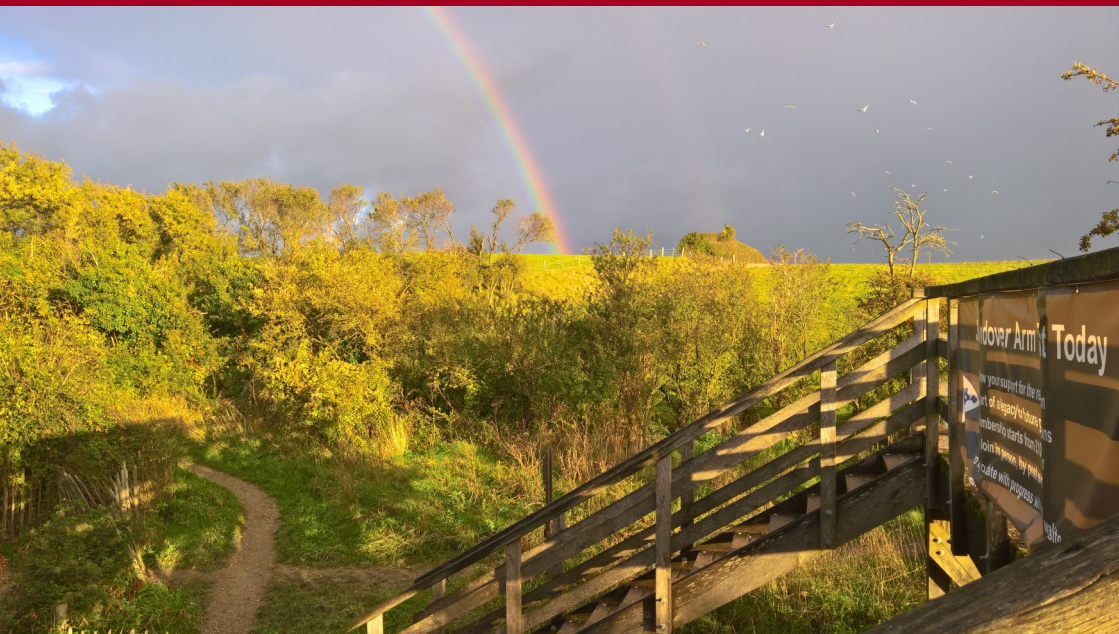


WENDOVER ARM NEWS

Restoring the Wendover Canal



Newsletter of the Wendover Arm Trust

*2020 Winter
Issue 3*

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Council members 2020/21

- * Chris Sargeant – Chairman
- * Leanda Richardson – Vice Chair & Fundraising
- * Clive Wilson – Treasurer
- * Tony Bardwell – Operations
- * John Rowe – Honorary Secretary
- * Peter Bird– Membership
- * Bob Wheal – Sales
- * Peter Lockett – Purchasing
- * Clive Johnson – Website and talks
- * Carol Williams – Newsletter
- * Nigel Williams – Publicity
- * Ben Grinsted – IT and Social Media
- * Jenny Brice – IWA Nominee & Minutes Secretary
- * Peter Elwin (co-opted) – Community Engagement
- * Doug Pell – Finance Group & Fundraising



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Chairman's Column

Work restarted on site in July and our volunteers have made enormous strides over the past four months.

Thanks to excellent organization by Tony and the team leaders, greater numbers volunteering and mostly reasonable weather we have maintained longer work parties of two weeks at a time with greater productivity as a result.

Working practices have been modified in the light of the ongoing Covid virus situation with improved welfare & sanitation facilities and with teams divided between 2/3 locations working in parallel in order to maintain social distancing and safe working practices.

Work at Whitehouses is nearing completion at the time of writing (mid October) and with the new brickwork topped with cast coping stones it looks amazing, drawing much favorable comment from passers by on the tow path.

In parallel, works at bridge 4 and restoration of the adjacent historic swing bridge abutments has also moved rapidly forward.

New stop plank grooves have been installed by bridge 4 and we are ready to order the actual stop planks subject to CRT agreement to the design.

Part of the old swing bridge abutments, containing the stop plank channels, have been restored in line with CRT

heritage requirements. The next part of the walls are also planned to be restored and having excavated further we have found more sections of wall curving into the bank on both sides of the canal and these will also need to be restored.

We should soon be in a position to plan re-watering between Bridges 4 and 4a, another major milestone in the whole project.

Do take a walk along the canal from Little Tring and I am sure you will be amazed!

Much more detail on all of this is in Tony's restoration update elsewhere in this issue and of course on our website and Facebook sites.

