

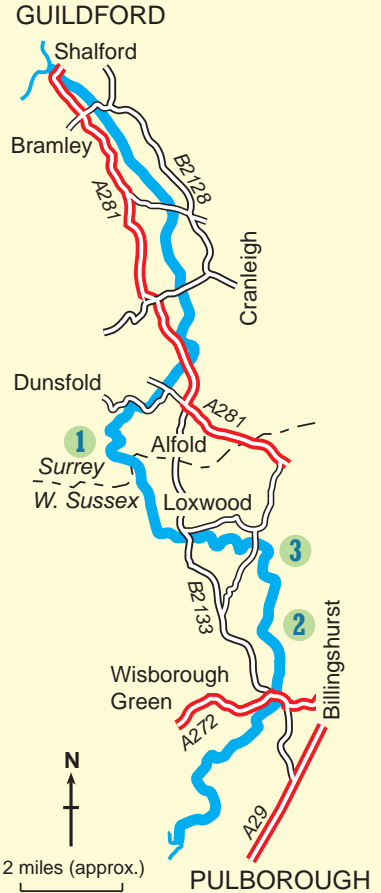
# WEY-SOUTH

BONFIRE HANGER  
PATH RESTORED

Quarterly Magazine of the  
**Wey & Arun Canal Trust**  
Issue 208 September 2024

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**Front cover: At Bonfire Hanger, now a smooth surface for family cyclists.**  
**Photo by Trevor Lewis**

**Wey-South**  
The Quarterly Magazine of  
**The Wey & Arun Canal Trust**

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Issue 208 September 2024

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# News headlines

## Bonfire Hanger towpath restored

One kilometre of towpath south of Rosemary Lane, Alfold, has been upgraded by our own volunteers and visiting working parties in a major grant-assisted project. What was often a narrow quagmire is now a wider all-weather path (see picture). At the same time our teams have worked hard to make this section look like a canal again after a long period when only occasional tidying was possible (see page 10). On the morning of our Annual Meeting (October 19), you can join a guided walk to visit the Bonfire Hanger section.

### Our Annual Meeting

All members are invited to our Annual Meeting at Alfold Village Hall on 19 October (see page 6). The formal business should not take too long, then there will be updates on our various activities and a chance to chat to directors and project leaders. Our statutory accounts for 2023 are complete and available for you to look through. If you have detailed questions, please send them in before the meeting.

### Phase 2 of Pump Controls project nearly complete - and Long Meadow leaks tackled

The locks at Baldwin's Knob and Drungewick have new pump controls in hardened cabinets, with other infrastructure improvements (see page 9). More work has taken place to plug leaking canal banks in the Long Meadow section north of Drungewick Lock (see page 20). We can now look forward to this section becoming fully operational again.

### Changes to our team

Our new Chairman Margaret Darvill started in April this year and introduces herself in this issue. In mid-July Dave Evans left his role as Operations Manager to take up a new job with Network Rail (see pages 4 and 5).



### A new Saturday work group opportunity

Mostly, our working parties operate on weekdays – and then we wonder why we are not attracting non-retired volunteers. So there's now a new Saturday Group on the second Saturday of the month, under Jack Walker, who'd like to hear from you! Email him at [jack.walker@weyarun.org.uk](mailto:jack.walker@weyarun.org.uk).

### And we had a good summer ...

As the days shorten, we can look back over a successful summer. The weather was relatively kind to our boat trips. Despite some challenges with low water levels, we ran a large number of profitable private boat trips as well as our popular public trips (See page 14). Our Poddle (sponsored walk) around Cranleigh and Bramley in early June also enjoyed good weather and raised a very useful sum for our funds (See page 22). And later in June, after a break of a year or two, our Arun Small Boat Rally was also a great success (See page 25).

## Margaret Darvill - Our new Chairman

As reported in Wey-South 207, Margaret has taken over from Sally Schupke as our Chairman. She has been a member of the Trust for over 30 years. Her involvement with the canal intensified on her retirement in 2012 from teaching Economics and Business Studies at The Royal School, Haslemere. She joined the Midweek Working Party, which she has led for several years, co-ordinating the efforts of 30+ volunteers.

She has been a Board Director (formerly a Trustee) for nine years, and steps up from Vice-Chairman. In addition to the achievements of the Midweek Working Party, she is proud of her productive liaison with landowners on the line of the canal's route. We only own what we can buy or what is gifted to us. For instance, Margaret played a leading role in the securing of 625 metres of canal route at Rooks Hill on favourable terms.



She lives in Bramley with her husband Stephen, himself a volunteer on the canal, and has three adult children and ten grandchildren.

Away from the canal, her main interests are walking, gardening, reading – and active soprano membership of the Blackheath & Bramley Choral Society. She particularly likes performing the works of Mendelssohn.

### Interim appointment

Margaret openly sees her Chairman appointment as interim, pending the identification of the right person to take the Trust forward for the long term. The Board she chairs is multi-skilled. While it meets formally monthly, much of the Board's work is done day-to-day by its active and enthusiastic Board members day-to-day, supported by the permanent staff. Margaret now has to deal with an enlarged daily in-tray of Trust business to be co-ordinated, from the prosaic to the extremely complex. She notes that volunteers have to be handled differently from employees.

She echoes the perception of other senior Trust members, that more volunteers are needed to cope with the accelerated work programme – younger people are particularly sought.

### Trust at a crossroads

Margaret says, 'I believe that we are at a crossroads. While in post, I see my main objective as being to analyse what we do and how we do it, so as to prepare a properly structured organisation for my successor – whom I have to find! I see my style as being collaborative – but I can be forceful when necessary.' Her biggest frustrations are, internally, resistance to change and the strictures of Human Resources processes as an employer. Externally, it's the local government Planning system.

Margaret loves personal contact with members and volunteers. 'My Midweek Team work continues, so if you see me down at the canal, please come and say Hello!'

## Dave Evans moves on

Dave Evans, our Operations Manager, has vacated his position, to join Network Rail – but will remain with the canal, as a regular volunteer once again. A ‘do’ at Loxwood on July 16th marked the occasion.

Dave first came to the canal in 2010 as a visiting Waterway Recovery Group volunteer, and stayed to become Site Manager for the rebuilding of Compasses Bridge and then in 2017 for Thriscutt Slipway. In 2018, he became one of our two first full-time staff, implementing the new cut and footbridge at Tickner’s Heath Crossing. Promoted to Operations Manager in 2022, Dave has underpinned our teams’ work with appropriate equipment and modern working practices. He is known to visiting working parties as ‘Kim Jong Dave’ for his personal drive and commitment. Dave’s contribution to our work has been immense. We wish him well in his new job.

Bill Nicholson writes: “Dave changed how our volunteers have worked. From his vast range of skills, we learned the quickest, safest and most effective way to do things. Before Dave, we would never have considered major projects like Compasses Bridge or Tickners Crossing as volunteer work.

‘The high point was Birtley Bridge No 1 where, under Dave, we worked as a team to design and build the base structure of the lifting bridge in only 5 months. Without Dave, it would have taken at least a year. Dave is never happier than when felling trees so I am sure that he will feel at home in his new role.’”



# Notice of Annual Meeting on 19th October 2024

The 51st Annual General Meeting of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust will take place on 19th October 2024 at 2.30pm at the Alfold Village Hall, Dunsfold Road, Alfold GU6 8JB.  
(See map on opposite page)

## The agenda will be as follows:

- 1 Apologies for absence (see note 1 below).
- 2 To receive and adopt the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 22nd April 2023 at Cranleigh Village Hall (see note 2 below).
- 3 To receive the Chairman's report.
- 4 To receive the Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ending 31st December 2023, together with the Directors' and Independent Examiner's Reports (see note 3 below).
- 5 To appoint the Independent Examiners for 2024 and to authorise the Board of Directors to determine their remuneration.
- 6 Election of Directors:-
  - a Tony Ford, Dennis Gillen, John Reynolds and Giles Eyre in accordance with Article 30 of the Trust's Articles of Association, and Robin Hirsch and Gordon Powell, who were appointed by the Board of Directors in the course of the last year under Article 33, retire and are eligible for re-election.
  - b Candidates nominated in accordance with section 30 of the Trust's Articles of Association (see note 4 below).
- 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.

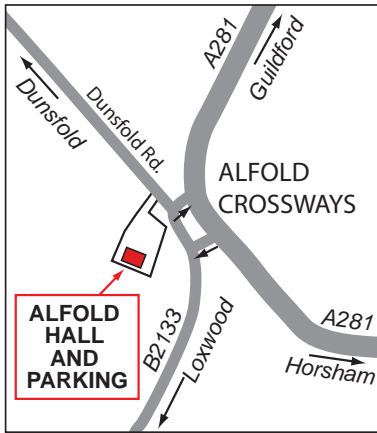
At this point the meeting will break for refreshments. You will have the opportunity to view our displays, project plans and sales stands and to talk with project and group managers.

After the break the programme (subject to alteration) is planned to be presentations and updates on sites and projects.

