

Editorial

At the Trust's Autumn Meeting at Bramley on 25 October, we were very pleased to hear of significant legacies from late Trust members and supporters Peggy Gledhill, Coral Charles and Stephen Ingram. Although the exact amount cannot yet be stated, our treasurer says that the combined total is certain to exceed £500,000.

The monthly WACT news email says that the Trust directors has allocated the money where it has the most effect in the shortest time - this means funding the first phase of construction work on Compasses Bridge in Alfold, and the Environmental Impact Assessment, which is said to be an essential first step to future work in the Shalford/Bramley area. With respect to Compasses Bridge, a planning application has recently been submitted to Waverley Borough Council.

Half a million is, to say the least, extremely useful and very welcome indeed. But such a figure is more a brief respite in fundraising efforts rather than a budget-beater. The spending plans over the next three years or so are well in excess of that figure, so plenty of effort is still needed. With this in mind, we welcome a new WACT staff member, Rob Searle, our part-time fundraising assistant.

Additionally, we can continue to benefit from the localgiving.com Grow Your Tenner 2014 scheme. This offers matched funding, effectively doubling the worth of small donations - up to £10 for single donations, though under previous versions of the scheme we benefited most from regular giving. In the first few days of the latest scheme, WACT gained about £1,500, and money is still available. You can donate by going to the website <https://localgiving.com/charity/wact>.



'Monster mower' at Lee Farm (see Mrs Bucket report - picture by Roger Wilson)

At Hunt Park in Shalford, contractors have installed supporting piles for the proposed viewing platform. From the platform, which is adjacent to the cycle way along the old railway track, you will be able to see the ancient oak trees on the opposite bank of the Cranleigh Waters - at least 500 years old.

Other volunteer work that hasn't been covered by the reports this time round included a visit from WRG Forestry over the weekend of 11/12 October to finished removing the large fallen tree near Fast Bridge, Alfold.

Bill

The Mrs Bucket Group - keeping up appearances on Mondays

As anticipated in last month's *WPN*, we gave ADrungewick and Southland locks a cut and bought all our regular sites up to standard before the winter. Martin, with his wonderful 'monster mower' (see photo) cut the towpath from the Lee Farm causeway to the 90-degree turn in the canal north of Haybarn in 40 minutes. It would take us days with brush cutters and mowers.

We are in contact with Roger Richards with the objective of assisting him to install his picnic table at Devil's Hole Lock at some future date. We shall be working with Ian Burton at Tickner's in November planting shrubs for screening and, if time permits and with landowner permission, we hope to clear the badly overgrown towpath from Lea Farm causeway to the lock in due course. When these tasks are complete we reckon we shall be able to start our winter tidy up in Sidney Wood during December.

Nick Wood

Hedgelaying Team

Belated greetings all from the group and Bcaptain! There wasn't much to report for September as our first get-together was the 30th of said month. However, this was the start of this season's laying pre-nuptials: i.e. coppicing.

I had promised the local landowner to clear part of Devil's Hole Coppice so I have split the area into approximately four sub-areas, so that over a four year period the whole will be coppiced. This will give four areas of: wild flowers, regeneration, and older coppice for maximum conservation benefit of wildlife support areas.

October saw four visits to the coppice with a final one on November 4th to finish tidying up, moving some/all cut material to site and hopefully

start laying. So this suggests that it will be gloom and doom on that Tuesday with the heavens throwing bathfuls of water at us every few seconds. I therefore respectfully suggest that other groups stay at home in the warm and dry (at home meaning PUB) on that day.

With that it only remains for me to say: Goodbye all for the moment.

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

Cheers (still alive but only just)

Keith Nichols

Mid Week Working Party

The members of the MWWP have been busy during October, continuing with the clearance of the canal bed and nearside bank from Cook's Bridge to Pallingham Bridge.

Unfortunately we lost one Wednesday of work due to the River Arun bursting its banks, which prevented us from gaining access to the canal. Parts of the cleared canal bed now have several inches of water. It is starting to look like a canal once again. But this has caused a few problems for some members of the team whose wellies filled with water. One of the team also showed us how deep the water was by sitting down in the waterlogged canal bed.

Dave Verrall, on behalf of Ray Pick

Tickner's Heath Depot

Well here we are again, seems as only yesterday we put the clocks forward and here we are putting them back. Unfortunately this means a shorter working day for the crew at Tickner's as with no electricity it is very difficult to work beyond 3pm. Hey ho, roll on spring.

During the month we managed at long last to get the Allen Scythe going. The crew working on the beastie found that the timing, marks - if that is what they were - are 180° out. Once this became apparent the team set the timing and away she went first pull, so if anyone has any really long grass the trust has the means of cropping it.

At this moment in time the team, well Mick Jones and Francis Wellerd really, are busy constructing a notice board to be put on the canal side, and also managed to manufacture two backing boards for signs to be placed on the bridge over the canal on the road to Cranleigh.

Ken Bacon has donated a chainsaw to the Trust and as usual with most of these things it decided not to perform. So with the help of Richard Powell it was stripped down and reassembled. Once this was done the saw started and ran quite well with the odd slight adjustment; so another useful addition to the Trust's stock.

Dave Kersley felt he needed a break from Tickner's and has been off helping the MWWP, but managed to fit in a trip to the Cactus Farm at Ashington to demolish the waiting mound of paper and take it to Loxwood. Luckily there wasn't as much as first thought and he cleared the lot there.

Finally thanks to Richard Watson the grass at the depot has been cropped to a manageable level.