Sincere thanks to Tony and all of our volunteers for their magnificent achievements.

As mentioned last month we are striving to make our canal an attractive destination from all points of view for wider public benefit, enhancing the environment and increasing bio diversity.

To this end the whole area around Whitehouses and from there to bridge 4 has already been landscaped and one section fenced off and handed back to our adjacent farmer neighbour for



grazing sheep.

An initial 150 new trees and 2000 bulbs were planted nearer bridge 4 last October and a further 500 saplings from the Woodland Trust are due to be delivered for planting this Autumn in various locations – planting is scheduled for November 27th - details will be posted on our website and Facebook and you are most welcome to come along and help.

After a great deal of research with a number of companies and organisations we are now optimistic we have found a solution for dealing with the old tip at Little Tring – a trial on a section is currently being arranged so do watch our website and Facebook for news in due course.

With current projections, completing the tip removal and lining back to Little Tring will require at least £250 k more than we currently have and we need to plan some serious fundraising.

Events possibly including a mini festival

and sponsored walk/run along the arm could also play a part.

All thoughts and help with this type of activity will be appreciated.

Also if you are able to help us “go the last mile” with a donation, however large or small we will be most grateful. For details of how to donate see our donation form, on page 6.

Wishing you safe passage through these difficult times and thank you for your support!



Chris Sargeant, Chairman

chairman@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

Mobile: 07547 181 857

Videos of the Wendover Canal

We were delighted to receive from Nigel Harper, a collection of 3 videos which he has produced. They show the Wendover Canal from Bulbourne to Wendover, and the wildlife we can all enjoy along the way.

Part 1 <https://youtu.be/LUZb3yA7j6M>

Part 2 <https://youtu.be/XSFgHr6AEoY>

Part 3 <https://youtu.be/gsbVXMZWIGU>



AGM Summary

Our AGM at 2.30pm on Wednesday October 28th was successfully conducted on Zoom due to the current restrictions on “normal” meetings with 35 people present on line.

Following detailed preparations and several trial link ups to sort out technical issues (like having the chairman in Cornwall with a poor internet connection !) we successfully ran the meeting in the usual format with voting and questions using the reaction and chat facilities on Zoom. For this I am indebted to fellow members of Council for their help.

During the meeting we were pleased to confirm three new and previously co-opted members on Council.

Doug Pell joins our Finance Group to help with fundraising in particular. Doug is also a restoration volunteer.

Peter Bird succeeds Katherine Deaney as membership Secretary and is also a restoration volunteer.

Peter Elwin has joined our new Partnerships group to help develop relationships with local councils and other bodies to help build support for the restoration and fundraising needed.

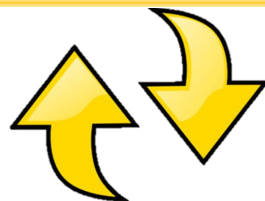
Please join me in extending them all a warm welcome.

The full report and accounts were published on our website in advance.



The only Constant is Change

In a period when we are all expected to stay away from others, to isolate ourselves from society, and have minimal or no social interaction, you could expect the Trust and the Restoration effort to be somewhat subdued, even to go into hibernation.



No way!

There have been so many far reaching and significant changes to the Trust's affairs that you may not have been fully aware of them all.

For example, one change is in the distribution of responsibilities within Trust Council, reflecting a fresh emphasis on the values and operating principles considered key to our future success.

Management functions are now allocated to specific groups within Council, ensuring a greater focus on the various tasks in hand. Continuity is ensured by each Group being made up from the relevant Council members with existing responsibility and expertise. Critically, additional Group members who have specific experience but who are not Council Directors are invited to join the Group, or contribute to their work. This opens the door to fresh thinking and a greater degree of professionalism.

The Groups which have been in operation now for a number of months are **Operations** (ie physical Restoration mainly), **Finance**, **Marketing**, and **Partnerships**. An additional **Environmental** Group is in an embryo stage of development.

Operations

Responsibility encompasses not only the physical digging, profiling, concreting work, but also the myriad support and 'desk' jobs. These include materials purchasing, equipment and plant hire, H&S, volunteer management, training, liaising with C&RT and suppliers, and report writing.



A 'Tidy Friday' sub-group led by John Reynolds 'does what it says on the tin'

and concentrates on scrub bashing, planting (for example 150 tree saplings planted already with 400+ more this Autumn) and a host of minor but essential jobs. John is also responsible for groupwide training.

Operations also has a new Environmental sub group which will make sure we treat the whole environment respectfully and also meet and exceed our legal obligations and public expectations.