## Notes:

- 1 Apologies for absence should be sent to the Office before the start of the meeting.
- 2 Copies of the previous (2023) Minutes will be available at the meeting.
- 3 Copies of the Report and Accounts for the Trust for 2023, which consolidate the results of the trading subsidiary W&A Enterprises Ltd, are available on the website, and are available on request by email or post. A limited number of copies will be available at the meeting. Members are asked to send any questions about the Report and Accounts to the Office in advance of the meeting and in any event no later than 11th October 2024.
- 4 We warmly welcome 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 Office at least 14 clear days before the meeting – that is, by 4th October 2024 at 4pm. (The Office has a proposal form although you are not obliged to use it).
- 5 All members have the right to appoint a proxy under section 324 of the Companies Act 2006 and Article 20 of the Trust's Articles of Association.
- 6 The Office postal address is Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford GU4 8EQ.  
Email: [support@weyarun.org.uk](mailto:support@weyarun.org.uk)

## Make a day of it



Before the Annual Meeting, there will be an opening ceremony close to Gennets Bridge Lock to celebrate the work that has been put in by volunteers and visiting work camps. A conducted walk along the new towpath is also being organised which will be about three miles given no parking possible close to this area of the canal. Details of both events were still being finalised as we went to print. Please go to our website to find out further information and to register for the walk. Further information will also be included in our monthly newsletter. If you have not subscribed to this monthly email, again go to our website to sign-up. If you wish to lunch after the walk at the Sir Roger Tichborne pub, Loxwood Rd, Alfold Bars, RH14 0QS (between Alfold Village Hall and Loxwood), call 01403 751873 or email [bookings@thetichborne.co.uk](mailto:bookings@thetichborne.co.uk). You are however requested not to park at the 'Tichborne' for the walk itself.

## Wey-South to move to three editions a year in 2025

**W**ey-South has been sent free to members quarterly for 52 years. It was started in another age, when printed material was the only written-form option for keeping us updated. We now live in an electronic world, where the sending and receiving of news is nearly instantaneous. Given the slow and steady pace of restoration, there is rarely a need to react quite so quickly, but the Trust nevertheless moves with the times. As well as receiving *Wey-South* (whether in print or electronically), we're kept well-informed via the following freely-available documents:

- The monthly *eNewsletter*, which has been upgraded from a simple text only email to a glossier format with pictures. Sign up at Newsletters on our website.
- *Working Party News*, a monthly narrative of the greater and lesser activities of our volunteer teams. See too Newsletters on the website.
- Facebook releases for the bigger stories as they happen.

There's also a twice-yearly emailed two-page *Wey and Arun News* for stakeholders such as councils and funders.

The 'news' that appears in *Wey-South* will now often have already been seen in those other publications – and none the worse for that. As a permanent record for our bookshelves *Wey-South* also features material that has no 'date-stamp' and may not be published elsewhere, such as history, archive and wildlife articles.

The cost of producing and distributing the printed version of *Wey-South* is steadily increasing. Also increasing are the demands on Trust finances for our restoration and maintenance work. The Trust wishes to avoid increasing the membership fee despite rising costs, preferring instead to encourage those who can afford to do so to give more voluntarily (see back cover).

For all these reasons, your Board has decided to move from four editions of *Wey-South* a year to three, starting in 2025. No 209 will appear in February 2025, and four-monthly thereafter. The size of the magazine and its quality will not be affected.

# Priority Projects Update

In the last *Wey-South*, we identified the projects where we want to make rapid progress. Here is the latest situation – and please refer to the map.

## South of Bramley

The long-awaited planning permission for Rooks Hill has still not been approved as we go to print. Some last-minute ecology-related information has been requested by a consultee. We believe that this is the last hurdle before permission can be granted (with the decision being made by a Planning Officer at Waverley Borough Council, without the additional hazard of the application having to be taken to a Planning Committee). So we are very hopeful for some good news soon!

## Cranleigh

Design work on the new towpath at Rye Farm has been completed. There will be slight narrowing of the canal here in order that a new towpath can be inserted between the canal and Rye Farm's drive. This will be offset, without any loss to navigable width, by replacing the sloped underwater edge of the canal with vertical-edged gabion cages filled with stone, as we have done at the new Birtley Bridges. This is cheaper than piling. It is also more environmentally friendly, as it creates a permeable habitat for vegetation and wildlife. Work will begin once final discussions and legal agreements are completed with the current landowner.

There is no update yet on the related navigable-height rebuilding of Surrey County Council's Elmbridge Road crossing, which is out of our control.

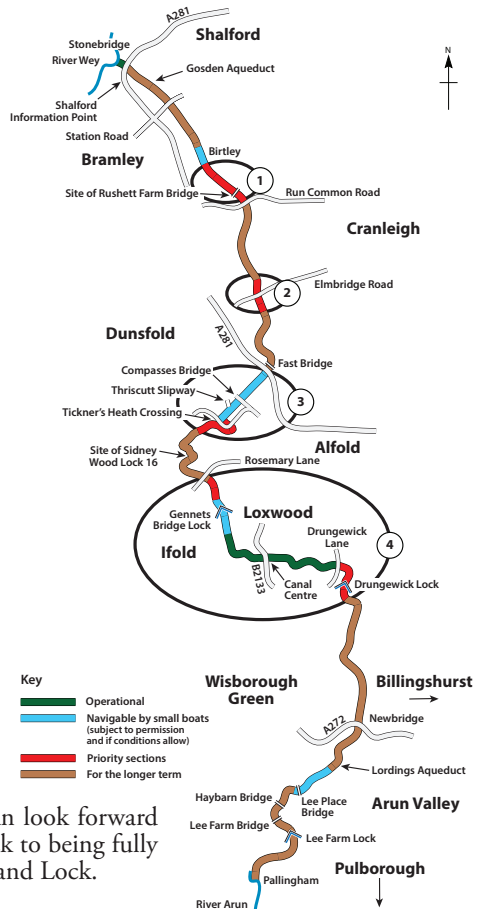
## Dunsfold

Work at Tickner's Heath has been on hold for well over a year, but a restart plan is beginning to take shape. The cause of the delay has been the wait for Thames Water to confirm the cost to complete the diversion of a water main. We hope to have an onsite meeting to confirm the work and the construction schedule in the near future. We are developing a tender document for the selection of a contractor to build the new road bridge. The Northern Working Party was due to complete work on the temporary road and drainage in late August.

## Loxwood

Work on the towpath improvements at Bonfire Hanger has been completed. Over 900 tonnes of stone have been laid. Please see page 10 to read about the work completed by two visiting work parties and our plans to finish this as an all-weather bridleway from Loxwood for nearly all the towpath as far as Rosemary Lane – a huge improvement to the leisure access to this popular stretch of the canal's route.

With the Long Meadow leak now plugged, we can look forward to refilling the canal. This will bring the canal back to being fully navigable from below Drungewick Lock to Southland Lock.





## Pump control replacement – phase 2 nearly done

The navigable section of the canal either side of Loxwood has no permanent source of water. Rainwater run-off from adjoining fields helps – indeed, it can overtop the lock gates after prolonged downpours. We have a licence to pump water up from the adjoining River Lox at Birch Copse and from the River Arun (into which the Lox flows) below Drungewick Lock, but that is interrupted by the Environment Agency (as a term of our licence) just when we need it most – when rainfall is low. For a typical W&A lock with an 8ft drop or rise, it would take only twelve transits for the water lost to fill that international measure of large volumes of water, the Olympic swimming pool.

Even if the locks are not used, evaporation and leakage are the enemy of maintaining the water level at a navigable depth.

So a summer season of boat trips has depended for many years on back-pumping at each navigable lock, and we were sorely affected by the 2023 criminal damage to our controls. Earlier this year, as reported in the previous edition of *Wey-South*, our volunteers completed the new controls and cabinets at Devil's Hole, Loxwood and Brewhurst locks and Birch Copse river pump.



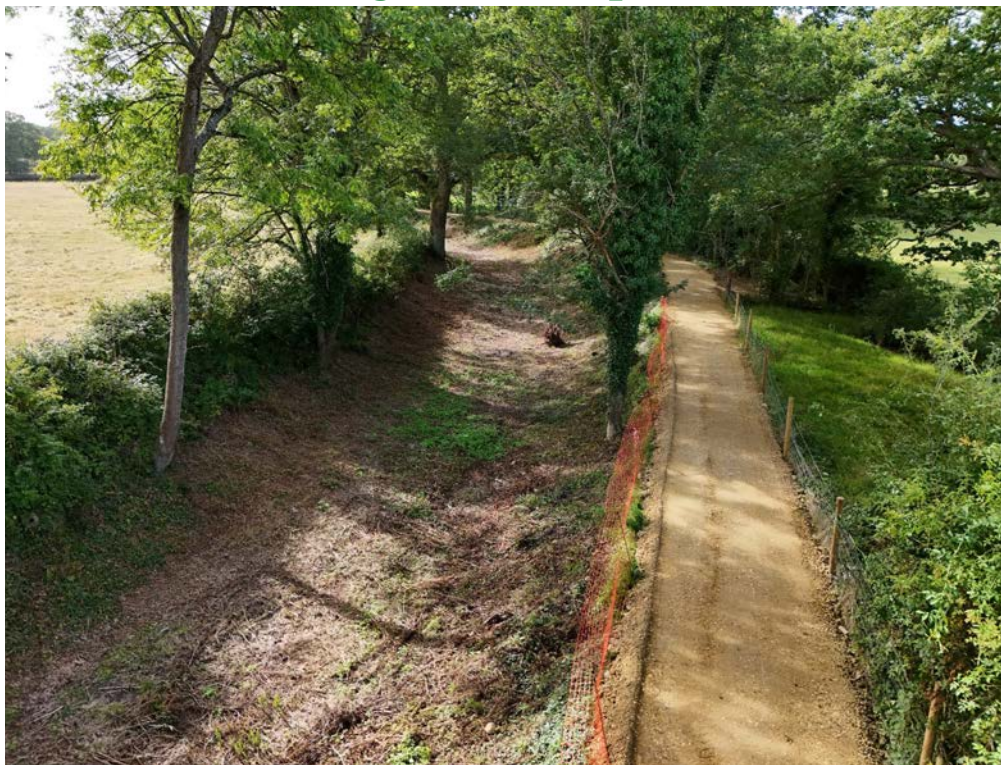
*The pump control cabinet at Drungewick Lock*

Phase 2 of the project has moved on south and is nearly complete. At Baldwin's Knob Lock, a new pump inlet has been cast by the EWG and work has been scheduled to dig a large hole for a new pump chamber. This requires access after harvest-time across the adjoining farmer's field. Four hundred and fifty metres of new electrical cable to power the pumps has been pulled through ducting previously laid under the towpath. The electrical connections have been completed.

