was that I was helping to maintain the canal and working with a super bunch of people in the open air," he says.

Eventually, however, the journey became just too much and in 2015 Nick put the brakes on his long-distance volunteering. "I got fed up with the M25 on Monday mornings! Instead, I now write the monthly contribution to *Working Party News* on behalf of Monday Group, record the hours worked by the group and compile the quarterly hours statement."

It was joining a Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) camp that led JJ Price to the Wey & Arun, some 40 miles away from his home in Havant. "I began volunteering in about 2010 after coming across a Shropshire Union Canal Society work site on the Montgomery canal and thinking that this might be a suitable



hobby for me. Somehow I found out about the Waterway Recovery Group and attended a couple of work camps with them on the Montgomery Canal and then the Newbury Working Party Group on both the Cotswold Canals and on the Wey & Arun.

"I decided I wanted to join a canal organisation and chose the Wey & Arun Canal Trust because I was attracted to being with a general construction group," JJ recalls. Fortunately we were the nearest group that had that type of work going on, rather than the much closer Chichester Canal.

JJ gravitated towards the EWG working party (called TSG back then) but has also worked with the Northern Working Party at Compasses Bridge and the Thruscott Slipway, as well as with the dredging team on the Summit.

"In the beginning I did odd jobs and then moved on to driving diggers, but then Eric Walker asked me to take on the task of bricking the bridge at Gennets Bridge. I think he had seen the rather smart garden wall I was building at the front of our house up from Hayling Island where Eric lived."

Despite not being a bricklayer by training (he is a Chartered Mechanical and Marine Engineer with a Royal Naval background), bricklaying has become JJ's speciality with his most recent stint being the training walls at Lordings Lock and Aqueduct, spending four or five days a week there at the end of last year.

"There is great satisfaction in working with a team who are all driving towards the same goal and kind enough to provide the support that one needs if one is to lay bricks and make good progress," JJ

says. "Also, most of what one builds or repairs will be there to be seen for another 100 years."

It is not just physical restoration that attracts volunteers from far-flung reaches though. The attraction of skippering has been enough of a draw to entice Rod Smith to leave his Dorking home for Loxwood over the past 10 years.

"I joined when there was a rally at Loxwood years ago and I had done a lot of canal boating in the past," he says. Rod says he has got used to the journey up to once a week and enjoys being part of the boat team. "Everyone is friendly," he says "and it is great fun."

Whether you are on the doorstep or miles away, there are plenty of volunteering roles available. To register your interest please email support@weyandarun.co.uk.

The railway debate – letter to the editor

Regarding the debate over diversions or Bypasses proposed by WACT, I wish to express my strong opposition to WACT plans to divert the canal along the course of the old Guildford-Horsham railway line. I am a canal lover and a railway lover: a fan of all industrial and transport heritage with a strong interest in local history, our beautiful countryside, and protecting what we can of it. I'm a member of WACT and signed up enthusiastically on the understanding that I'm supporting a sensitive and respectful restoration of the old canal over its original route. That WACT now envisages rerouting the canal along the railway bed fills me with dismay.

To me, our railway heritage is just as important as our canal heritage. The old railway is a strategic asset and, from time to time, there have been campaigns to promote its re-opening. These campaigns continue to this day. We surely cannot have one historic heritage interest group damaging the fabric of another.

I urge the WACT board to reconsider its strategy in this respect and refocus on restoring and preserving the original course of the canal. The restoration of the canal was always going to be difficult, costly and take a long time. It should be done, non-destructively, without alienating our fellow neighbours and enthusiasts.

Eric Brough, Shalford

Response:

In the December issue of *Wey-South* we included an article (prompted by an earlier letter from Mr Brough) focusing on the question of diversions from the original canal route. Putting it bluntly, if we committed to using only the original route, we would be giving up on the idea of opening the canal from end to end. Surprisingly, we have received no comment (except Mr Brough's latest letter) on this article.

The bed of the former Guildford-Horsham railway is now a long-distance footpath and cycle path - the popular Downs Link*. We

have proposed to route short sections of the canal within the corridor of the former railway, sharing this corridor with the Downs Link. We can clearly say that none of our proposals threatens the Downs Link in any way. The path will remain open, including during construction, and some parts will be improved.

On the Bramley Link section between Stonebridge and Gosden, our proposals for the canal run alongside the former railway corridor and have no material impact on it, except at two 'pinchpoints' (Tanglewood Lock site and near Tannery Lane bridge). While we accept that the presence of the canal at these points would make reopening the railway more difficult, they would certainly not make it impossible. Any future railway reopening would already have to overcome some very expensive obstacles, especially the crossing of the A281 south of Shalford. On the Rushett Common section, our proposals are still under discussion, including the degree of impact on prospects for a future reopened railway.

The Trust's management team assesses the prospect of the railway reopening as very remote; if there was any realistic prospect we would be accommodating that. If there was an active railway preservation group we would be trying to agree on jointly acceptable solutions. But sadly there is no such group and the view of our local authorities is that there is no economic case for reopening a railway link. Recently the government invited bids for a Restoring Your Railway fund worth £500m. No bid was submitted for the Guildford-Cranleigh-Horsham railway.

Any proposals to reopen the railway would face strong local opposition from the users of the Downs Link and homeowners in Cranleigh and Bramley whose properties were built very close to the former railway line after it closed.

As always, *Wey-South* is very happy to have your comments and opinions.

* For simplicity we call the footpath and cycle path along the old railway track the "Downs Link". Strictly speaking it is only the Downs Link south of Tannery Lane in Bramley.