Operations Group Lead - Tony Bardwell.

Group members – Peter Lockett (Purchasing), Mike Wright (H&S), Tony Borrill (Environment), John Reynolds (Tidy Friday).

Vacancies – Volunteer management, Environment Group members.

Group Contact – operations@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

Finance



Gone are the days when finance could be a part time activity, paying a few bills, and receiving donations. The Finance Group includes of course cash flow and payments, etc but its responsibility also extends to investment policies, account handling, membership admin, liquidity (a very apt term for a Canal Trust!), Gift Aid, Club 100 admin., and donations. The traditional Treasurer role also continues, with tasks including preparing and agreeing our annual report. With the search for sources of significant funding as well as fresh fundraising activities continuing, the Finance role becomes an even more crucial one.

Finance Group Lead – Peter Lockett.

Group members – Clive Wilson (Treasurer), Doug Pell (Financial Planning), Peter Bird (Membership services), Mike Beckley (Systems advisor).

Group Contact finance@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

Marketing

Marketing is maybe a bit of a misnomer. Various names were suggested for the group, each trying to find a name which encompassed the varied and various jobs which group members carry out. Apart from the obvious

‘marketing’ tasks like Publicity, Events, Publications, we also have Trust Sales, Newsletter, Website, Talks, and Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube).

So not much then!



In addition, the Marketing group has the remit to set communications standards across the Trust's affairs, as well as the more traditional role of public relations.

It is fair to say that we are not fully active or competent yet in all of these areas, but we are getting there.

Marketing Group Lead – Bob Wheal (Sales).

Group members – Clive Johnson (Deputy Lead, Website, Talks), Ben Grinsted (IT Support), William Mathew (Social Media), Nigel Williams (Publicity, PR), David Page (Publications), Jenny Brice (Events) Carol Williams (Newsletter).

Vacancies – Graphic design advisor

Group Contact – marketing@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

Partnerships

A group in its infancy. WAT recognises that if we are to be successful in completing the restoration, we will need support, assistance, and funding from sources we have not engaged with up to now. It is the Partnership Group aim to seek out and foster such cooperation. As such the work of the group is developing.



Partnership Group Lead – Leanda Richardson (Trust Vice Chair)

Group Members – Peter Elwin (Partnership and funding advisor, information management), John Hinton (Advisor with respect to Bucks CC), Adrian Cole (Advisor with respect to Herts CC).

Group contacts – partnerships@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

Most individuals in the lists above can be contacted by emailing firstname.lastname@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk – that's another change introduced earlier this year. Change is constant!

One of the strengths of this new arrangement is that groups can and do include non-Council contributors, taking part on a more or less ad-hoc basis. Could you contribute? Do you have a particular skill or expertise which could benefit the Trust? We have particular need for legal, PR, and environmental input over a range of subjects. No need to 'join' a group on a permanent fixed basis. Your input could be valuable, and you could make a difference. Start with a conversation.

Contact Bob Wheal on bob.wheal@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk, or the relevant Group Lead listed.

Donation to the Wendover Arm Trust



Please complete and send to:

WAT Membership Secretary, Island House, Moor Road, Chesham, Buckinghamshire. HP5 1WA

I would like to make a donation to the Wendover Arm Trust of £ _____

Please make cheques payable to **Wendover Arm Trust**.

Gift Aid Declaration

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate.

I want to **Gift Aid** my donation of £ _____ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the last 4 years to **Wendover Arm Trust**. Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/ or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Please notify the charity if you:

- Want to cancel this declaration
- Change your name or home address
- No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

TITLE _____

FORENAME _____

SURNAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POST CODE _____

TELEPHONE _____

EMAIL _____

I am not currently a Trust member but would be interested in joining? **Yes/ No**

Donations can also be made online using BACS to:

Yorkshire Bank account **67957123** Sort Code: **05-04-61**

Payment Reference: Surname and/or Membership Number (if applicable)

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

WENDOVER ARM TRUST.

A Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered in England No. 2353392, Registered Charity No. 801190
Registered Office: **Wendover Arm Trust, Island House, Moor Road, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 1WA**

Arise Sir David !

We can all share in the pride and esteem in the news of our Patron David Suchet receiving a well earned knighthood in the recent Royal Birthday Honours list.

Sir David is no stranger to the Wendover Arm Trust, having supported us for many years. In another

'first' he was aboard the first boat to go under the newly built Little Tring Bridge,

having just declared it officially open to navigation. The funds for building that bridge were greatly augmented by income from our annual festivals, which Sir David attended on more than one occasion, with his wife Sheila.