The backpumps at Drungewick Lock have been sent away for servicing and a new pump control cabinet has been built. The electrical supply has been connected, to await the delivery and installation of the new pump control equipment. These works together with the servicing of the Arun river pump by the Drungewick winding hole will allow us to manage water levels on the Long Meadow section, assisted by the repair of a long-standing leak – a major project in itself.

The resulting reopening of the Long Meadow section from Drungewick aqueduct to Drungewick Lock will improve our leisure offering, especially for the growing number of paddlers enjoying our canal. They are particularly welcome, as they waste no water! They do not 'lock-through' but portage around the locks using the landing platforms we have recently installed.

## Bonfire Hanger - the towpath restored



An alignment of the stars (specifically, gaining ownership of most of the land involved in 2023: securing landowner agreement to re-lay 60 metres at Rosemary Lane not owned by us; the delay to the Rooks Hill project, and the promise of £45,000 grant assistance) resulted in the resources for rebuilding 1km of public bridleway path at Bonfire Hanger being in place this summer. The work, by our own volunteers and camps for three visiting groups, is now finished.

Our Midweek Working Party had earlier spent many weeks felling trees that had grown in the middle of the path as well as in the canal bank and bed, for a new width of at least 2.5m for future work vehicle access. In June 2024, the worst 700m of path was excavated down to a level base for stone laying. A sandy-coloured (and expensive!) limestone from Fittleworth, near Pulborough, has been chosen for being rounded and therefore kinder to hooves and tyres, this being a bridleway for riders and bikes as well as for pedestrians.



A compound at Gennets Bridge Lock was the base for the project. Materials were trucked in from the main road and stockpiled the week before. Dave Evans (his last paid project with us) hired in six three-tonne swivel dumpers, a sit-on roller and an eight-tonne digger. Training for three volunteers resulted in having nine volunteer dumper drivers to call on. Northern Working Party's Pete Turville devised a railway-based token system to ensure only one dumper occupied a length of path where there was no room for two or more. The team started at the Rosemary Lane end, 1.2 km from the compound, and moved south, laying up to 100m

of base stone per day. The path had been formally closed and signed accordingly, despite which people, mainly cyclists, had to be deterred from trying to pass.

During this first week, 630m of base stone were laid at 200mm depth. 503 tonnes of stone were moved in 260 dumper movements. The plant was driven approximately 600km.

The accommodation for visiting week-1 working party volunteers was once again at Kirdford Village Hall, south of Loxwood - which this time had to be shared for a while with council staff, and then the public, for the General Election.

The path was then reopened in early July, to await a further camp-based work session for a week starting in mid-August to finish the reinstatement – except for some final work by our own volunteers that may still be needed. Subject to that, and except for a short section not in our ownership there is now a broad all-weather bridleway path from Loxwood to Rosemary Lane.

*Bill Nicholson kindly provided the information in this article.*



*The cleared canal bed and banks*



*Base stone ready for laying on the old mud*



*Handing over the dumper permit token*

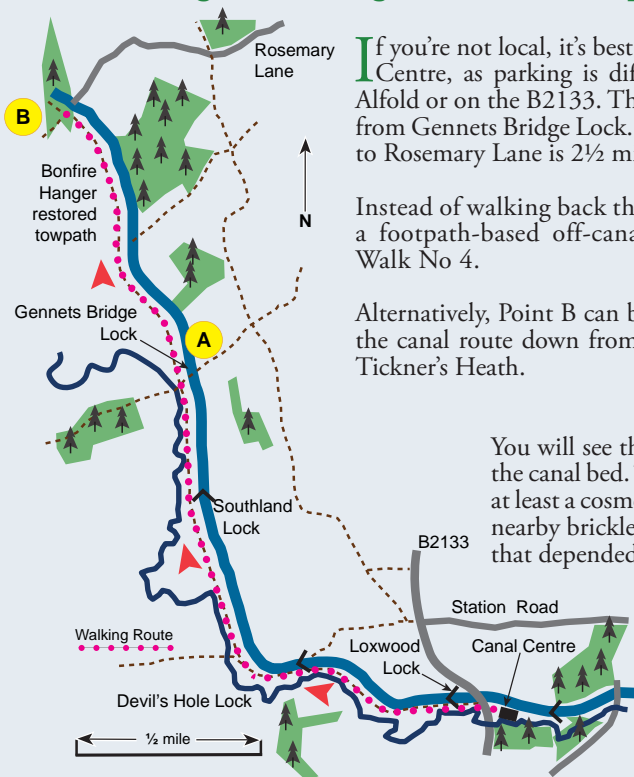
# Bonfire Hanger - the towpath restored (contd)



*The Tuesday team on the path*

**Wey-South 208**

## Bonfire Hanger – walking the restored towpath to Rosemary Lane



If you're not local, it's best to start from the Loxwood Canal Centre, as parking is difficult on either Rosemary Lane, Alfold or on the B2133. The restored towpath (A to B) starts from Gennets Bridge Lock. The total distance from Loxwood to Rosemary Lane is 2½ miles – allow an hour.

Instead of walking back the same way, our website suggests a footpath-based off-canal return route – see Loxwood Walk No 4.

Alternatively, Point B can be reached by a longer walk along the canal route down from the Sidney Wood car park near Tickner's Heath.

## Dams Busted

You will see the remains of three brick dams in the canal bed. These were built in 2002 to create at least a cosmetic presence of water between the nearby brickless lock chambers. In the event, as that depended on run-off, there was little or no water thus penned for much of the year, but, conversely, flooding through a leaky bank into adjacent fields after heavy rain. The dams' centre sections were therefore breached, but the main structures have been left for possible future reinstatement.



*Fencing at Bonfire Hanger*



*One of the three dams*

## So far, a good year for boat trips

Our Loxwood-based boat trips use our three tripboats - in descending order of size, *Wiggonholt*, *Zachariah Keppel* and *Josias Jessop*. The trips are run by our volunteers and the income boosts our funds.

2023 was affected by water shortages and the criminal damage to our pumps. Julian Morgan reports a better 2024. 'We can give a totally positive message on this year's results up to early August. The amount we are able to contribute to our funds should be up substantially.

'We took a deliberate commercial decision to cut back public trips in favour of running more private trips, and this has paid dividends – our 2024 private trip income so far is running at nearly double 2023's. We have a catering partnership with the Onslow Arms, where we make a small commission on the boat meals the pub sells to the private trippers, in return for our providing the table service.

### A balancing act

'Despite fewer public trips, the income from them is also up compared with last year – because most public trips have been well booked, which is also a great morale booster for the crews.

'However, the 2024 public trip season had to be curtailed, with very few trips in August, because of water levels. As it is entitled to do, the Environment Agency has once again stopped us from pumping water into the canal up from the Lox and the Arun, due to lack of water in those rivers. Fortunately, there was still sufficient water to run private trips, and none, to date, has had to be cancelled.'

Our private trips are naturally seasonal and weather-related. Successfully managing this fluctuating demand is volunteer John Robson, who took over from paid staff the running of enquiries and bookings in 2020. His hard work delivers booked trips which then only need the rostering of skipper and crew.



*Idyllic boating at Loxwood*

## The Wey & Arun and Westminster

The July 2024 general election was fought on changes to constituency boundaries that affect our canal. Previously, there were five MPs we needed to liaise with. From now, it is only three.

Shalford moved from Guildford to what is now the Godalming and Ash constituency, retained by Jeremy Hunt (Con), and now containing all the canal from Gun's Mouth south as far as the Surrey-West Sussex county boundary near the site of Gennets Wood Lock.

Over the county border and as far as Long Meadow Winding Hole below Drungewick Lock, the canal's constituency is no longer Chichester but now in an enlarged Arundel and South Downs, represented by

Andrew Griffith (Con). Andrew has visited the canal quite recently and took part in the 2023 Poddle. No doubt in June 2024 his priorities were rightly elsewhere.



*Andrew Griffith at the helm on our canal*

From there, the canal moves into Horsham constituency, gained by John Milne for the Liberal Democrats. Horsham's MP until 2015 had been Francis Maude, our Vice-President and now the Rt Hon Lord Maude of Horsham.

The boundary between these West Sussex constituencies had not changed. It follows the original course of the River Arun south to Pallingham, and not its diversions associated with the canal's construction. The canal itself crosses the river,

and therefore that boundary, at Lordings Aqueduct. The result is that the canal moves several times between the Horsham and the Arundel and South Downs constituencies between Long Meadow and Pallingham.