Santa trips ran across nine days, but with a maximum of three cruises a day, allowing longer breaks for the hard-working volunteers. John Thompson (left) and Stephen Keating (above) donned the special red suit.



Christmas and New Year boat trips at Loxwood

For the second year running it was an anxious time as we got ready to start seasonal trips at Loxwood. In 2020 we just managed to run our Santa trips as planned (with very limited capacity) in amongst the various tier restrictions but Boxing Day and New Year (2021) trips had to be cancelled as lockdown started. Our 2021 trips had been largely booked out by early November; by the end of November we were gearing up to refund somewhere in the region of £8,000 when the seemingly inevitable restrictions were announced. So it was with great relief that we were finally able to run all trips through to New Year's Day 2022.

All trips stuck to the 'one table, one party' rule which means that no-one has to share a table with a stranger and everyone feels safer. With a maximum of 10 tables on *Wiggonholt*, spaced more widely than usual, the theoretical maximum capacity was 40 (normally 48), but as passengers don't neatly arrive in groups of 4 (or 8, or 12) the practical limit is generally around 30. Lyn Nash carefully managed the

capacity to make sure we sold the maximum number of seats within the rules.

Trips started on 4 December in weather that seemed to fit the season for once – brilliantly sunny but quite cold. Sadly most of the other trips were in gloomy but warmish conditions. The standard pre-Covid routine was for Santa to board the boat at Brewhurst Lock and see children individually as the boat went to Brewhurst Lane Bridge and back.

In 2020 this was clearly too risky and so Santa moved next to the Canal Centre, to a grotto otherwise known as *Zachariah Keppel*, and distributed presents from behind a perspex screen after the boat trip.

For 2021 we started with a variant of the pre-Covid approach but as the case numbers rose we moved ZK back to the Canal Centre after the last trip on 19 December and reverted to the 2020 approach for the last three days.

Traditionally Santa trips have needed a huge number of volunteers, including lock keepers, car parkers and various elves. They could



As the number of Covid cases rose Santa was moved to his grotto on ZK, a model that worked well under tighter restrictions in 2020.

frankly be a gruelling experience - up to five trips without a break, ending with putting the boat away in the gathering darkness. For 2021 we rethought this approach as we no longer have lots of volunteers and we want to keep the ones we do have. This meant no lockkeepers or car parkers and fewer trips on more days – an unprecedented nine days of trips but a maximum of three on each day (two on days when demand was lower). Crews really welcomed the shorter stints, starting no earlier than a 10.30am trip and finishing after a 1.15pm trip.

Catering followed the model used for trips throughout 2021, where volunteers place the food and drink on tables before customers board, so crews do not need to mix with customers in the cabin. Hot drinks (mulled wine for adults on Santa trips) are served in thermos flasks for customers to pour themselves. On normal trips the flasks contain hot water and tea/coffee ingredients are on the table, included in the ticket price. This works well but is a lot of pre-trip work to make sure the right supplies reach the right tables. For Santa the Onslow Arms supplied mince pies which earned good reviews – gone are the days when volunteers would donate them as nowadays we have to know what allergens were present in each kind.

Many volunteers put in heroic contributions but special thanks go to John Thompson and Stephen Keating for donning the red coat and the white beard and to Lyn Nash who was in the Canal Centre for nearly every trip.

Even after it was clear that the trips could go ahead we expected a heavy rate of cancellations after positive tests, but in the end there were no more than a sprinkling and some of these customers transferred to Boxing Day or New Year trips after their isolation period was over.

We vowed to ourselves that we would not cancel trips so long as volunteers were willing to turn out and the pub stayed open. The Finance team is very grateful that we did – 739 Santa tickets were sold with a profit after expenses of over £8,500. In our business plan we assumed a repeat of 2020 and much smaller receipts, so the result was excellent news. On top of Santa we ran two trips on each of Boxing Day and New Year's Day, all filled to near capacity, at normal ticket prices and with seasonal snacks as a bonus.

Now that's it for public boat trips until Mothering Sunday on 27 March when we hope to run three trips – fingers crossed as I'm writing this in early January.

Julian Morgan

Making better use of legacies AND reducing the tax bill? Read on



Most of us know that if you Gift Aid your subscriptions/donations to charities then they can claim back 25% more from the Inland Revenue. Many will also be aware that money or anything else left to charity in a will is

exempt from Inheritance Tax. Readers may also know that if 10% or more of what's taxable (the "chargeable estate" after exemptions) is given to charity, the rate of Inheritance Tax is reduced from 40% to 36% - that's on the whole sum, not just what's given to charity. But did you realise that even if nothing was left to charity in a will, the beneficiaries can sign a Deed of Variation to make donations, or increase the amounts, reducing the tax bill?

There was a time when your parents died in their 70s and left you money when you were young enough to need it. Not so much nowadays, it seems. With parents going on into their 80s or even 90s, all too often by the time you get your inheritance you wonder whether you now need it – or, at least, need all of it. Of course, personal circumstances vary from family to family, but it is noteworthy that legacies are becoming an increasing source of funding for charities.

It's also noteworthy that children often arrange for their parents' home to be sold. They've got their own home by now and don't want to move back to where their parents lived. So the house sale means a cash windfall – which is also subject to Inheritance Tax (subject to exemptions at lower levels).

Let's look at an example. Joe is the son of a parent who dies; the other parent died earlier. His parents had a house worth, say, £550,000 and they also had various investments of some value. Let's assume that the taxable value

(after the usual tax reliefs etc) is £500,000. With inheritance tax at 40%, that means £200,000 for the Government and £300,000 for Joe.