It had also been planned for David to walk a nominal distance to support our 'Walk and Arm's Length' in 2012. In fact, Sir David was so taken with the Arm, it's beauty, unique character, and of course the restoration actively taking place that he insisted on completing much more of the route than originally intended, signing T shirts worn by supporters on the way!

He is well known for his long-standing love of boats, inland waterways, and canal restoration projects. The Wendover Arm Trust is proud and

grateful to have Sir David as our patron

David recently appeared in Arthur Miller's

The Price alongside Brendan Coyle at the Wyndham's

Theatre. The production, directed by Jonathan Church, has had wonderful reviews and David's performance has been nominated for a 'Best Actor' Olivier award.



He has most recently appeared on Television in Mike Bartlett's 'Press' for the BBC. He was recently seen in the BBC comedy adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's novel Decline and Fall alongside Eva Longoria, Jack Whitehall and Douglas Hodge and has also recently appeared as a guest lead in an episode of Doctor Who.

He appeared in Michael Cuesta's feature film American Assassin, which was released earlier this year. Sky Arts' URBAN MYTHS will also be out soon with David playing Salvador Dali opposite Noel Fielding as Alice Cooper.

He has also recently finished filming a guest lead part in an episode of the popular French detective series Capitaine Marleau.

Congratulations, Sir David!

Obituary, Peggy Batchelor

Peggy Batchelor, who has died aged 103, a former resident of Wendover, was known to many members as she would attend events to support the Wendover Arm Trust well into her nineties.

She was the oldest surviving member of the wartime ENSA, surviving Dame Vera Lynn by a short margin, which would have pleased her no end.

Peggy had a long and fascinating life. She first hit the headlines as "Baby Peggy of the Wembley Tattoo" in 1925 performing in front of the King and Queen. She travelled the world in ENSA performing with many of the great artists of the day and appeared in many JB Priestley plays and other productions after the war, including a role in Mrs Dale's Diary.



She became a wonderful teacher of speech and drama and again travelled the world as an examiner.

In 1944 she met a young RAF officer named Arthur Clegg and finally married him on the 40th anniversary of their meeting in 1984, moving to live with him in Wendover.

It was my privilege to work with her and write her biography. She was still in good form for her 100th birthday but drifted away mentally after that and went to live in a care home in Leicester where she continued to regale staff with stories of her past (not always accurate by then but delivered in a strong and melodious voice) and she would put her make up on ready to perform.

She was one of a kind and will be greatly missed.

If anyone would like a copy of Peggy's story, I still have some of the books so please email - carole.hawkins@hotmail.co.uk or call 01296 661916. I will either send you one or we can arrange collection. (Price £10 for WAT members)

Club 100 Lottery

The Summer draw was made at the October council meeting. There were 208 subscribers in this draw.

The winners were....



John Rowe, £258.00



David Gray, £107.50



Graham Watts, £43.00

Congratulations to our winners and thank you to all members who take part in the Club 100 lottery. Thanks to your support the scheme has raised well over £20,000 for restoration funds since it began in 1997.

If you would like to be in with a chance of winning next time, joining Club 100 couldn't be easier. Simply complete the application form and arrange payment (cheque, BACS transfer or standing order). Each lucky number costing £15 per year is entered into 4 quarterly draws. The jackpot is directly proportionate to the number of subscribers.

Remember you have to be a paid up member of the Trust to enter Club 100, each lucky number costs £15 per year for 4 prize draws. The prize fund increases with every new subscription taken out. **Join today** - the application form can be found on the website.

The next draw will be in March 2021.

Operations Report

Yes – there is a considerable amount of progress to report from our work party! This is a summary of Tony Bardwell's Operation Reports for July to September 2020, edited by Clive Johnson.

With careful adherence to newly-written Covid Risk Assessments, our work party was able to re-start work in late July for a week. Such was the keenness of our volunteers that we completed a further 2 weeks in each of August and September (total 5 weeks), and a further 2 weeks is under way as this report was written in October. To allow this quantity of work, several volunteers have been successfully trained as Team Leaders, and we have had to buy a lot of materials. Two additional lockable steel huts have been bought to provide proper facilities for our volunteers.

The August fortnight contained the most variable summer weather we have seen for a long time. It started dry and warmish, became extremely hot and sunny, then the thunderstorms and heavy showers began. On the second Wednesday the weather was so bad the work party was suspended for a day. Many days started with water being pumped out at Bridge 4.