Jeremy Hunt's constituency has gained not just the northern end of our canal but also nearly all the River Wey's Godalming Navigation. Adding Ash to Godalming has also given Jeremy part of a third leisure waterway – the section of the Basingstoke Canal from Ash Vale to the Surrey-Hampshire border just short of Aldershot, including the modern aqueduct over the A331 dual-carriageway.



*A young Jeremy Hunt visiting our canal in 2009*



*John Milne, newly elected MP for Horsham*

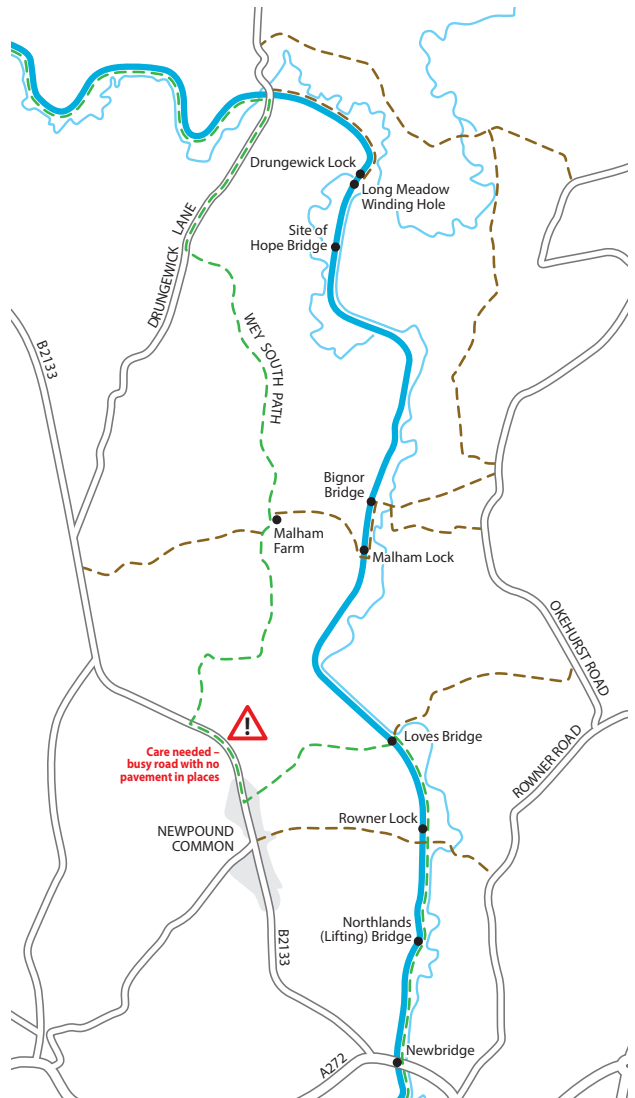
# Drungewick to Newbridge – the canal on foot

*Wey-South's last edition looked at the southern end of our canal – the Arun Navigation section from Newbridge to down to Pallingham. Julian Morgan moves further north to explain what we've done and where you can walk, south from Drungewick (the southern end of the fully restored part of the canal), completing this review of walks back at Newbridge.*

Around 2003, Drungewick to Newbridge (D2N) was being talked about as the best prospect for further extending the Loxwood navigable section. Much work had been done over thirty years but, sadly, vital agreements with landowners could not be reached. Instead, our focus turned to the northern extension beyond Loxwood High Street, a much harder engineering challenge. This was easily enough to keep us busy for more than the next 10 years. With the main restoration effort until at least 2030 remaining north of Loxwood, work on D2N will continue, but as a holding operation at present. In the meantime, there are several pleasant walks to be enjoyed.

## Drungewick – Gateway to the South\*

Between Drungewick and the junction of the Wey & Arun Junction Canal with the Arun Navigation at Newbridge, the canal route is about 3½ miles. Only about half the towpath is on public rights of way. The Wey-South Path has to make some long diversions away from the canal route, which runs very close to the River Arun. In two places the canal builders saved the cost of aqueducts by diverting the river where it would have been crossed and recrossed by the canal, for it to remain on the same side of the canal (in the same way as the builders did at Devil's Hole north of Loxwood). Much restoration work over the years means that there are no huge obstructions to navigation between Newbridge north to Malham Lock, although the two restored lock chambers currently have no gates. In 1984 a work punt navigated the complete Newbridge-Malham section and a video of the voyage is in our archives. \* Credit: Peter Sellers







### Drungewick (Long Meadow) to Loves Bridge

You can walk along the towpath from Drungewick Lane to Long Meadow Winding Hole (*picture above*), passing the restored Drungewick Lock, but you will have to return by the same route. There is no public access to the towpath south of the winding hole; the section is in the ownership of Hope Farm. There was only one original bridge (Hope Bridge) on this section; it has not been restored. One of the points where the River Arun was diverted was in this section.

### Bignor Bridge to Malham Lock



*Bignor Bridge in 2004*

This short section is not on the Wey-South Path but is accessible via public footpaths, either from Okehurst Road (the shorter route) or from the B2133 via Malham Farm. The Wey-South Path goes through Malham Farm so if you are walking this way you could make a diversion to Malham Lock. We restored Bignor Bridge in the 1990s (*see picture left*); before this it was badly decayed but still intact. Restoration work at Malham Lock started in the 1970s when a huge amount of rubbish was removed from the chamber. We built a new lock bridge as the original was beyond repair. The new lock bridge originally had brick parapets but these later had to be demolished to make the

bridge wider for farm traffic. Extensive work has taken place on the lock – it has the sluices and pipework needed for backpumping and at one stage a pair of top lock gates was fitted. Sadly, lock gates deteriorate if not used and they were later removed and put into storage.



*Malham Lock*

### **Malham Lock to Loves Bridge**

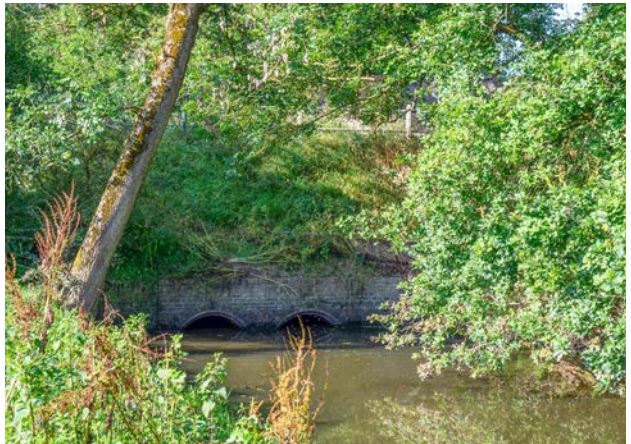
There is no public access to the towpath in this section, but in the past our working parties have desilted the section and repaired a damaged culvert. With special permission from the landowner, the Puddle route has used the towpath in this section on more than one occasion. The second point where the River Arun was diverted was in this section, just north of Loves Bridge. Using public footpaths, you can walk between Malham Lock and Loves Bridge, via Okehurst Road.

### **Loves Bridge to Newbridge**

The Wey-South Path follows the canal towpath throughout this section. Loves Bridge has an unusual shape. It was derelict at the beginning of the 1970s and we finished its restoration in 1992. Rowner Lock saw our very first volunteer working party in 1971. The chamber and lock bridge have been restored. At one stage lock gates were fitted and a work boat passed through the lock – probably the first lock operation on the canal for more than 100 years. As at Malham the lock gates later had to be removed.

Just north of the lock we built a large overflow weir and between the weir and the lock there is a pylon straddling the canal; it would not be an obstacle for future navigation.

There was no original canal bridge at Northlands but after the canal was closed the landowner installed a low-level plank bridge. We replaced this with a steel lifting bridge in the 1980s.



*The canal passes below the A272 at Newbridge - a real obstacle*

## Loxwood Canal Centre – the building and the people

Our Canal Centre at Loxwood, next to the Onslow Arms, is now 13 years old. It serves several roles. As a Visitor Information Centre it is open several days a week in the summer to help and interest passing enquirers. It sells publications and it takes bookings for canal trips. It also acts as a hub for running those trips, including the catering for passengers.

As a result of its multiple uses, its layout is a compromise. Our Thursday Group of volunteers has been busy building new storage in the kitchen area and a better dividing wall between the kitchen and shop areas. New displays and posters are also being developed, so we can better showcase the canal and our restoration work, in progress and planned. The Canal Centre continues to stock guides and a small range of merchandise. However, without people to run it, the Centre has little value.

As you will have read in the last *Wey-South*, Lyn Nash has retired after 13 years as our volunteer Loxwood Canal Centre Manager.

### Help wanted!

Several new volunteers have recently come forward to join the Canal Centre team, and more will be welcome - the more volunteers we can call on, the more hours we can keep the Centre open. But we do not yet have a replacement for Lyn herself, who kindly continues to help out as much as she can.

Could you be the new Manager? There's full training for this important volunteer position. Could you join the volunteer team? Either way, please get in touch by email to: [support@weyaron.org.uk](mailto:support@weyaron.org.uk)





*A drone shot of recent bank repair work at Long Meadow. We are looking north  
– Drungewick Lane is visible in the distance – and the canal is the darker green strip on the left.*

## Long Meadow leaks plugged

For some time, we've been unable to use the beautiful half-mile from the Drungewick Lane Bridge to Drungewick Lock at the southern end of the navigable section. This is because of leaks into the adjoining Long Meadow field, despite repairs attempted in 2021. The leakage was mainly around the roots of felled trees left in the canal bank - presumably they had begun to shrink or rot, opening gaps around them.