Joe doesn't need all the money and has always been a waterways supporter, Gift Aiding subscriptions to a favourite waterway society (but this isn't essential for will varying). Joe doesn't want to sit on all this money and see another 40% go in tax on his death. He would like to give away half of his inheritance. He signs a Deed of Variation to his parent's will agreeing that and naming the charities he wishes to receive the money totalling £250,000 (half the gross inheritance before tax). This reduces the tax rate to 36%, charged only on the remaining £250,000.

Result? Only £90,000 for the Government, £160,000 for Joe and £250,000 goes to charities. If he hadn't varied the will and given half his (net) inheritance to charity, then the Government would have got £200,000, Joe would have got £150,000 and the charities would have got £150,000. Result of varying the will? Charities better off by £100,000 – and incidentally Joe by £10,000.

Of course, Joe doesn't have to be so generous. Maybe he's got grandchildren he wants to help – but not too much, as he wants the grandchildren to earn their own way through life. There's still some left for charities.

Maybe you're wondering what this article has to do with you. Well, you are interested in the inland waterways – or else you wouldn't be reading this. Maybe YOU might be interested in varying a will so you can direct money to a waterways charity such as the Wey & Arun Canal Trust. (If you are thinking of making your own will, you could simplify things by leaving money direct to a waterways charity – and not hope your children do "the right thing"!).

Naturally, this article isn't professional advice but you may wish to ask your solicitor about it. By the way, Deeds of Variation need to be dealt with within two years of the death.

John Dodwell



Wildlife to spot in Spring

For one am looking forward to spring and the return of a variety of insect life to the canal. Last year some of the first insects to appear were Orange Tip butterflies on Cuckoo flowers (only the males have orange tips). Look out too for Large Red and Azure damselflies, as well as the Hairy dragonfly. Bees and hoverflies can be seen nectaring on spring flowers which add a burst of colour to scrub and towpaths, from Lesser Celandine, bluebells and primroses, to Wood Anemones, Greater Stitchwort, Red Campion and Marsh Marigolds.

Dave Verrall

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Top: Male Orange Tip butterfly on Cuckoo flower; White-tailed bumblebee. Below: Large Red damselfly. Bottom: Greater Stitchwort; Red Campion and cowslips.



Christmas Draw a success

The 2021 Christmas Draw provided a welcome boost to our coffers and a New Year bonus for the six lucky prizewinners selected at random by administrator Max Byfield.

Total ticket sales were £4,087, bolstered by generous donations of £2,485 (including some winners who kindly donated back prize money), making a total of £6,572. Some 41% of tickets were purchased online this year - the first time we have offered this option - with three of the six winners entering this way. The winners were: 1st prize £200 Mr G Wilkins, Hampton; 2nd £100 Mr R Speight, High Wycombe; 3rd £75 Mr M White, New Milton; 4th £50 M&S token Mr M Collins, King's Lynn; 5th £40 Mr B Stovold, Wantage; 6th £30 Mrs P Cakebread, Shoreham-by-Sea. The prizes and the cost of ticket printing were kindly donated by sponsors, to whom we are most grateful.



Property acquisitions could be a wise route to restoration

In 2021 good news seemed to be a shortage item, just like building materials and lots of other things. So it is good to report that we had our most successful year to date for acquiring sections of canal route on a freehold basis – a total of around 1.8km. We had to pay for most of this land and meet the legal costs, and we are extremely grateful to supporters who kindly covered some of the costs. There is nothing like being in control of your own destiny.

When the canal closed around 150 years ago, the route was sold, mainly to neighbouring landowners. The board believes that buying sections of canal route (or sometimes adjoining property) is very important to the progress of the canal project. We are most interested in opportunities to purchase at close to agricultural land values. Paying a heavy premium price is difficult for us because in effect we would transfer charity funds to a landowner, while the asset we bought would have a lower value than the purchase price. It is very clear this would raise all sorts of questions.

Fortunately the sections we acquired in 2021 came at a clearly reasonable price and in one case as a free transfer – very many thanks to the landowner concerned.

As we reported in the June 2021 *Wey-South*, we have set up a Property Fund to help with potential future purchases. This is very much a long-term plan; the fund will build up gradually and it could be some years before it can finance a major acquisition. Sadly we are not sitting on a large pot of money right now. One quicker route to success could be if a member or supporter purchased a critical canal property for his or her own use and then transferred the canal land to us.

We have already had some very useful offers of financial help and professional expertise. If you have not already contacted us, the main ways you could support future property purchases are:

1. Specific donations or legacies to our Property Fund;
2. Offers of short-term finance (at no interest or lower than commercial rates) for a potential purchase;
3. Any knowledge, expertise or ideas about how to approach property purchase.

Late news: We are most grateful to Gerald Fox, a longstanding member who now lives in the US, for his most recent generous donation to the Property Fund.

Len celebrates 20 years of volunteering

When Len Hasler came across the Wey & Arun Canal on a work trip many moons ago, little did he know that the chance discovery would lead to a pursuit that would consume more than two decades of his life.

"A job took me up to Guildford and it puzzled me that there was a canal through Surrey and Sussex," Len explains. "I was intrigued so I went to find the canal and I thought to myself, 'I'll join the team restoring that when I retire.'" In fact, Len didn't wait that long, instead signing up to become a volunteer on a Sunday with the then TSG led by Eric Walker.