In July we completed fencing the land on the offside beyond Whitehouses and handed it over to the adjacent farmer. There have been safety issues with moving concrete blocks in the dumper bucket, so we acquired an Army surplus trailer and fitted it with a wooden platform on top. Handling blocks on and off this trailer has proved much safer.

During this period of changeable weather, once ground conditions allowed safe access through bridge 4, we laid a ready-mix concrete base in the canal in front of Whitehouses and built elegant block and brick wing walls to protect the remains of old Whitehouses below water level.

Meanwhile back at Bridge 4, similar brick facings are being





added to the concrete blocks between the old and new Bridges
4. Work has continued this month at both locations.

Below are the brick facings (in front of

concrete blocks for strength) starting to take shape. The brickwork is being completed to a very high standard, in some cases by extra bricklayers who responded to an appeal we made.



Tony has also been successful in putting required approvals in

place with the Canal and River Trust. In July an F10 form was issued to the H and S Executive by CRT. This tells the Health and Safety Executive what we are doing, who is doing it and how long it will take. We have also been issued with a new CRT form CDM 3.2 which reappoints WAT as "Principal Contractors" for another year. In August our application to be an "Approved Contractor" to CRT was signed off. These show that we are properly organised and certified to do what we are doing.

Clive Johnson

Volunteer Profile: Tony Borrill



Monday 7th January 2019, my first day volunteering as part of the crew renovating the Wendover Arm of the Grand Union Canal. Surrounded by mud, bricks and blocks, and a great team of volunteers made the day fly by. Just a few days earlier, whilst walking down the canal tow path, I certainly didn't expect to be down in the canal with my hi-viz jacket and hard hat.

My volunteering journey started in early January, Christmas had passed and it was time to get some fresh New Year air into the lungs. I had walked the canal tow path many times and, on several occasions, seen volunteers working. Today's walk was different. Today I stopped to talk and ask what was going on. I chatted to a guy called Peter, and as I left he shouted 'Turn up on Monday, we need some help'. Well that's exactly what I did, I turned up on Monday, and nearly two years later I still turn up and volunteer.

I volunteer for several reasons. Lots of fresh air, some great exercise, but also because it's amazing to think that the



canal will be re-filled with water and be the home for a great variety of wildlife. I've spotted mandarin ducks further down the canal, and so will they swim down. Reed warblers are in the nearby reservoir, so it's a potential new home for them. Fish, ducks and swans are all inhabitants of the canal. The renovated canal will act a new wildlife highway from Wendover, past Tring, to the Grand Union canal.

The canal renovation team has an environmental group that keeps an eye on what's happening down at the canal. With the advice of the Canal & River Trust, plus the Waterway Recovery Group & Inland Waterways Association, the group is trying its best to make sure that all renovation work makes the canal a better place for the native flora and fauna. We are also liaising with the



Woodland Trust and have over 400 small trees arriving this autumn. This in turn makes it a wonderful walk for us all as we amble down the tow path. If you live in Tring and wander down the High Street, turn right along Miswell Lane. Cross over Icknield Way and head straight down the path, past the farm, to the canal. Here you will find a bridge. To the left the canal has water in. To the right is where the renovation team is working, and hopefully soon there will be water in this next section.

So what do I do when I volunteer? Well just about anything that needs to be done in a canal renovation. Hands on training gets me involved in whatever areas I show an interest. This could be digging out the canal, cement & concrete mixing, laying bricks & blocks, fence building or operating the heavy lifting machinery (with the right training). I'm also part of the environment group. I learn loads, not just about how to renovate the canal, but also about its history, and off course it's always great fun talking to the 'passers-by'.

Volunteers on the canal are all ages, shapes and sizes, and from all types of background. This has included my daughters who have been down to help out. If you also fancy helping out give the team a call on 07547 181 857 or visit our website at www.wendoverarmtrust.co.uk

Membership Update

We have 14 new memberships to welcome.



Study Tour of the Lot Valley 2019 – part 3

The following morning the coach followed the line of the Lot Valley with stops at the medieval village of Conques (to have a guided visit of this remarkable abbey which was rebuilt in the 11th century and has 212 columns. This was followed by a cruise from Flagnac with lunch on board the vessel *L'Olt*.



On arrival at the river bank below Saint-Cirq-Lapopie we joined a traditional-style *Gabare* for a cruise to Bouzies with a walk back along the towpath carved out of the limestone cliffs at Ganil.

One of the highlights for me was a visit to the hilltop village of Saint-Cirq-Lapopie regarded as one of the most beautiful in France which clings to a cliff perched high above the River

Lot. Since my last visit over ten years ago it has become increasingly touristy with numerous cafes and restaurants in virtually every street. Later we arrived in Cahors, a town with a prestigious past as a trading crossroads, and built inside a loop in the River Lot.