Earlier this year, a team under Dave Evans had extracted the stumps. With the canal empty, the EWG began again to seal the leaks. The previous sealing operation undertaken by the group had been by using Bentomat®, which is a membrane consisting of a layer of bentonite clay between two outer layers of non-woven fabric. When covered with water, the Bentonite clay layer expands by up to eight times to form an impervious barrier. Bentomat® is supplied in long, wide rolls and was found to be very heavy to handle and manipulate into position, particularly in the restricted width of the towpath.



*One of the offending tree roots after removal*

EWG's team leader Dennis Gillen reports:

“To overcome the difficulty of using Bentomat® - and to save expenditure - we decided to use a different product called Terraseal®, which is a single layer of fabric. It is much lighter than Bentonite and is available in smaller roll sizes, making it much easier to cut and locate. It has the added advantage of being self-sealing if it is punctured by a tree root or stone.

“We excavated the canal bank to a depth of 30cms creating a smooth surface. We then laid the Terraseal® and anchored it in a trench at the edge of the towpath. With the Terraseal® membrane in place and lapped over the previous layer, we finally relaid the excavated earth, compacting and grading it to form the canal bank again.

“We could have just covered the area of the bank where the tree stumps were removed, at five locations ranging from seven to fifty metres in length between sections of original Bentomat®. However, we decided we would also seal the whole of the canal bank from where the previous sealing ended to a point nearly at Drungewick Bridge. This ensured that all possible Long Meadow leakage areas would be covered. A total of 150 linear metres of canal have thus been upgraded with Terraseal, taking the total length of previous and new canal bed leak-proofing to 350 metres.”

As the aerial picture (left) shows, the growth in the empty canal bed will need to be addressed before the section is refilled for navigation.



*Terraseal membrane in place*

## Poddle 2024

It is some kind of miracle but the weather on the day of our sponsored walk, the Poddle, has rarely been bad – maybe a little warm sometimes, and there was one year when it poured – on June 2nd 2024 the British weather delivered the goods yet again. After a couple of years when the route explored more distant parts, this year's walk came 'home' to the Surrey section of our canal.

The morning part followed the canal route very closely. Setting off from Snoxhall Community Centre in Cranleigh, the first section was almost a straight line across Cranleigh's new Knowle Park and past new housing to join the towpath south of Elmbridge Road. With special permission, walkers were able to go through the grounds of The Wayside (where the Canal Superintendent lived in the later days of the canal's commercial life). Then the route continued along the canal past Rye Farm, where we have planning permission to install a new towpath. Past the site of Rye Farm Bridge (nothing to be seen now), the canal is filled in. Going across the Downs Link, the route joined the Wey-South Path to reach the towpath again near the 'Navvies' Hole' just south of Run Common Road. This was a former winding hole that became a popular bathing and wild swimming site after the canal closed.



*Keith & Sandra Tidey in their matching 2014 Poddle T-shirts, slightly amended*

After another short section of towpath, the morning Refreshment Point was near a large house that became a beer house in the early 1800s. It had several names including The Barge Inn and The Canal Arms. After the canal closed it became The Railway Arms. From here the canal route goes across a field to the site of Hazel Wood Bridge but this is farmland and the Poddle route returned to the Downs Link to bypass this section.

Near Rushett Farm, walkers had the unusual opportunity to walk down the dry canal bed and past the site of Fanesbridge Lock (Lock 18), where there was one of the unsuccessful windpumps installed in the 1830s, then along the canal (partially filled in) at Rooks Hill Farm to reach Birtley Bridge 1. (Please note that although we own a section of the canal route south of Birtley Bridge 1, there is currently no public access – we made special arrangements for the Poddle.) Between the two lifting bridges Birtley Bridges 1 and 2, officially opened in October 2023, Poddlers followed the popular circular walk along the towpath before leaving the canal route for the last time and heading for Shamley Green.

After the lunch stop at the Arbuthnot Hall, or picnic-style on the village green, the afternoon route headed for the hills, with some great views, finally coming down across Smithbrook Common to the afternoon Refreshment Point – Richard & Vanessa Smith started refuelling walkers for the final leg around 1979 and have missed very few Poddles since – an extraordinary record. The final section was through Rowly and along the Downs Link back to the start point.

*Chris Tavener, Chief Organiser, adds:* “This successful event is on course to raise a total of about £10,000 when Gift Aid is included. This is a very useful sum and we would like to offer grateful

thanks to all those walkers who supported the walk (116 was the official total) and raised this amount.

The walk doesn't take place without considerable help from a great 'team' of helpers - in particular:

- Jim Nunn and Paul Tilley who gave considerable help in surveying the route, waymarking and clearing overgrown sections in the week before the event.
- Richard Marchi for drawing maps and putting together the Walkers Guide.
- Margaret Darvill who advised on all aspects of the overall organisation, booked the halls that had been identified for the start/finish and the lunch stop, ordered and delivered the food for lunch and gave help on the day.
- Graham and Carol Moore who acted as 'Last Man', collecting up the waymarking signs and making sure no-one was left behind.



*At Smithwood Common the waymarker post should give these walkers a clue*

and then all those who helped on the day at 'sign in' and 'sign off' at Cranleigh, prepared and served food at the Shamley Green lunch stop, manned the morning and afternoon refreshment stops, provided First Aid cover and marshalled at the road crossings. We thank all walkers, sponsors and helpers very much.”

As you can see the whole event needs a considerable number of volunteers and we welcome anyone who would like to be involved in the future. We urgently need a volunteer to come forward to be the lead organiser for the event otherwise this year's Poddle will be the last. We will be happy to discuss the role with anyone who is interested. While there is a lot of background work to be undertaken it is an enjoyable event to organise and a great pleasure, and you will get great satisfaction from the enjoyment walkers have taking part, and the money raised for our funds.



*Walkers stop to admire Birtley Bridge*

## Some of our Yesterdays

In this, the first of an occasional series, the *Wey-South* team look back at what we were reporting 50, 25 and 10 years ago.

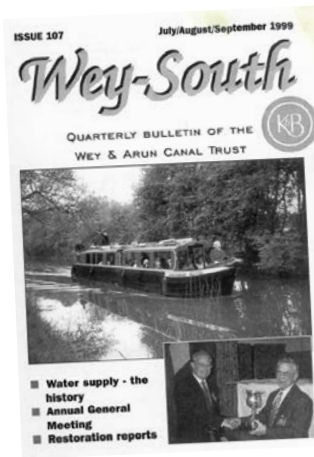
### Issue 11, August 1974

The lead item of this 10-page typewritten Newsletter – no pictures – was the ‘Launching of the Wey-South Project’, the plans for full restoration announced at Petworth House after three years’ work including a restoration survey, which had proved that ‘a complete restoration of the canal is possible and practical’. There had been a cruise on the Wey to enthuse riparian landowners. A supportive leader from the London Evening Standard was quoted as saying that ‘The recreational advantages [of restoration] extend to the work of reclamation itself. The Trust estimates that a private commercial enterprise might set the cost of restoring the 20 odd miles of waterway at £2,000,000 – roughly the cost of two miles of new motorway. But, with almost entirely voluntary labour and the expensive equipment hired either for free or at a preferential discount from local contractors or national operators, the Trust hopes to restore the Wey and Arun to full working order for a fraction of that sum.’

Subscriptions then were £1.50 for ordinary membership and £2.50 for family membership.

‘Work Progress’ included the ‘repair of the breach at Birtley’ requiring 900 cubic yards of infill. (This was unsuccessful and had to be redone two years later, requiring even more material.) A technical committee was examining ‘methods of providing a suitable crossing at Iron Bridge, Birtley’: 49 years later, in 2023, Birtley Bridge 2 was opened.

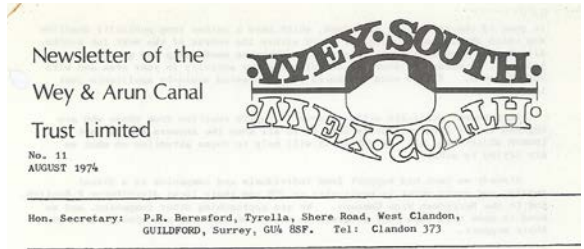
For ongoing work at the southern end, there was an appeal for donations of fencing, for glass fibre resin and matting to repair a work pontoon, for a volunteer to turn it into a floating dredger or weed clearer – and for a Fordson tractor and trailer, if you happened to have one spare.



### Issue 107, July 1999

In this issue Dave Wedd wrote “On 2nd May, after a very leisurely paddle down from Barnsill Bridge to the [Drungewick] Aqueduct site and a cup of coffee served by Jo Beagles, we set off for Baldwins Knob Lock, Brewhurst Lock, and the lunch stop at the Onslow Arms.

‘Two open canoes and two kayaks portaged over the Loxwood High Street, risking life and limb amongst the speeding cars, and launched into the weeds beyond. Mostly the water was about 2ft deep, but the weeds were twice that height, so at times it was difficult to see any water at all.



#### THE LAUNCHING OF THE "WEY-SOUTH PROJECT."

Many of our readers were present at our Official Launch, celebrated by the Vine and Cheese party at Petworth House on June 24th, but that occasion was merely the outward evidence of a great deal of activity already carried out and planned for months to come.