When he eventually retired Len kept on volunteering, switching his Sunday for Wednesday with the EWG, who at the end of last year honoured Len's long service with a card and cake.

A delve into Len's career and it isn't surprising he found himself drawn to the joys of canal restoration. From the age of six he wanted to be a farmer and duly went to agricultural training college, working in the field for 15 years. Buying his own home triggered the desire for a change in career, and so training in carpentry and joinery beckoned and a job with a building firm and later a blind-fitting firm.

His "love of the country and love of making things" has meant he has been a very handy person to have around. When trip boat *Wiggonholt* came along it was Len who helped fit it out, making all the tables himself at home.

"I love working out how to do things. I do drawings and diagrams and I enjoy problem solving," he says, recalling the challenges of getting the *Wiggonholt* seating design just right.



Len has worked on most of the canal over 20 years.

Past achievements are wide ranging, spanning Gennets Bridge Lock, Devil's Hole Lock, Drungewick Winding Hole up to the aqueduct, Loxwood crossing and most recently Lee Place (Harsfold) Bridge – there probably isn't a part of the canal Len hasn't helped out on.

Along with the legacy of what he has achieved – "I can look back and think 'I helped build that'" – Len says he has met some nice people along the way and enjoys the appreciation the public have for the work that's been done.

Twenty years on and he has no intention of giving up any time soon. "I think you need to keep working, making things. I will keep going until it gets me," he says.

Working Party Roundup

It's good to report that all the Working Parties have been active and making great progress. It's also interesting to note how the various groups are working together to great effect.

Fortunately the weather has been on our side so working conditions have been relatively good. The rain over the holiday period would have caused a few problems but conditions had dried out by the time we got back to work.

It seems strange to look back at this time last year when lockdown rules were in force and almost all activity was suspended. While Covid is still about, at least we can get on with the tasks in hand.

Peter Winter

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Monday Group

It took six visits but we have finally completed the clearance of the towpath and, where appropriate, the offside bank in Sidney Wood from Firtree Copse to Lock 16.

The team also spent a full day at Gennets, mowing both lock sides, strimming the canal embankment part way towards the overflow weir and sweeping the bridge. We also worked at Loxwood, brushcutting the embankment on the car park side and up to the low fencing on the river side, tidying up around the visitor centre, mowing the access track to the lock and tidying up the lock sides. We also pruned the hedge alongside the steep triangle by the road bridge.

We brushcut from the towpath all the way from Baldwin's Knob Lock to Drungewick Aqueduct. This included clearing and cutting the grass at the slipways at Barnsill Bridge and Drungewick. The canal overflow at Drungewick also received our attention.

In the new year we have concentrated on the restored section between Loxwood and Drungewick. The towpath bank has been brush cut, the hedge has been trimmed and the cuttings cleared all the way between these



two locations with the result that the section is now complete for the rest of the winter - until the growing season starts again in the spring.

The balance beams and headposts at Baldwin's Knob, Brewhurst and Devil's Hole Locks are in urgent need of a repaint. However, they have required extensive preparation, rub down and scraping before painting.

Nick Wood

mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk

Eric Walker Group

Over the past few months the team has been working on the stretch from Gennets Bridge Lock south towards Southland. The project's objective was to clear the canal bed of trees and tree stumps/roots, and raise the level of the west canal bank and towpath where necessary. The first operation was to install two large pipes in the towpath, set at a level that will maintain the maximum depth of water to around one metre. These will control the level to ensure that it will not overflow a new bund just to the north of the boundary to the next landowner.

There is an old brick-built culvert below the canal bed, about 100 metres south of the lock. It was intended to drain water from two lakes in the land immediately to the east of the canal into a tributary of the river Lox, but has been rendered almost ineffective over the



**Opposite page:
The EWG team
have been
transforming
the Gennets
Bridge Lock
area. Left:
Hedgelayers
are back
in action,
working
opposite the
Canal Centre
in Loxwood.**

years by tree roots encroaching the brickwork and by some collapsing of the structure. The area of collapsed brickwork was reinstated, the rest of the culvert "rodded" and then overlaid and sealed with clay.

The next operation was to remove the causeway below Gennets Bridge Lock and create a new bund just north of the next landowner's boundary, while work started on building up the towpath level with Fittleworth stone all the way to the bridge by the lock.

When the final residue of the old causeway was removed, water was allowed to flow down towards the two new bunds that had been installed. With water rising in this section we discovered two areas that were leaking into the adjacent field. Fortunately they were not extensive in length and Jeff was able to seal the bank with clay dredged from the bed, using his skills on our Yanmar digger. The water then began to rise again, so we hope that problem has been resolved.

The final tasks were to dig out the tree stumps adjacent to the lock and in so doing extend the newt pond, and to remove some of the stop planks in the lock to increase the rewatering of the pound.

Dennis Gillen

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Hedgelaying

As usual the hedgelaying team started by cutting hazel for binders and stakes; these are used to hold the laid hedge together. This time we reworked a coppice owned by long-time WACT member Chris Tavener, to whom many thanks are due for allowing us to move in and take away material to use on the canal.

After three weeks' cutting we had around 200 stakes and 200 binders, all tied up into bundles of 10 stakes and 25 binders. We may well look at reducing the sizes of bundles when we next cut, to ease handling and save our backs! Thanks are due to Kev Baker for coming to our aid and moving almost all the bundles in a trailer load to Brewhurst, ready for laying to start.