On Friday 7 June, after leaving our hotel, a stop was made to visit the Pont Valentre the town's landmark monument - a magnificent, medieval, fortified bridge built between 1308 and 1360 and only open to walkers with a unique wide-chambered lock under the left bank arch and seven pointed arches and three towers. It has withstood repeated attacks by both armies and nature.





Our penultimate day in the area, prior to a lengthy coach trip back to Lyon, also included visits to Luzech, an old village perched on a ridge, then to Puy-l'Eveque with a further cruise in a *Gabare* with wine tasting on board, and then visits to Fumel, Saint-Vite lock, and the the 13 metre deep lock at Villeneuve-sur-Lot, opened in 2001.

For anyone visiting Villeneuve-sur-Lot it should be noted that there is a scarcity of hotels and those available tend to be small basic two star accommodations. Our group had to be split into three in various parts of the town.

Saturday, the last full day, commenced with a visit to Port Lalande at Castelmoran, and the locks at Aiguillon, Nicole, Lavardac, Vianne and finally Buzet-sur-Baise where the hire base of Nichols is based. (www.aquitaine-navigation.com).



This was a packed itinerary visiting a beautiful part of France with generally very good weather and coach travel obviated car parking difficulties, and problems of finding some of the more obscure parts of the river.

Should anyone be interested in future IWI trips they should make contact with David Edwards-May, e-mail: dem@transmanche.net

Nigel Williams

Ecology Workshop

During September a number of WAT volunteers joined a workshop covering the 1st stages of understanding the Environment around the vicinity of the Wendover Canal. Regulation now requires all building works, which include canal restoration to comply with BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain).

This put simply, is that any works must restore the surroundings to a better environment than before. If you remove dead trees, you must plant more, while works are in progress you must be aware of the effect on any wildlife or vegetation and replace with new and better habitats.



The training was provided free from the Inland Waterways Association, and led by Alex Melson, this, started with a Zoom morning showing slides covering many aspects in detail. After lunch we all met up at the cart track to continue with a practical assessment of the Whitehouses area. We studied the grasses, wild flowers and identified trees. Alex pointed out that we had a Box tree, which was fairly rare and only

found in the Chilterns. He highlighted the fact that a cherry tree stump left by the storm earlier this year, should be kept as a home for bugs and beetles.

A number of volunteers have started up an Ecology Group to advise on actions that might be in contradiction of BNG. Our next task is to plant the 420 Woodland Trust trees which will be delivered early November. We are also drawing up a plan of the area, with types of vegetation and names of trees.

It would be helpful, when you are walking the towpath if you could photograph any butterflies, birds or plants. We can then identify them and keep an audit of the surrounding area. Anyone interested in joining our group, please contact jenny@johnbrice.co.uk



Team needed to Tackle Tring's Trees

Woodland Trust have donated 420 native whips to be planted at the CRT triangle of lane adjacent to the winding hole.

Volunteers required for Friday the 27th November
– please contact jenny@johnbrice.co.uk

Subject to change due to Covid. Please refer to our website.



Work Party Schedules

Working parties are held throughout the year, and typically take place from Friday to Thursday around the first weekend of each month. Please see the dates below:

Friday December 4th - Thursday December 10th, 2020
Friday January 8th - Thursday January 14th, 2021 - note a week late, otherwise we would not get a plant delivery on Thursday December 31st!
Friday February 5th - Thursday February 11th, 2021
Friday March 5th - Thursday March 11th, 2021

For further information please contact Tony Bardwell via email, operations@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk or 01296 634 973. Any help will be greatly appreciated.

Subject to change due to Covid. Please refer to our website.

Wendover Arm Restoration part 2 – 1990 onwards as recalled by Roger Leishman

1990 onwards

During the following years Festivals were held every late May Bank Holiday and volunteers continued to clear the canal bed from Little Tring to Drayton Beauchamp in preparation for the day restoration proper could commence.

1996

This was a year of great hope. WAT and British Waterways (BW) made a joint submission to the Millennium Lottery Fund (MLF) for a grant to restore the Arm to Buckland Wharf.

However, the MLF did not consider the application grandiose enough and asked for a re-application based on restoration right through to the basin at Wendover; not only that they required the new submission to be submitted in six weeks! Nevertheless, this was completed on time by WAT and BW. There was a need to 'gold plate' the estimate for the work required as an in depth survey and design was impossible in such a short time.