First let us answer the question, "Why have an Official Launch for something that has already been going on for three years?" The answer is simply that all the work to date has been designed to prove that complete restoration of the Canal is possible and practical. Having proved this and having produced the comprehensive Restoration Survey that provides the answers to the potential problems, it is now



‘As we approached Devils Hole lock we were met by some of Eric Walker’s team who told us there was more water above the lock than down here. Wheels were quickly fitted to the heavy open canoes, and we set off for the top of the lock, pausing to admire the restoration work but unable to take photos due to the lack of hard hats on the volunteers.



*This photo of the intrepid explorers appeared in issue 107, in black and white of course*

‘Above the lock it was initially clear, with little weed growth due to the surrounding trees, but soon we were paddling amongst bushes and saplings. ...a dam blocked our progress..... Southlands Lock was just the other side of the dam, but there were no visible remains of the structure. Presumably the lock chamber had suffered the same fate as Devils Hole, where the force of the explosions had been so great that entire walls have been found upside down, with coping stones underneath the brickwork.

‘Two boats returned the full distance by water.....and we learned that we were the first boats to have navigated up the canal above Devils Hole in the last 130 years!’

### Issue 168, September 2014

Jim Phillips reported the opening of the rebuilt Southland Lock, which remains the northern end of the navigable Loxwood section. It had been professionally designed by Hockley & Dawson, with its concrete shell constructed by Burras Piling, and lock gates by Hargreaves of Halifax. The facing bricks came from Rudgwick. Three years of further work by a hundred volunteers under Eric Walker culminated in a ceremony attended by about 150 members and visitors. The lock was formally re-opened by Simon and Sally Carter of adjoining Headsfoldwood Farm, arriving in *Josias Jessop* with chairman Sally Schupke. The lock was then visited by a trip by *Wiggonholt*.

An ambitious programme of works for the next 12 months included progressing the new Compasses Bridge was set out.

Twenty years of service by narrow tripboat *Zachariah Keppel* were celebrated. She had arrived, second-hand, as *Elsetee* and, duly renamed, benefitted from a policy of continuous improvement – including a new hull. Julian Morgan compared her with ‘the knife that’s had three new handles and four new blades’.

Membership was now 2,992. A deal had been done with British Canoeing to allow its members to use the Loxwood section free of charge.

Work was in progress on planning the reconnection of the canal to the river Wey, the first stage of the Bramley Link to bypass, via Cranleigh Waters, the overbuilt section of the canal between Birtley and the Wey.



## Dragonflies on the canal



*Brown Hawker (above)      Blue Emperor (right)*



In the summer dragonflies can be some of the most spectacular wildlife on the canal. When the sun shines they fly low over the water, feeding on other flying insects – mostly small ones, but they can catch butterflies, bees or even other dragonflies. Dragonflies are generally larger than their damselfly cousins and normally rest with their wings open. The canal, with its fresh, calm water, is ideal for them and recently I have met a couple of camera-wielding folk on the Loxwood towpath asking where the best place to see dragonflies is. This must count as a conservation success story for us.



Dragonflies generally do not start flying until May/June and can sometimes be seen as late as November.

For a while I have been trying to capture dragonflies in flight along the canal. This has called for great patience but the results have been rewarding. All the pictures were taken on the canal either in Loxwood or Shalford.

*Julian Morgan*



*Southern Hawker*



*Common Darter*



*Migrant Hawker*

## The 2024 Arun Small Boat Rally



We have organised this annual event for several years, having taken it over from its founder the Solent & Arun Branch of the Inland Waterways Association (now defunct). The route is northwards up the tidal Arun, from either Pulborough or Stopham (as the participants choose), to Pallingham Farm Bridge – and back, a total distance of up to 8 miles. Pallingham is both the northern end of the Arun tideway and the southern end of the Wey & Arun Canal. The river becomes increasingly narrow and shallow upstream, and the event helps keep it open for navigation as part of our ‘Lost Route to the Sea’.

‘A record number of canoeists, kayakers and paddleboarders took part this year on Sunday 23rd June. The lovely mid-summer weather topped off a gorgeous paddle for all through this beautiful part of the Sussex Weald’, reports Trust organiser Ashley Bowen. ‘About 50 craft launched, some from Pulborough and some from Stopham, with about 30 making it all the way up to Pallingham.’



The holding of the event had in fact been in doubt. At the end of April, two very large trees had fallen across the river at Stopham, blocking it entirely. This gave the organisers a major cause for concern. The Environment Agency, which controls the river, was alerted and promised it would clear the obstruction before the date of the rally. After pausing to allow the landowner time to cut and bale hay before entering his land, the EA was as good as its word and successfully cleared the channel, finishing just two days before the rally – to the great relief of our team.

Naturally, the event will be repeated in 2025. We plan further small boat rallies on the canal itself, as it is already ideal for paddled craft. On our three miles around Loxwood, our locks feature platforms above and below for portaging. There is also now the recently-restored lock-free Dunsfold Cutting section next to Dunsfold Airfield (now being redeveloped as Dunsfold Park). This is accessible to us, with Dunsfold Park’s permission, for our special events, via the Thriscutt Slipway.

## The Earl gets an Act to build his canal

*The story of our canal (continued)*

In 1811, the committee set up by the Earl of Egremont to promote a canal from the river Wey to the Arun Navigation received a favourable feasibility report from its recently-appointed engineer Josias Jessop. The committee, now enlarged and chaired by the Earl of Onslow, set in hand an application for a parliamentary bill for an Act to authorise it, and successfully invited subscriptions from potential shareholders for the planned cost of the canal's construction.

An Act of Parliament was essential for a transport project passing through multiple ownerships – it still is - a recent example is the Act for the new High Speed 2 rail line.

### Forming a Company

The only sensible way for investors to come together to build and run the canal, with voting powers in proportion to their investments, was by creating a Company. At the time, that in itself required an Act of Parliament. Companies were the exception rather than the rule for running businesses. It would not be a 'limited company' (Co. Ltd), as that was not yet legally possible. The liability of investors was not restricted to the value of their investment, and so they were at risk of losing everything in the event of some

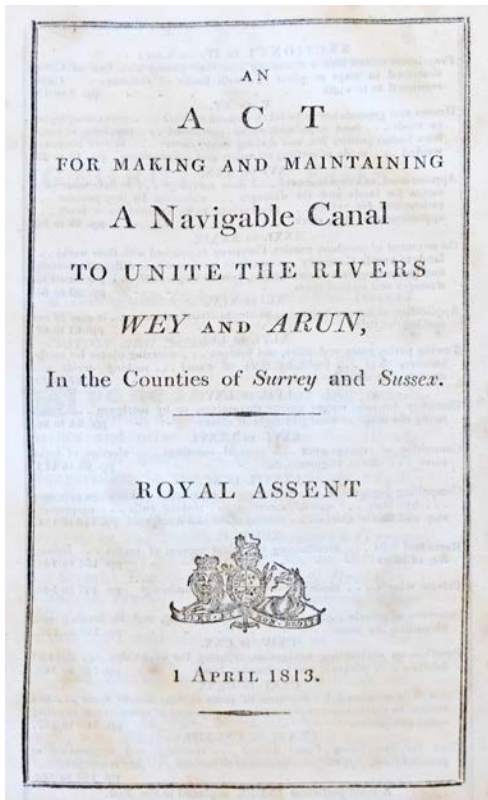
major catastrophe. Thus, the Act would create 'One body Politic and Corporate, by the Name of "The Company of Proprietors of the Wey and Arun Junction Canal".'

The Act would set out the line of the canal (with scope for small adjustments), and empower the compulsory purchase of the land required, setting out how the price of compensation was to be determined. It would state the specifications for the canal's construction, and the tolls chargeable on goods in transit.

### Built on clay ?

The public prospectus correctly asserted that the canal did not need any tunnel, and that no property would need to be demolished. It was literally on less safe ground in claiming that the canal would 'pass through a country whose soil is principally clay, presenting no difficulties and with a plentiful supply of water in the driest seasons'. We now know, to our considerable cost, that the canal's water resources and its geology are far less favourable. It also claimed that there would be 'no injury to any mill'. The canal's Act in fact had to provide for compensation for Rowner Mill in the event of loss of water.

Jessop had no doubt surveyed possible routes as best as he and his assistants could. His position was paradoxical. There could be no canal without a reasonably firm line for it enshrined in an Act of Parliament. Without that Act, however, he had no right to enter private land to survey any route. In those pre-Ordnance Survey days, all the mapping would have to be his own. As



with any such scheme, there would be supportive landowners but also opponents. Where access was denied, London's Lost Route to the Sea (PAL Vine) tells us that 'the engineer's men were inclined to take matters into their own hands, with the result that in some quarters opposition to the proposed canal became even more determined' – and strong opposition in Parliament could result in the Bill being voted down.

### Pales and Rails

Many objectors could be persuaded to change their minds. For some, reasoned argument sufficed. Where that failed, some could be bought off with additional payment. For a few powerful landowners, the Act had to make additional explicit provisions. For instance, although it would generally provide for all the canal to be fenced off, at the canal's expense, from the lands through which it passed, it had to be specifically stated that the existing 'Pale or Fence round the Park of Lands of... Lord Grantley in the parish of Bramley' was not to be taken down until the canal's alignment was marked out and the canal company had 'erected a Wall or other good and sufficient Fence of Oak Pales and Rails, of the height of Six Feet at the least' between the estate and the canal. The Company had specifically to 'make the Towing Path... on the West Side' of the canal. (Grantley's Wonesh Hall was, unsurprisingly, on its east side.) Four other specific 'deals' were enshrined in the Act.

