

# Wey & Arun Canal News

## June 2015

A review of recent events on the Wey & Arun Canal

### Permission given for new Surrey bridge

Waverley Borough Council has granted planning permission for replacing the causeway that blocks the canal at Compasses, near Alford and Dunsfold Park in Surrey. The Canal Trust hopes to begin construction of a new bridge, alongside the causeway, later this year; funding for this part of the project is already available and the Trust has selected a contractor to carry out the work. Once the new bridge is complete, the next stage will be to demolish the causeway.

The Canal Trust has also applied to Waverley Borough Council for permission to build a slipway near Compasses; this will make it much easier for small boats to enter and leave the canal. During the Spring, volunteers removed accumulated silt from the canal route near the proposed slipway site. The Trust is planning a celebration to mark the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Wey & Arun Junction Canal in 1816 - if all goes to plan there will be plenty of boats on the canal and they will be able to navigate the whole of the attractive stretch along the edge of Dunsfold Park. Once the work is complete the Trust hopes to run regular public boat trips.



Making a 200-year-old canal ready for boats again - near Dunsfold and Alford.

### Canal Trust celebrates 3000th member

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust gained its 3000th member when Roy and Caroline Tanner of Dorking joined in April this year. To mark this important milestone, Lord Egremont, President of the Trust, presented a commemorative membership certificate to Mr & Mrs Tanner at Petworth House. This was very appropriate as a previous Lord Egremont (George O'Brien Wyndham, the 3rd Earl), was the chief promoter of the Wey & Arun Canal and by far its largest shareholder.

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust is the second largest canal society in the UK.

### Sussex lock rebuilding goes ahead

Thanks to a European Protected Species licence from Natural England, the Canal Trust's project to rebuild the northernmost lock in Sussex is set to go ahead this Summer. After special training, Trust volunteers have painstakingly carried out an agreed plan to relocate the protected species from the construction site at Gennets Bridge, near Loxwood and Ifold, to new ponds away from the route of the canal. This will allow the Trust's contractors to build the concrete shell of the new lock. Volunteers will then recreate the appearance of the original lock by facing the shell with locally made bricks. As part of the reconstruction of the lock, volunteers will also build a new bridge. As well as allowing the local landowner to cross the canal, the bridge will carry a public bridleway (part of the Sussex Border Path) and so has to conform with standards laid down by West Sussex Highways.



Lord Egremont, President of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust (centre), welcomes Roy & Caroline Tanner as Trust members, bringing the total membership to over 3,000.

## Boats head further north in Sussex

Since a new boating season began after Easter, visitors to Loxwood have been able to enjoy a new section of canal. There are now some 3 miles (5km) of navigable waterway



The first public boat trip of the 2015 season is almost ready to leave Devil's Hole Lock and head northwards to Southland Lock.

stretching both north and south of the Canal Centre, just off Loxwood High Street. The most recent extension brings Devil's Hole Lock, officially opened in 2010, into regular use for the first time. Boats now reach Southland Lock, opened in 2014.

The Trust's trip boats now carry more than 10,000 passengers each year, but this is only a small fraction of the number who come to enjoy exploring the peaceful canal, now brought to life again thanks to hard work by volunteers.

## Studies launched for new Surrey canal link

The Canal Trust has awarded contracts for important studies aimed at reinstating the link between the Wey & Arun Canal and the national waterways system. A new canal route will be necessary in the Shalford and Bramley area, near the junction with the River Wey in Surrey. This junction, the Gun's



Boats at the Gun's Mouth in Shalford.

Mouth, is hugely significant because the River Wey is part of a network of rivers and canals that reaches as far as Lancaster and Ripon. Joining up with this network will mean that the Wey & Arun Canal is no longer isolated. Peter Brett Associates (PBA) are carrying out a Civil Engineering Design Study, scheduled for delivery in Summer 2015, whilst Wimbledon-based specialists Water Environment are modelling water flows to ensure that the new canal minimises any risk of flooding to neighbouring properties. At the same time, The Temple Group, based in London and Sussex, is producing the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which will take at least 12 months to complete because it has to cover all the seasons of the year. All of these studies are required to support public consultation in advance of a future planning application.

## Arun Navigation Rally is a huge success

The River Arun is vital to the Canal Trust's vision of re-establishing an inland waterway link between the Thames and the Channel. The river is a traditional navigation as far as the tidal limit at Pallingham, north of Pulborough in Sussex, where the canal route joins. The Wey & Arun Canal Trust organises a rally for small boats each year; this year the event was



The flotilla heads up the River Arun.

on April 19th. Thanks to improved publicity, a large number of canoeists and other small boat owners were inspired to discover the beautiful and isolated Arun Valley from a different angle. Those taking part included members of the Canal Trust as well as enthusiasts from canoe clubs and youth groups in the area and from as far away as Hampton in Surrey.

## Staying up to date

It is always worth checking our website for the latest progress. You can also 'like' us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter or use your smartphone to scan the QR codes at our Canal Centre, in our publications and on information posts along the canal route.

Website: [www.weyandarun.co.uk](http://www.weyandarun.co.uk)

Facebook: [weyandaruncanal](https://www.facebook.com/weyandaruncanal)

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