It also caused a further problem in that public consultation over the restoration had only involved residents as far as Buckland Wharf. A public consultation meeting at Wendover was a disaster because of strident opposition by a few local inhabitants.

Eventually the application was short listed on the basis that work was completed by the millennium year of 2000 and WAT would find 50% of the nearly £8m estimated cost. Although approaches were made to English Partnerships for matched funding it seemed that projects in the south of the country were second to those in the north – end of hopes of a MLF grant.

At this point the then WAT Chairman, Roger Lewis, asked Roger Leishman, a retired civil engineer and then Working Party Organiser, if he would examine possible ways ahead. At the 1996 WAT AGM Roger Leishman presented a proposal to divide the restoration into three phases:

- Phase I (short term) to restore the canal from the present end of navigation to the former basin/winding hole at Little Tring including rebuilding Little Tring Bridge.
- Phase II (medium term) to restore the dry canal bed from Little Tring to Buckland Wharf.
- Phase III (long term) to restore the present length in a lower level of water than normal and obstructed by lowered bridges from Buckland Wharf to

Wendover Basin.

The decision by the AGM was to commence Phase I forthwith on the basis that there was about £150,000 available in the WAT funds at that time.

1997

In January, Roger Leishman working in close co-operation with the local BW Waterway Manager, Chris Mitchell, presented a paper on Phases I and



Bed Clearance Continued in the 1990s

II to the WAT Council. At this stage no detailed design or costing was available but the work was proposed to be carried out by volunteer labour other than the rebuilding of Little Tring Bridge which would be let to contract by BW.

The WAT Council approved commencing Phase I subject to approval of a final costed project plan.

Although the bed of the canal is owned by BW (now Canal & River Trust (CRT)) a problem arose at Little Tring over the length from Little Tring Bridge to an entrance off Little Tring Road towards Wendover. A local farmer claimed squatter's rights and a dispute went on at great cost to WAT and BW for lawyers and surveyors fees.

The dispute continued until, by chance, a BW employee happened upon the one page, one paragraph, lease document for the land with Rothschilds Estates in a cupboard at their Watford HQ. This ended the argument and the lease was terminated and the land fenced off by WAT volunteers, restoration proper starting exactly 200 years after the Arm was first opened.

During this work a badger sett was discovered on the site. In conjunction with the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, a badger licence was obtained and the sett fenced off but was found to be deserted with the only occupant a dead rabbit!

In April the original Feasibility Study prepared for the MLF was re-issued in an updated form for Phases I & II to act as a starting point for starting restoration works in earnest.

Before detailed estimates and timescales were prepared a 1:200 survey of the whole of the Phase I site was undertaken by the Trust and drawings of the

proposed relining prepared and agreed with BW.

In June 1997 Issue 1 of the Wendover Arm Trust Working Party News was published. These newsletters can be viewed right back to that issue and form a complete diary of restoration work to date.