Another compromise was to deviate from the usual outright purchase of land for the canal in the case of its planned Vachery Reservoir, by giving the landowner Thomas Lowndes the right instead merely to lease the land concerned to the Canal Company.

### Objection

The objections of one group of objectors could not be assuaged – namely, landowners at Alford. As explained in Wey-South 206, March 2024, Jessop was forced to bypass Alford and extend the summit level, now the Dunsfold Cutting, further south-west to Sidney Wood, from where the canal could begin a flight of eight locks down to near the Lox at Gennets Bridge. This added 1½ to the 4½ miles of his original nearly-straight line from near Fast Bridge to Brewhurst.

Josias Jessop was closely involved with all these negotiations, with promoting the cause of the canal at the Committee stage of the Bill in Parliament and with rebutting remaining objections. The Act, with its 133 sections, passed into law on 1st April 1813. Construction could now begin.



ANNO QUINQUAGESIMO TERTIO

## GEORGII III. REGIS.

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### Cap. 19.

An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal, to unite the Rivers *Wey* and *Arun*, in the Counties of *Surrey* and *Suffex*. [1st April 1813.]

**W**HEREAS the making and maintaining a Canal, navigable for Boats, Barges and other Vessels, from the River *Wey*, at or near to a certain Place called *Stonebridge*, in the Parish of *Shalford*, in the County of *Surrey*, to the River *Arun*, at or near to a certain Place called *Newbridge*, in the Parish of *Wijborough Green*, in the County of *Suffex*, in, to, or through the several Parishes of *Shalford*, *Bramley*, *Wonesh*, *Dunsfold*, *Cranley*, *Hastcomb* and *Alford*, or some or one of them, in the County of *Surrey*; and also, that Part of the said Parish of *Alford* which is situate or lying in the said County of *Suffex*, and in, to, or through the several Parishes of *Kirdford*, *Wijborough Green*, *Rudgwick*, *Bilingsbursh*, and *Pulborough*, in the said County of *Suffex*; would not only open a short, easy and commodious Inland Communication between the Port of *London* and the Port of *Arundel*, in the said County of *Suffex*, avoid a long circuitous and dangerous Navigation in the open Sea, and greatly facilitate the Conveyance of Goods, Wares, and Merchandize, between the said Ports and the Town and Port of *Portsmouth*, and the several other Towns, Districts or Places through or near which the said Canal is intended to be made, at a much cheaper Rate than by any other Inland Navigation which can be made; but would also tend to promote the Improvement and better Cultivation of the circumjacent Country, by the Conveyance of Manure, and would be otherwise of great

[Loc. & Per.] 4 L public

*To be continued*

## Meet the volunteer - Gordon Powell

### When did you first get to know about the Wey & Arun Canal and our work?

I moved into Ifold (next to Loxwood) in 2006 and started to discover the canal between these villages when walking our dog. At that time, the section of canal from Ifold down to Loxwood was not in water and the Loxwood road crossing had not been completed. I saw volunteer groups tackle large and complex projects, and I started to take an interest. I wondered how a local charity could undertake and finance these large and expensive projects.

### When did you start volunteering with us ?

I took the opportunity to retire early in 2021 and immediately signed up to volunteer with the Northern Working Party at Tickner's Heath Crossing. One of my early jobs was laying and fixing the oak planks on the bridleway bridge.

### What experience or skills did you bring to volunteering ?

None! I had sat behind a desk for most of my career (a mix of Commercial and IT roles) but I had a desire to get hands-on again after completing a Civil Engineering degree nearly 40 years ago. So, other than some basic DIY know-how, I have had to learn on the job and acquire new skills with the help of other volunteers and our Operations Team. The Trust also ensured I completed a Construction Supervisor course to ensure I was au fait with Health & Safety requirements.

### What is your role now ?

I have two roles. First, I'm the Working Party Lead for the Northern Working Party. I enjoy working with a great group of volunteers each Tuesday. With the pause of the Tickner's Heath Crossing project, we have been undertaking a variety of smaller projects. I have enjoyed learning many new skills and making a lot of new friends.

My second role is being responsible for our Communications and Fundraising. I have been helping out in this area for the last 18 months, but in May this year I was co-opted onto the Board, to lead our Communication and Fundraising efforts. Fortunately, I am not on my own! We have a Communications Team which produces *Wey-South* magazine and other publications and newsletters. I help out with some editorial input, but the writing, layout and photography is a team effort by Trevor Lewis, Julian Morgan, Jonathan Copeland and Keith Lyall. Martyn Lewis produces our monthly e-newsletter.

I am responsible for content on our website and Facebook posts, with the support of the Communications Team and technical help and advice from our brilliant webmaster Tom Crawshaw. You may have noticed a few subtle changes recently, and there's more to follow.



On the fundraising side I am supported by Caroline Roberts who is leading our grant-funding applications, including the recently successful grants of £41k from Waverley Borough Council and £5k from Alfold Parish Council. for the Bonfire Hanger footpath.

However, we would welcome more help with Communications and Fundraising – and also with Events. So if you can spare some time and want to develop your skills in any of these areas, I would love to hear from you.

### **What makes your day ?**

Working as part of a team and hearing the really positive feedback and appreciation from the public and local landowners on what we are achieving. Listening to the ideas of fellow volunteers and understanding how much the local community appreciate what we are achieving maintains my motivation to do more.

### **What are the big challenges we face in the next years ?**

Our priority projects and 2030 vision will require us to generate a lot of new income to fund the projects (in addition to securing planning permissions and having landowner support). We therefore need to secure more grants from funding bodies, to continue to appeal to our members for donations and to expand our supporter base.

Community engagement – as supportive and generous as our members are, we need to do more to get the local community engaged. Community benefits are key to our grant applications and engagement will translate into new supporters and volunteers.

Getting the next generation involved – most of our volunteers are retired and we have very few young volunteers. We must find ways to get a younger age group engaged, to continue and expand our work.

### **What are your other interests ?**

Walking and Rugby Union. My wife Alison and I are season ticket holders at Harlequins and so enjoy watching the most entertaining rugby team in the English Premiership at the Twickenham Stoop and at the odd away game.

I love the outdoors and the challenge of some hill-walking when I can get away with friends. Climbing the highest peak in Northern Ireland (Slieve Donald) was very rewarding. I also enjoy tackling some landscaping projects at home and the skills I have learnt while volunteering have come in very useful.

*Gordon behind the wheel of our dumper truck*



## Restoration and Maintenance News

Ten teams of volunteers are out most weeks, restoring the canal and maintaining what we've restored. They're backed by the Tickner's Depot volunteers. Come and join us!

The full story of these efforts is recorded monthly in Working Party News – see under 'News' on our website – or send an email to [listadmin@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:listadmin@weyandarun.co.uk) to receive an electronic version. Working Party News lists the contacts for each team.

### Refurbishing 'Pauline'



Our dredger has received much-needed care and attention. She was taken ashore at Drungewick Slip by the Dredger Group – not a simple job, given her draught. As is regularly needed for any canal craft, her hull was 'blackened' with bitumen-based paint. Anti-corrosion anodes were then fitted, for the first time. (These are sacrificial strips of zinc that preferentially erode before the hull does, where there is an electrical reaction between boat and water.) The 50 year-old hull has lasted surprisingly well without

anodes, but a hull-thickness survey indicated areas where it will need attention. So, in a few years' time when next she is slipped, the blacking will first have to be grit-blasted off.

The hull received internal treatment, with four buckets of rust flakes removed from the aft bilge area. Welding work included repairing mooring bollards and patching around her weed hatch. Pauline's excavator arm and associated hydraulics were attended to. Relaunching her for her winter's work could be as tricky as slipping her was, as a good depth of canal is needed.

Before her trip ashore, *Pauline* had been busy nearby, dredging the winding hole below Baldwin's Knob Lock. The 'arising' are deposited ashore, either directly or via a short trip in the 'tub' (see *Wey-South* 207, p33). These silt deposits, being wet, deep and sometimes odorous, can only be left safely on the non-towpath side. This is often a two-stage process, since the arising are initially half water, and are left to drain and settle, in the process giving any aquatic fauna the opportunity to slither back into the canal. Later, a further layer can be deposited on top. Vegetation grows quickly on this organic environment.





## MWWP improves the views



The Midweek Working Party played a major part in the Bonfire Hanger towpath project by clearing the adjacent canal bed. This will further improve the visual experience for users. Further south, it repainted Haybarn Swingbridge in 'canal green'. The bridge is an important piece of infrastructure, as the Sussex Diamond Way and the Wey-South Path meet and cross the canal here. (The original Haybarn brick bridge was demolished many years ago and replaced with a low-level concrete structure, which we removed and, in 2005, installed in its place this swing bridge, acquired 'pre-loved' from the Leeds & Liverpool Canal.)

## Landing stages – stopping the rot

All we do to restore or upgrade the canal has maintenance implications for the future. The Long Meadow section at Drungewick is topped and tailed by landing stages, never original features of the canal, one near the slipway and the other down at the lock. At present the main beneficiaries are paddlecraft - for launching and portaging. Despite this light usage, both stages needed attention, to bearers and planks that were beginning to rot or fail. They were attended to by the Thursday Group (slipway) and the Northern Working Party (lock).



## Casting an outfall

How do you create a new concrete outfall that, by definition, will always be partly underwater? If you're the EWG, you cast it as a single entity at the Depot and then transport it to site.