We had two weeks working on the hedge opposite the Canal Centre, taking down the stock fence and clearing out brambles and blackthorn scrub in the field in order for us to reach the base of the hedge. There is also a lot of scrub and brambles on the canal side of the hedge, which need to be removed in order for the hedge to receive adequate light to allow it to regrow, plus we are losing the smaller flowering plants from this area. This is not easy due to the steepness of the bank and proximity of the canal.

After all the preparation actual hedgelaying started, with both right-handed and left-

handed sections of hedge available (hedges always should be laid uphill, so handedness depends on the direction of the slope). We ended January with just one week's work left. This includes the crossover between the very end section laid by left-handed hedgelayers and the main section which has been laid right-handed. This has provoked a certain amount of interest from towpath users (and also in the minds of the Hedgelaying Team) as to how we will join these two sections together without a gap – a good question and the answer (I hope) will be found.

We have been getting exercise with a long tarpaulin drag to take away arisings right across the field to the bonfire site near the lock. This is an activity that none of us will miss when we tackle the next section, which is immediately adjacent to the bonfire site.

One of the benefits of working alongside the canal is being able to enjoy the wildlife. From mid-January, we have been serenaded (if that is the right term) by two, and sometimes three Great Spotted Woodpeckers drumming loudly to define their territories (a good reason to keep some dead or dying trees, where safe to do so - the rotted centres help amplify the sound), while at the same time hearing the yaffle of a Green Woodpecker. We also discovered fruiting bodies of oyster mushrooms on both elder and ash.

Nick Baxter
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Midweek Working Party

This has been a very busy period for MWWP with volunteers working north, south and in between. A large group took to boating across to Gun's Mouth Island, where the team found that it was completely overgrown as it has not been touched for many years. It took a great deal of time and we are only able to do it when the Cranleigh Waters are not in flood.

The Northern group have been improving Hunt Nature Park by clearing the pond near the schools. This has meant taking out a



The MWWP have tidied up at Birtley ahead of opening the new circular walk.

large number of branches, pulling out trees and generally making it lighter as per the ecologist's instructions. At the Shalford Information Centre, a new fence has been erected from the corner of the boardwalk to the river to prevent the public and dogs wandering on the area until such time as the conservation plan agreed with our ecologists has been completed.

Time has also been spent tidying up Gosden aqueduct and making the Birtley Permissive Path ready for the public.

The middle groups have been tidying up Drungewick Slipway after a tree fell down. The job entailed taking down some more dangerous trees, tidying the hedges and generally making the area much more presentable. A group has spent several weeks down Roger Dimmick Lane and it is very much clearer. It is now possible to park many more cars, making it easier for our volunteers and the canoeists. It is now ready for EWG to put down some hardcore so cars do not need to be pushed out.

A group cleared the offside at Brewhurst, whilst others cleared the canal side verge from Brewhurst up to Devil's Hole.



Above left: The entire MWWP came together at the end of the year for a working party at Run Common. Above right: Work on the temporary road diversion at Tickner's Heath.

Further south we have been tidying up the towpath from Haybarn Swing Bridge to Lee Farm Lock. This has entailed taking ash trees down under a felling licence, trimming the hedge and clearing the banks.

The week before Christmas we met as a whole group and cleared the landowner's area north of Run Common Road. Finally, we had a week in Sidney Wood clearing a dangerous tree, removing a fallen tree from over a culvert and coppicing the hazel.

Margaret Darvill
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Northern Working Party

Work has progressed steadily at the Tickner's Crossing site, where the focus remains the construction of the temporary road. The method of work is to excavate the route of the temporary road down to around 750mm below existing ground level and for the clay arisings to be taken off site by tipper truck. After excavation, a Terram membrane is laid on top of the base clay and two 6-inch flexible perforated drainage pipes are laid alongside the route. These are also wrapped in the Terram to prevent the drain holes

becoming blocked. Many tons of imported recycled crushed hardcore are then placed on the Terram and thoroughly rolled in. On top of that is a layer of Type 1 limestone also rolled in.

The final asphalt layers will be put down by contractors at a later time. To complete our work, sea dredged pebbles are placed on top of the drainage pipes behind temporary shuttering boards.

Elsewhere, we have laid more bricks on the four footbridge abutments such that this work is now substantially complete. Bricklaying has also reached final height on both sides of the above waterline training walls of the bridge approaches.

For our last three days of work before Christmas, attention turned to Loxwood and the need to fell many ash dieback trees (small and large) along the towpath side of the canal between Brewhurst and Barnsill Bridges. With a smaller team, including friends from visiting groups NWPG and KESCRG, the first two days were spent on the section from Brewhurst down to Birch Copse. The towpath is narrow here and some skilled reversing of vehicles and trailers was required to get the kit to site and the timber away. However, by

the end of Friday our work was completed. The more substantial timber was split on site and loaded into ton bags and taken back to Tickner's Crossing. The brushwood was dealt with by the WACT chipper.

For the last working day of the year, in lovely winter sunshine, we had a fantastic turnout of 20 who set to the task of taking down the marked larger ash trees below Baldwin's Knob Lock. For this, Peter Foulger kindly permitted us to fell the trees across the towpath and into his field and to burn the brushwood on site. Although it was almost the shortest day of the year, we managed to fell at least five very large ash trees, cut and split the logs and burn everything else.

By the end of the three days we had filled 30 large dumpy bags with split logs. They are now filling the yard at Tickner's Crossing and are available for local log burners in return for a donation. They will require seasoning, but being ash should burn well next winter and beyond. Please contact Roger Beazer or Dave Evans if you are interested.