THE WENDOVER ARM TRUST
THE WAY TO REWATER TO WENDOVER

**PROPOSALS FOR AN IMMEDIATE
START ON PHASE I
RESTORATION TO NAVIGATION AT LITTLE TRING**

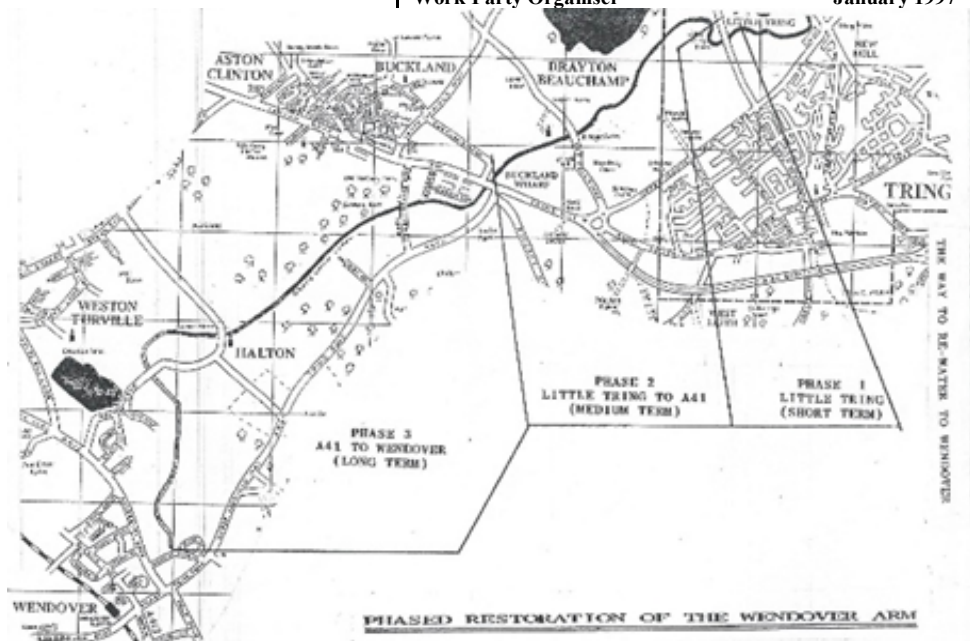
AND

**CONSIDERATION OF PHASE II
RESTORATION OF NAVIGATION
TO THE A41 AT ASTON CLINTON**

1998

**Roger Leishman,
Work Party Organiser**

January 1997



The Three Phases of Restoration

Work continued with fencing the site but a new problem arose in that 200 metres of canal at Little Tring had been filled in by the local council as a rubbish tip – with whose permission is a question still unanswered. The fill is mainly domestic ash but contained many old bottles and similar curios. We would arrive on site and find large craters where bottle hunters had excavated overnight. This was resolved by coming to an arrangement with the Norwich Bottle Club to

excavate the site in return for a donation of £1,500 to WAT. They completed the excavation over one week in January leaving a very tidy site and the problem was solved .

After discussions with BW the drawings were all agreed and estimates prepared totalling £375,000 for Phase I re-lining and the rebuilding of Little Tring Bridge with completion in 2004. Thanks to the fact that BW, now CRT, own the canal, the Trust are able to purchase materials and pay for plant hire through BW and hence not pay VAT, a considerable advantage when counting the cost of restoration.



The base formwork being prepared for the first 8.8m pour in April 1999



Buried Booty at Little Tring

The design included 650 metres of 'L' shaped reinforced concrete wall. Our Restoration Purchasing Manager, Ron Pittaway, sourced second hand steel formwork for the wall upright. Another volunteer, Rodney Hardwicke, had a son working for a contractor at Reigate clearing the site at the end of the works and we were able to source all the timber for the base formwork from that site – free of charge. Ken Graves took charge of the

manufacture of the timber formwork and it is still going strong, with periodic maintenance, in Phase II after more than 100 pours!

Next, steel mesh reinforcement for the wall was required and the ever resourceful Ron Pittaway went straight to the manufacturer to purchase plain sheets of reinforcement and then designed a bending frame to bend the necessary right angles so avoiding the cost of having the reinforcement pre-bent.

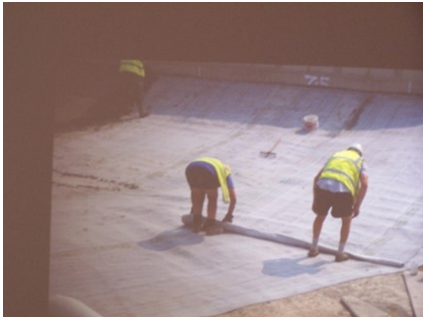
Once several bases had been poured it was possible to start pouring wall sections using our second hand steel formwork. For both the base sections and the wall

sections we were able to place the ready-mix lorry close enough to the formwork for direct discharge.

After the first few 8.8m long base and wall sections had been poured wall construction became very repetitive but, with experience and as modifications were made progress was rapid.



Ready-mix being poured into a wall



Carpet layers in winding basin,
Little Tring

The other major element of the design was waterproofing the canal. Various options were considered and visits made to other sites where waterproofing was in progress. In the end it was decided to use Bentomat lining, granules of clay between two layers of artificial material. Our volunteers all became expert carpet fitters!

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Regards from your Editor
Carol Williams (left)
Assisted by Janine Jones (right).

Deadline for the
next newsletter is
31st January 2021



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To promote the restoration and maintenance of the Wendover Arm of the Grand Union Canal, (including all waterways, buildings, and related structures), to good and navigable order and to promote the fullest use of the waterway by water-borne traffic (subject to the regulations of The Canal and River Trust) and for local amenity, recreational and water related activities for the benefit of the public.

To restore, preserve, maintain and educate the public in the history, use and wildlife, of canals and inland waterways generally and the Wendover Arm in particular.

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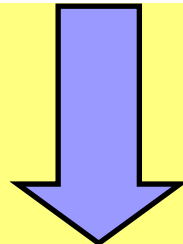
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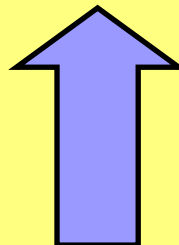
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