## More plugging

Long Meadow has not been the only place suffering leakage (see p20). Earlier, EWG had addressed a similar problem between the Birtley Bridges, albeit on a smaller scale. Once again, the culprit was a large tree stump in the canal bank, around which water was percolating out of the canal. The remedy was the same - the stump was dug out and extracted, then Terraseal waterproof sealing membrane was laid over the gap. This was covered with clay and the bank was restored.



## Our canal – a healthier and safer workplace

Health and Safety is of great importance to us. It is a major consideration in the planning and carrying out of work along the canal. ‘Getting Home Safe’ after a day’s volunteering on the canal is the slogan we must all remember and support. Health & Safety (H&S) must be kept as a focus of our attention, not only for those managing our activities but also those partaking in them: it is the responsibility of us all - employees and volunteers, working party leaders and participants alike.

- We have now a new, refreshed H&S Policy, which is available to all volunteers, and which sets out our systems and our aims.
- We have also introduced standardised Site Attendance Sheets to ensure potential risks are identified at all working parties for all working party participants and that good and safe practice is shared.
- We will also shortly be rolling out training to working party leaders, and we have plans for more training in the future.

The H&S Policy also sets out our aims in terms of welfare for employees and volunteers and to this end we have bought a second Welfare Unit (which includes a toilet, canteen area and drying room) which can be moved to work sites. This unit was first used recently for the work taking place at Bonfire Hanger.

To help us in these objectives, the Trust has appointed a Health & Safety Consultant, Trevor Craggs of Absolute Health and Safety Services, whom many volunteers have now met as he visits working parties and offers advice. His role is to assist us in reviewing our processes and to make improvements, and to help us ensure everyone is kept safe.

New and improved First Aid kits have been issued to all working parties and placed in all Trust vehicles. Any opened or out-of-date kit should now be returned to the depot and replaced with a new kit.

Health & Safety is something we can all contribute to for the benefit of us all. We encourage everyone to share any thoughts they may have about the working practices that they are involved in or see.

*Giles Eyre*  
Director Lead on Health & Safety

## Christmas Cards and Raffle

Halloween may still be ahead of us, but our elves have been busy getting ready for Christmas with a new Christmas card design (see picture) now available to buy along with our annual Christmas Raffle tickets.

Head to our website to purchase cards and raffle tickets. However, if the digital world is not for you, please see the card flyer and raffle tickets in this edition to submit your card orders and raffle purchases by post.



## Membership report

The Trust has had an excellent spring and early-summer of recruitment! 65 new members joined us in the last quarter taking our total membership to 2,839. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the following new members.

<i>Simone Allcock</i>	<i>Alison &amp; Peter Allison</i>	<i>Colin Arthur</i>	<i>Irene Aspinall</i>
<i>Anne Bolton</i>	<i>Maria &amp; Gary Booker</i>	<i>Stella &amp; David Buchan</i>	<i>Margareth &amp; Peter Barker</i>
<i>Alan Buxton</i>	<i>Marilyn &amp; Bryan Catt</i>	<i>Diana Charles</i>	<i>Sharron &amp; Colin Chapman</i>
<i>Stephanie Christensen</i>	<i>Dave Codd</i>	<i>Jane &amp; Derek Cooper</i>	<i>Jez Cowley</i>
<i>Terry Duhig</i>	<i>Philip Frederick</i>	<i>Jonathan Gayner</i>	<i>Angela &amp; Douglas Edmonds</i>
<i>Jane &amp; Paul Ferguson</i>	<i>Nicola &amp; Philip Gardner</i>	<i>Daryl Gibbard</i>	<i>Donna Gorin</i>
<i>John Green</i>	<i>David Griffiths</i>	<i>Edward Grinstead</i>	<i>Jackie Ince</i>
<i>Adam Jennings-Frisby</i>	<i>Claire &amp; Robert Kershaw</i>	<i>Yazmin &amp; Chris Hodgson</i>	<i>Castillo</i>
<i>Scarlett &amp; Matt Lambert</i>	<i>Noel Millier</i>	<i>John Mitchison</i>	<i>Graham Mugeridge</i>
<i>Carolyn Nash</i>	<i>Michael O'Driscoll</i>	<i>Robert Palgrave</i>	<i>Maura &amp; James Peters</i>
<i>Sonia &amp; Chris Pollington</i>	<i>Michael Power</i>	<i>Martin Sanderson</i>	<i>Jean &amp; Graham Taylor</i>
<i>Tim Taylor</i>	<i>Hilary &amp; Nicholas Thrupp</i>	<i>Madeleine Vaughan</i>	<i>Ros Wild</i>
<i>Lucy Wood</i>			

We have learned with regret of the death of:

<i>Chris Penney</i>	<i>Carolyn Mudford</i>	<i>Derek Tourle</i>	<i>John Greenwood</i>
<i>James Kinnear</i>	<i>Jean Connel</i>	<i>John Sayles</i>	<i>Albert Nash</i>
<i>John Miller</i>	<i>Raymond Skelhorn</i>		

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@weyarun.org.uk

*Wey-South* is the magazine of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust which is dedicated to restoring the former inland waterway route between the River Wey and the River Arun and to conserving and improving it for the benefit of everyone.

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**All communications and copy either by post to *Wey-South* at the Office, or by email to [weysouth@weyarun.org.uk](mailto:weysouth@weyarun.org.uk).**

**Address change, non-delivery, etc. : please notify the Membership Secretary at the Office or email to [membership@weyarun.org.uk](mailto:membership@weyarun.org.uk).**

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The Wey & Arun Canal Trust, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Guildford GU4 8EQ  
Email: [support@weyarun.org.uk](mailto:support@weyarun.org.uk) Tel: 01483 505566**

## Could you give more to your canal?

Our member subscriptions produce only 6% of our annual income (2022 figures). For every £1.00 we received from subscriptions, we were blessed with donations and legacies of £6.50 – which accounted however for only 42% of our total income. By comparison, some well-known Charities get up to 60% of their total income from legacies alone. Could you give more? Here's how.

### Give more each month, and/or give a lump sum

As you are supporting a registered charity, income tax-payers can choose to 'GiftAid' additional contributions, which means that for every £1.00 you are giving, we can claim a further £0.25 from HMRC – and you can still reclaim any higher-rate tax element. Our 'Thank You' for this is membership of our Milestone Club, which includes invitations to some free cruises on our tripboats.

And, of course, please support our occasional appeals for specific projects.

### Make a gift to the Trust in your will

The website tells you how to 'Leave a Legacy', either in a new will or as a codicil to an existing will. Gifts in wills to charities like us are favourably treated for Inheritance Tax purposes.

For further details go to : [Support the Trust / Donate on our website.](#)



# Wey & Arun 2024 Christmas Cards are now on sale



You can choose between

- \* A pack of six cards featuring our new 2024 design (Santa Special at Brewhurst Lock)
- \* A mixed pack of three different cards (two of each design, including our new 2024 card)
- \* A5 size cards with envelope
- \* The inside of the cards reads "Season's Greetings"
- \* Price: £6 per pack of six
- \* Postage for up to two packs: £3



Back of cards

- On sale at the Loxwood Canal Centre, (01403 753999, [canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk](mailto:canalcentre@weyandarun.co.uk)). Open Friday, Saturday & Sunday 11am-3pm, until the end of December
- Or visit our website and buy online:- [www.weyarun.org.uk/shop](http://www.weyarun.org.uk/shop)
- Or to order by telephone please contact the Loxwood Canal Centre, details as above
- Or to order by post please use the form below
- The cards will be on sale at the Annual Meeting at Alfold on Oct 19th



To: Wey & Arun Canal Trust, The Granary, Flitchfold Farm, Loxwood RH14 0RH

Please supply ..... packs of 2024 Christmas Cards (&/or) ..... mixed packs at £6 per pack

Name:- .....

Address:- .....

.....

.....

Telephone:- .....

Email:- .....

- Please add £3 postage for up to two packs of cards
- For extra cards please contact the Loxwood Canal Centre to confirm postage
- Cheques payable to: W&A Enterprises Ltd
- For card payment contact the Loxwood Canal Centre

# Christmas Raffle 2024

## Wey & Arun Canal Trust

Registered Charity No. 265331

# CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

**First Prize: £200**

Second Prize: £100

Third Prize: £75

Forth Prize: £50 M&S Voucher, Fifth Prize: £40

Sixth Prize: £30, Seventh Prize £25 M&S Voucher



***The draw will take place at Eight Dormers, Snowdenham Lane, Bramley GU5 0DB on Tuesday 21st January***

Promoter: Margaret Darvill, Bridge End, Somerswey, Shalford, Surrey GU4 8EQ  
Registered under the Gambling Act 2005 with Guildford Borough Council, Licence No. SL345  
Printed by [www.raffeticketsdirect.co.uk](http://www.raffeticketsdirect.co.uk)

**Tickets £1 each**

For members who receive a printed copy of *Wey-South*, we have enclosed Christmas Draw raffle tickets with this issue. Of course this isn't possible for electronic subscribers. However, the raffle is also running online. All tickets will be entered into the same draw.

Entering via our website saves us both manpower and money and can be done so easily at [weyarun.org.uk/raffle](http://weyarun.org.uk/raffle). If you would like to buy paper raffle tickets, please contact the Office ([support@weyarun.org.uk](mailto:support@weyarun.org.uk), 01483 505566).

Only tickets purchased by 14th January 2025 will be entered into the draw.