Bill Nicholson
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Boat Group PEST

The PEST team started by clearing the canal banks and waterway around Brewhurst Lock and down to Brewhurst Bridge. This work complemented the work of other working parties which have been clearing the towpath side and the bridge approaches. This left the stretch of canal between the Canal Centre and the Brewhurst Bridge Winding Hole in good order for the festive season cruises.

Our group's attention also turned to the section of canal north of Loxwood, in particular the 'chicane' above Devil's Hole Lock. Although the winding hole had received attention in past months, the approach to the lock received a fair amount of work to maintain its appearance and enable ease of use by boat crews. Our crews do not appreciate being thrust into a jungle while their skipper is winding the boat!



Wasp has been in use with the PEST team after the workboat's renovation.

The first work party of the new year was something of a red letter day as the workboat *Wasp* had her first outing with PEST after the completion of renovation and improvement work. The work included major cleaning and clearance of her deck and deckhouse, refurbishment and reinstallation of her outboard motor, battery and fuel system and the laying of ramp decking. With her larger working area and loading ramp she provides a welcome increase in our maintenance capability. The PEST team's thanks go to John Reynolds and Kevin Baker who were instrumental in bringing this about.

Using both *May Upton* and *Wasp* the team undertook bank clearance work towards Southland Lock and the removal and disposal of a substantial fallen tree. On our second work day progress was constrained by ice on the canal so, using only *May Upton*, we carried out bank clearance work north of Loxwood Lock.

Chris Jones
chris_jones@weyandarun.co.uk



The interior of JJ is looking smart; its hull is also set to get a little TLC.

Boat Maintenance

Maintenance took a back seat to operations for the Christmas period. *Zachariah Keppel* did her static duty as Father Christmas' grotto and *Wiggonholt* ran Santa, Boxing Day and New Year's Day trips. This all adds up to an estimated income of more than £8,500 after expenses, great credit to all the skippers, crew and Canal Centre volunteers who worked so hard over the holiday period.

Meanwhile, the bow fenders on *Wiggonholt* have been renewed. I made the old fenders a couple of years back, designed to take the shocks of the odd skipper ramming the concrete. They worked well but did look a little unsightly. At great expense, new fenders have been made and delivered by AJ Fenders Ltd, which look so much better. Woe betide any skipper who hits the brickwork and damages these. *WH* must now be handled with care!

Peter Hyem obtained the solar charging equipment for *Josias Jessop* plus the recovered

back cushions for her cabin. *JJ* has a rather more worrying problem in that water is seeping in under the engine silencer and from around the weed hatch. It is easily pumped out, but will necessitate her slipping in July and, if due to rust in the flat plates under the stern, will require some welding of new plates there. Until she is slipped for a few days in July, we won't know whether outside assistance is needed or not. Meanwhile her hull will be buffed off, given two coats of black International paint, new longitudinal fenders fitted (the old ones from *Wiggonholt* rebuilt in my workshop), the engine room hatches rewelded where the runnels have wasted away, and repainted inside and out.

On *WH*, Ian has been cutting a new floor for the engine room, as the old one is rotting. Sadly, like all of us, our boats are getting old.

David Arnold

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Canal Maintenance Unit

The team have been working with EWG on the latest Gennets Farm project, which has resulted in a massive improvement to the section with a new towpath surface. The towpaths from Drungewick to Southland were all cut with our big mower.

At Devil's Hole the long awaited replacement sign for the picnic area was installed and Southland Lock was emptied for the winter months (refilling will be in late February).

At Lordings we have completely replaced the fencing around the waterwheel and chambers with a more robust metal fencing system.

Kev Baker

kevin_baker@weyandarun.co.uk



Wiggonholt's smart new bow fenders.



Switch to biofuel set to improve emissions

Plans are underway to switch to using HVO biofuel in our plant and van fleet, a much greener alternative to diesel.

The synthetic HVO biofuel being trialled is made from 100% renewable raw materials and claims to be better for the environment than regular diesel, significantly reducing greenhouse gases and eliminating 90% of CO₂ emissions. The fuel is also sustainable as it is synthesised from waste fats and vegetable oils.

With little price difference and the benefit of being biodegradable, the HVO switch looks like being a big winner. Restoration manager Dave Evans will be monitoring its use and a full report will appear in a future issue of *Wey-South*.

Badge of honour

A snippet in *Wey-South* for September 2021 about WACT badges got some of you searching through the attic for past treasures.

Nigel and Pam Edwards unearthed the two badges pictured below. Nigel says he also had a white badge at one time which read 'I worked on the W&A in the 1980s.' 'If they have a value, would that be enough to pay for another bridge?' he asks. We fear not.



Bumper harvest from Hunt Nature Park

Willow coppiced from Hunt Nature Park has been put to good use raising funds for us. Chairman Sally Schupke worked her magic and transformed the willow whips into Christmas decorations and fruit bowls, and along with Lyn Nash sold the goods at a Christmas fair at St Mary's Church in Shalford for a tidy sum.

More willow whips have now been cut from the nature reserve and are available in return for a donation. Please email support@weyandarun.co.uk for more details.



Shalford Centre opens



The Shalford Information Centre began to welcome visitors at the beginning of the year. The Centre, in Hunt Nature Park, is open every Wednesday from 11am to 12 noon.

The first Wednesday of every month is also Coffee Morning, where visitors are invited to come and chat about all things canal-related over a hot drink and find out more about our plans and successes, as well as what can be seen within Hunt Park.