So other than replacing a rotten fence post and the odd bit of re-organisation of stock that is about it for this month. All the best

John Smith

Thursday and Sunday Group - Southland and Northwards

At Southland lock the ground paddle screens have been fitted. The final task, fitting of the back pump water intake screen, has also been completed. So now we await the winter rains to fill the Devil's Hole pound.

Work at Gennets Bridge Lock (GBL) is still on hold. The application for an EPSM licence to Natural England has been held, awaiting more information from our consultant. That has now been supplied, so we are waiting again. Last time Natural England missed its target delivery date for a response by two weeks, so it seems likely that this delay will be repeated this time. There are hundreds of applications in process at this time and the question is being asked, "Is this what the legislation intended?"

Name	Group/Project	Tel	e-mail
WACT Office	General enquiries	01403 752403	office@weyandarun.co.uk
David Daniels	Visiting working parties	01483 505566 Mon-Thurs 8.30-12.30pm	support@weyandarun.co.uk
Michael Bates	Health & Safety Officer	07786 323515	michael_bates@weyandarun.co.uk
Eric Walker	Loxwood Projects	07717 855340	tsg@weyandarun.co.uk
Ray Pick	MidWeek Working Party	01483 272443	anne.pick@btinternet.com
John Empringham	Monday Group	01483 562657	mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk
Kev Baker	Loxwood Link	02380 861074	loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk
John Smith	Tickner's Depot	01903 235790	depot@weyandarun.co.uk
Tony Clear	Winston's Group	01903 774 301	winstonsgroup@weyandarun.co.uk
Keith Nichols	Hedge laying	01403 753882	hedging@weyandarun.co.uk
Bill Nicholson	Northern working parties	01844 343 369	bill@nwpg.org.uk
Bill Thomson	Working Party News	01903 744767	bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk

Repairs and modification to Gennets Pound Sluice and Barberry Bridge have moved ahead a little but are presently on hold.

October at Baldwins Knob Lock (BKL) was interesting. At the end of September we went to BKL to drill the off-side wall and foam fill it. The filler reacted with water to fill the voids at the back of the wall with foam. We then used a rapid setting mortar to point up the front face of the lock. Some progress was made to restrict the water going through the wall and coming out at the bottom of the lock and presently the water in the lock has to be near to full depth before the water appears on the training wall.

The rotted elements of the lock footbridge turned out to require some redundant stop planks to replace the walkway. This was because the bolts used on the walkway were rusted up and extremely difficult to remove. Also the bridge had to be virtually taken to pieces to replace the rotten wood under the walkway, which is not normally visible. To get at rotting timbers we needed to stand on the roof of the workboat, *May Upton*. A piece of checker-plate on the threshold and heavier chicken wire are being used on the walkway which we hope will help extend its life. Feedback to Julian Cheek for reference on future maintenance of the wooden walkways would be helpful.

JJ Price and a couple of volunteers finished the painting job despite being flooded out when the river overtopped its bank and the site was submerged.

After the flood the gap between the platform and the landing had changed and it was noted that the bridge platform was skewed to the landing. These interferences, for that's how the problems exhibit themselves, are only measured in millimetres, so readily dealt with. At this point the absence of an invert in the bridge construction and the clay banks are being blamed for the movement.

The Brewhurst to Birch Copse footpath repair was started in October but being very dependent on the weather was abandoned until next April or May when the ground conditions will be better. About 6 tonnes of concrete had been put into sandbags to protect the bridleway/towpath and put in place before we had to quit.

The Thursday & Sunday Group meets at 09:30. No meeting is scheduled for 20 November 2014. Because the work is taking the group to a number of different sites, our current practice is to email a work briefing form before the working day. Please email Eric Walker if you want to get on that circulation list. Once we get back to one or two regular sites the briefing form will be discontinued.

Eric Walker

Himalayan Balsam

"I doubt it", said the Carpenter, and shed a bitter tear...

WPN readers who have spent wearying hours pulling up Himalayan balsam might have echoed the Carpenter's reply to the Walrus who had asked "would they ever get it clear?".

Help, if not at hand, is getting closer. After eight years of research a rust has been found which weakens the balsam. Three sites, in Berkshire, Cornwall and Middlesex are being used to try out the rust. Plant growth is distorted and warped. The stems will topple over. The breaks in the stems are then open to secondary infection.

The rust will not eradicate the balsam but gives previously crowded-out native plants a chance to grow.

More sites will get the rust-inoculated plants next year after which the rust should spread naturally. More at himalayanbalsam.cabi.org

Jim Phillips

Help wanted

New leaders are being sought for both MWWP and the Winston Group - Ray Pick and David Junkison have indicated that they would like to retire at the end of the year. If you would like to find out more, or are considering volunteering for either of these posts, please get in touch with David Daniels.

WACT Calendar

Don't forget to buy WACT 2015 calendars for all your friends and relatives.

See www.weyandarun.co.uk/goods.php, visit the Canal Centre or contact the Loxwood office, 01403 752403, office@weyandarun.co.uk.

Working Party Diary		
Every Sunday and Thursday	Mainly construction work	Contact Eric Walker for details
Usually first & third Mondays of the month	'Mrs Bucket' - Keeping Up Appearances	Details from John Empringham
Every Wednesday	Mid-Week Working Party	Check with Ray Pick for confirmation of venue
Every Wednesday (plus Thursday and Sunday as required)	Loxwood Link Maintenance	Check with Kev Baker
Every Wednesday	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Contact John Smith/Ken Bacon
Tuesdays or Fridays	Winston Harwood Group	Contact Tony Clear for details