It is hoped to extend the opening times but this requires more volunteer help. If you think you could spare an hour or two to help man the centre, please send an email to support@weyandarun.co.uk.

Volunteer opportunities

As warmer weather approaches, we would like to meet volunteers who enjoy working with members of the public. Could you spare some time to help out in the Loxwood Canal Centre or at our new Shalford Information Point? We are also looking to strengthen our Mobile Display Vehicle (MDV) team who attend fetes and similar events to spread the canal message.

The team that run the special boat cruises at Loxwood are also in need of a hand. If you could spare some time helping to decorate the boats before an event, serve food and drink onboard, or even meet and greet or entertain passengers, we would love to hear from you.

If you are happier with working at a desk or a laptop, we need more help with a variety of admin jobs, such as organising our twice-yearly meetings.

To chat about any of the roles available please contact support@weyandarun.co.uk or call the Northern Office (01483 505566).

Numbers Game winners

January 2022: First prize (£100) number 1, second prize (£30) 143, third prize (£10) 159

December 2021: First prize (£100) number 149, second prize (£30) 14, third prize (£10) 161

November 2021: First prize (£100) number 100, second prize (£30) 153, third prize (£10) 14

You could be among the lucky winners by taking part in the monthly Numbers Game. To join please email support@weyandarun.co.uk, or call 01483 505566.

Calendar of events

Mother's Day Cruises from Loxwood: Sunday March 27th, 12 noon, 1.30pm and 2pm

Easter Cruises: Wednesday 13th, Friday 15th, Saturday 16th, Easter Sunday 17th, Bank Holiday Monday 18th and Wednesday 20th, 11.30am and 12.30pm

Annual Meeting: Saturday April 23rd at Pulborough Village Hall

Puddle (Sponsored Walk): Sunday June 12th

Autumn Meeting: Saturday October 22nd

Membership Report

We gained 30 new members in the last quarter, and our membership now stands at 2,936. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following new members:

Nicholas Bragger	Carlo Briffa	Mike Charman	John Currell
Donald & Sandra Eade	John Humphries	Helen & Simon Jones	Jacqueline & David Earley
Joyce Jordan	Paul Moody	Maggie & Peter Morgan	Annalee Nobbs
John Patman	Penny Phillips	David Randel	Jim Ratliff
Ann Roberts	Mike Smith	Michele Springall	Lizzie & Miles Tisdall
Keith Stainer	Dianne Vander Cruyssen	Tracy Winter	Sedrah & Colin Williams

We have learned with regret of the death of:

Margaret Pink	Keith Godden	Geoff Boote	Godfrey Nicholls
Peter Harman	Keith Ramplin	Joseph Nobbs	Robert Donn
Christopher Harrison			

For members currently paying by cheque, please can you consider changing to payment by standing order or direct debit? It would help reduce our administrative costs and effort.

John Tovell
membership@weyandarun.co.uk



Dave strikes it lucky

We know there is a wealth of wildlife along the canal, but the inhabitants of our waterway can sometimes be a little camera shy. Not so on a day in December when Canal Centre volunteer and keen photographer Dave Verrall took a stroll from Loxwood.

"I met a friend above Devil's Hole Lock who mentioned he had seen a Grey Heron below Southland Lock.

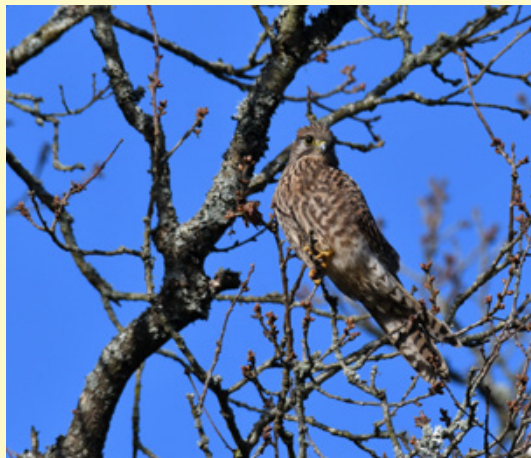
I continued my walk and slowly approached the site. All of sudden the heron flew out the reeds in front of me, too quick for me to take a photo."

Disappointed, Dave sat to eat his lunch, just as a kestrel landed in an oak tree opposite, near enough to take several photos.

After finishing his lunch Dave headed towards Brewhurst. "Just after I went through the gate at Brewhurst Bridge I spotted a Grey Heron at the edge of the canal towpath, patiently waiting for fish. I was able to take a few photos before it saw me. It then took off, but landed again further along the towpath, allowing me to take more photos.

"Feeling pleased that I had managed to take photos of a kestrel and a Grey Heron I started to walk back. I thought to myself wouldn't it be nice to be lucky a third time and see a kingfisher. I could not believe my luck as walking past Brewhurst Lock a kingfisher flew past me and landed in a distant tree alongside the towpath. I slowly approached, taking photos as I got closer. The light was not good for photography but I was pleased that I was able to take a photo."

Dave adds: "Sometimes there is luck involved with wildlife photography but it is often about being in the right place at the right time."



Where, when, how?

- ◆ The start is at St Mary's Church Hall, 1-6 Church Farm Lane, Sidlesham, Chichester PO20 7RE which is off the B2145 Selsey Road. To access Church Farm Lane when travelling south along the B2145 from Chichester turn left some 150 yards after passing "The Anchor" public house on your left. When travelling north along the B2145 from Selsey turn right some 250 yards after passing the Esso petrol station on your left. Once you have turned into Church Farm Lane the hall is soon on your right.
- ◆ Arrive between 9am and 10:30 to check in and receive your Route Guide and start walking the whole route, or only the morning route. If you only wish to walk in the morning, we will provide transport from the lunch stop back to the start.
- ◆ If you wish to walk only in the afternoon, come to Hunston Village Hall, Selsey Road, Hunston, Chichester PO20 1AW which is on the B2145 Selsey Road. When travelling south along the B2145 from Chichester the hall is on the right some 300 yards after passing "The Spotted Cow" public house on your right. When travelling north along the B2145 from Selsey the hall is on the left some 500 yards after entering the 30 mph section through the village. Arrive between 12 and 1.30pm to check in, have lunch if you wish, and receive your Route Guide. We will provide transport from the finish back to Hunston.

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust, which is working hard to restore 23 miles of navigable waterway linking the River Arun at Pallingham to the River Wey at Shalford, organises a sponsored walk each year. This is the Trust's most important fundraising event and makes a vital contribution to pushing the restoration effort forward.

This year's Poddle is on Sunday 12th June and takes in "The Hundred of Manhood", the ancient name for the peninsula south of Chichester. We are going to walk from St Mary's Church Hall in Sidlesham to Hunston Village Hall where lunch will be provided, and then back to Sidlesham in the afternoon. For those who would prefer a shorter walk you can choose to walk in the morning or afternoon only. Morning and afternoon refreshment stops will be provided.

The morning walk is 6 miles and passes picturesque Sidlesham Quay and Pagham Harbour Nature Reserve before heading across country to the lunch stop at Hunston Village Hall. The afternoon walk, also of 6 miles, continues along a short section of the former Selsey Tramway meeting the Chichester Canal at the site of a lifting bridge, the abutments of which can be seen. There is then a lovely walk along the canal, in which coots, moorhens, mallard ducks and swans proliferate, to Chichester Marina, where hundreds of yachts can be seen, and the lock at the end of the canal. The walk returns via the picturesque village of Sidlesham to the start for a well-deserved cup of tea and a cake.

Did you know we offer 50/50 sponsorship? If you enter as a 'Team' and raise more than £200 sponsorship (minimum £25 each) we are happy to split funds equally with another charity or organisation of your choosing. If you or your organisation wish to take part as a team please complete individual sponsor forms as usual but please also contact the organiser, or look on the Trust's web site for a 'group' form.

- If walking isn't for you, why not
- ◆ Sponsor the Last Man?
 - ◆ Make cakes for the walkers?
 - ◆ Help on the day as a marshal or at a refreshment point?

Please contact the Poddle co-ordinator for more information or to offer assistance - all help is greatly appreciated.

PODDLE CO-ORDINATOR

Margaret Darvill ☎01483 894606

✉poddle@weyandarun.co.uk

For more details of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust and its aims, contact the Trust's office.

✉support@weyandarun.co.uk

☎01483 505566



You are invited to take part in

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust's 49th Annual Poddle Sunday 12th June 2022



Salterns Lock - at the entrance to the Chichester Canal

What is it?

The 2022 Poddle is a 12-mile sponsored walk around "The Hundred of Manhood", the ancient name for the peninsula south of Chichester, raising money towards the restoration of the Wey & Arun Canal.

Who can do it?

Almost anyone, with the exception of the very young, infirm and pushchairs as the walk has some stiles. Dogs are welcome especially if sponsored!

What do I need to do?

Register at weyandarun.org.uk/poddle.

Complete the sponsor form overleaf and raise as much money as you can - minimum £25 please (lunch is provided) then just turn up and walk.

Wey & Arun Canal Trust Annual Poddle Sponsorship & Gift Aid Declaration Form

Please hand in this Sponsor Form - it will be given back to you at the finish when you check out.

Please sponsor me to walk the 2022 "Poddle" on Sunday 12th June 2022 in aid of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust.
(name of walker - CAPITALS PLEASE)

We, who have given our names and addresses below and have ticked the box headed "Gift Aid?", want the charity named above to reclaim tax on the donation detailed below, given on the date shown. We understand that each of us must have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for the current tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for the current tax year.

Surname (CAPITALS PLEASE)	First Name (CAPITALS PLEASE)	Home Address (essential for Gift Aid)	Postcode (essential for Gift Aid)	Amount £	Date Paid	Gift Aid? (✓)
Remember: Full name + Home address + Postcode + (✓) = <i>giftaid it</i>				£		

(To be completed before arrival - IN CAPITALS PLEASE)

Walker's Details

Full Name

Address

..... Postcode

E-mail address

Gift Aid

Please ensure that if any of the above donations are to be Gift Aided by you or a donor that you / they are a taxpayer, aware of your / their commitments, and that you / they have recorded the first line of their address and their postcode and ticked the Gift Aid box. By doing this their donation increases by 25%, i.e. 25p for every pound. If all are able to do this it will mean that the total amount raised is increased by 25%.

Signature:

Date:

Please tick here if you are a member of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust

☐

Please collect your sponsor money as soon as possible and transfer to:

Sort code 40-52-40, account number 00024651
CAF Bank Ltd, account name "The Wey & Arun Canal Trust Ltd"
- please add "Poddle" and your name as a reference.

Alternatively please send a cheque payable to "Wey & Arun Canal Trust Ltd" to: The Treasurer, Wey & Arun Canal Trust, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Guildford, GU4 8EQ

If you have more sponsors, please download a form from weyarun.org.uk/poddle (or continue on separate sheets of paper).

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Walker Number: