



THE WENDOVER ARM TRUST WORKING PARTY NEWS

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THE NINE DAY AUGUST WORKING WEEK



POURING SOME OF THE 470 TONNES OF READYMIX

As I write this looking at the present indifferent and often wet weather I marvel at our luck during the August working week (nine days!) when we had extremely hot weather only broken on the Tuesday evening by a torrential thunderstorm.



BY TUESDAY THE CONCRETING WAS WELL AWAY FROM THE BRIDGE AND THE BENTOMAT LAYING TEAM WERE NEARING THE WINDING HOLE



DRY STONE WALLERS HARD AT WORK ON FILLING THE GABIONS

During the week a team worked hard constructing the shallow shelf at the winding hole.



EXCAVATING IN THE WINDING HOLE

The completed work by Sunday afternoon after nine days of hard work exceeded everyone's expectations. Bentomat was fixed right up to the nose of the winding hole and covered with ready-mix concrete to within 15 metres of the nose of the winding hole. The shallow offside underwater shelf was completed with gabions over the Bentomat and covered in soil.



REAL PROGRESS – THE END OF A NINE DAY WEEK!

During the nine days, hoggin removed from the ramp in the winding hole was used to fill pot holes along our temporary entrance road. (This hoggin was originally infill to the demolished Little Tring Bridge and was part of the spoil from the bridge that was to have been carted off site at a cost of around £8,000; The Trust saved this cost by having the spoil dumped on site.)

As much excavation as possible was completed in the winding hole just leaving the temporary ramp for the ready-mix lorries. The toe wall by Little Tring Bridge was completed and a base cast for the plinth for the Tim Wilkinson plaque. Another ten rolls of Bentomat were delivered and stored.

For those of you with a passion for statistics:

We laid nearly 2,000 square metres of Bentomat lining.

We laid 213 cubic metres of ready-mix concrete, 470 tonnes in weight and delivered in 47 loads, on two days 10 loads were delivered.

We completed the lining of 180 linear metres of canal bed, from the bridge narrows to the winding hole.

From the towpath wall to the nose of the winding hole is 100 feet.

On Monday 2nd August we also installed milepost zero at Bulbourne Junction and this was followed by a short ceremony and a BBQ in the evening - see the Wendover Arm News for the full story.

For this magnificent effort we have to thank not only the Trust's restoration volunteers but KESCRG who came for our July weekend and cut and rolled all the Bentomat for our nine day stint in August and BITM who held the week long camp in August as well as a BITM weekend on the second weekend. There were over twenty volunteers on site every day, half from the Trust and half from BITM. My personal thanks to everyone who made this extended work party such a success; such was the pace of work that it was not possible for me to spare time to complete the longitudinal levels through Phase II that was part of my programme.

Programme for completion of Phase I

It does not seem seven years since we started work on Phase I in 1997, exactly 200 years after the Arm first opened in 1797 but at last the end of this Phase is in sight. The following programme of work depends very much on the weather but we will make every effort to complete the lining before the winter weather.

September weekend (Friday 3rd September to Monday 6th September 2004)

On the Friday, if the ground conditions permit, unroll the Bentomat already fixed in the winding hole and cover with ready-mix, carrying on into Saturday morning if necessary.

Also on the Friday carry on with profiling the winding hole yet to be completed apart from the ready-mix lorry ramp. Once all the ready-mix has been delivered:

Complete the excavation and profiling to the end of Phase I and form a new ramp at least 40 metres into the present car park area. The road behind the winding hole wall will also be linked to this ramp.

Cut and roll all the Bentomat pieces required to complete Phase I

If the ground conditions are unsuitable for ready-mix lorries on the Friday and using a dumper for transporting the ready-mix is not practicable, this work will be abandoned and excavation, profiling and cutting/rolling Bentomat will start on the Friday leaving the ready-mix for another day. You will see from the dates for working parties that Pete Bowers has planned several days that will be used to catch up on laying ready-mix if necessary.

Sunday September 12th (sponsored walk) and Monday 13th September 2004

Carry on with excavation and profiling to completion. Cut and roll Bentomat not already done.

Concreting Work Party Thursday 30th September/Friday 1st October 2004

Weather permitting, all outstanding ready-mix will be laid to the end of Phase I.

October weekend (Saturday 2nd/Sunday 3rd/Monday 4th October 2004)

If everything has gone according to plan, the final lining and bund at the end of Phase I will be completed; if not, this work will carry over to the November weekend.

November weekend (Saturday 6th/Sunday 7th November)

If everything has gone according to plan this weekend will be devoted to general clearing up including backfilling the ramp behind the new bund, tidying up the spoil tip and any towpath work required before the winter.

It will be a great help if all volunteers able to assist at any of these work parties let me know in advance if they have not already done so. If you do not let me know in advance it will not be possible to advise you if we have to cancel a work party because of weather conditions.

Phase I in water

There are several factors that will determine when we re-water Phase I:

- The best time for BW to release the volume of water required
- The need to plant the shallow underwater shelf just before re-watering
- Stoppages affecting those who wish to have their boats ready to be among the first through the lock after re-watering

The Trust's Restoration Committee will be meeting on September 21st so the October Working Party News will have up-to-date information on this subject.

Phase I Towpath Hedge

There are some gaps in this hedge and a few of the plants have died and require replacing. Ken Graves is arranging for plants to be ready for a planting session at our December Working Party.

It is planned to remove the spiral protectors and trim top growth in the Spring at the March 2005 Working Party.

Phase II

It is hoped to complete the level survey on the 5th/6th September 2004 so that designs and estimates can be prepared. The Trust Council have given financial authority to proceed with 50 metres of Phase II relining from the new sump at Drayton Beauchamp and it is hoped to commence work in the spring of 2005. The Bentomat just delivered includes enough for 50 linear metres of canal bed. Completion of this length will confirm or otherwise the validity of the design/estimate proposals..

Phase II also includes the provision of two footbridges where public footpaths cross the canal bed and it is essential that these be erected as soon as possible so as to keep the public clear of our operations rather than have to provide safety staff at both locations when we are working. Ron Pittaway is actively in discussion with two firms that supply timber bridges of this type. Initial enquiries suggest costs in the order of £10,000 for each bridge, including forming narrows and foundations, with the bridge supplied ready to assemble.

Web Site

The address of the Trust web site managed by Oliver Revel is:

<http://wendovercanal.org.uk/>

I regularly receive praise of our web site, usually by e-mail. Well done Olly.

Tring/Wendover Festival 2004

I am pleased to report that the figure of £45,000 that I reported as this year's profit has been amended by our Treasurer, John Brooman, to somewhat nearer £47,500.

Site Security

On Wednesday 4th August of our working week we had unwelcome visitors who broke into Nigel Williams car as well as stealing the key from a dumper very near where we were working. Around lunchtime a local resident saw a white van leave the site in great haste and a car alarm going off so we presume they fled in a hurry as nothing was stolen from Nigel's car. Unfortunately no registration number was taken. The incident was reported to the police.

Sometime between 10.30am on Tuesday 10th August when Ray Orth saw the plant off site and Saturday 13th August when Enid and Ron Pittaway visited the site the hasp of the BW padlock to the outer gate was partly sawn through and snapped off and the padlock and chain to the inner gate removed. Nothing is missing on site although the diesel pump had been unscrewed from the oil drum it was fixed to. No diesel appears to have been taken. One possibility is that the thieves had come back expecting to drive a dumper away. The diesel pump is now stored on the VW Transporter and the padlock on the inner gate replaced with our own lock as anyone can buy a BW Watermate key. The BW lock on the outer gate has been replaced and I have duplicate keys to the new padlock for all volunteers who hold Tringford hut and gate keys. The police visited the site and felt that the only item on site of any interest to thieves was the diesel. As this is of comparatively low value we are leaving it on site for the moment. I have spoken to both farmers whose land adjoins the canal and they will be keeping an eye open. The police have been asked to be informed of any incident, no matter how trivial.

Everything happens in threes so it was no surprise when Keith Slade (one of the farmers) rang me on Friday morning 20th August to say that a lorry load of coniferous bark chippings had been dumped in front of the entrance gate in Little Tring Road. Subsequent enquiries brought to light that a BW employee had seen that the entrance was clear at 3pm on Thursday 16th but was blocked when he went by half an hour later. Dumping in broad daylight! Keith Slade, who also uses the entrance, is asking the fly tipping department of Dacorum BC to clear the entrance as it blocks a public footpath; if this does not happen, Ray Orth will use our plant at the next work party to clear the entrance. The chippings will be dumped in our tip as they do not rot down readily.

Perhaps not unrelated to one or more of the above events has been, yet again, a short occupation of the Festival Site by 'travellers'. Ray Orth has excavated trenches at both entrance gates and at a gap in the hedge for the owner of the field, Mr. Brown. Let us hope that this will prevent future trespass.

General Notes.

All volunteers receive and sign for the Trust's Restoration Manual that includes full Health and Safety requirements for the restoration works. The Manual is the property of the Trust; if you leave the working parties for any reason, please return the Manual to either Ray Orth or myself.

David Barratt is our qualified First-Aider and, even if he is not on site, lives nearby and can be contacted on 01442 822523 if he is at home.

Hard hats for use at all times and high visibility jackets to be worn on sites with mobile plant in use are kept in the store at Tringford and must be drawn/returned there. One first aid kit is kept in the store; another is kept in the VW transporter for use on site. Also available in the transporter are ear defenders and goggles that must be worn when using strimmers, angle grinders, concrete breakers and the like.

My mobile phone number at working parties is 07850-170858. It is not always left on continuously but has a message facility that I check from time to time. We normally work from 9am to 5pm (or dark if earlier!) when we are hiring plant or taking delivery of ready-mix concrete early in the morning. There are breaks for morning coffee/tea, packed lunch and afternoon tea/coffee. We take our own food and drinks. However, do not feel bound by these times, as half a day is better than no help at all.

DATES FOR WORKING PARTIES

DATE	WORKING AT	WORK TO BE DONE
Friday 3 rd September 2004	Little Tring	Bentonite lining/concreting/excavation
Saturday 4 th September 2004	Little Tring	Bentonite lining/concreting/excavation
Sunday 5 th September 2004	Little Tring	Cut Bentonite lining/excavation Phase II level survey
Monday 6 th September 2004	Little Tring	Cut Bentonite lining/excavation Phase II level survey
Sunday 12 th September 2004	Little Tring	Cut Bentonite lining/excavation NB: This is the day of the Trust's sponsored walk
Monday 13 th September 2004	Little Tring	Bentonite lining/concreting if excavation is completed
Thursday 30 th September 2004	Little Tring	Bentonite lining/concreting
Friday 1 st October 2004	Little Tring	Bentonite lining/concreting
Saturday 2 nd October 2004	Little Tring	Construct bund at end of Phase I
Sunday 3 rd October 2004	Little Tring	Construct bund at end of Phase I
Monday 4 th October 2004	Little Tring	Construct bund at end of Phase I
Thursday 21 st October 2004	Little Tring	Tidying up and towpath work
Friday 22 nd October 2004	Little Tring	Tidying up and towpath work
Thursday 4 th November 2004	Little Tring	Tidying up and towpath work
Friday 5 th November 2004	Little Tring	Tidying up and towpath work
Saturday 6 th November 2004	Little Tring	Preparatory work for Phase II
Sunday 7 th November 2004	Little Tring	Preparatory work for Phase II
Thursday 2 nd December 2004	Little Tring	Preparatory work for Phase II
Friday 3 rd December 2004	Little Tring	Preparatory work for Phase II
Saturday 4 th December 2004	Little Tring	Preparatory work for Phase II. Hedge planting.
Sunday 5 th December 2004	Little Tring	Preparatory work for Phase II. Hedge planting

Roger Leishman, Restoration Director. 7 Hall Park, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 2NU.

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WENDOVER ARM TRUST

WORK PARTY VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE TO DECEMBER 2004

Date	Location					
Fri 3 Sep	Little Tring	<i>R Leishman</i>	B Harris	P Cardy	P Bowers	R Pittaway
			B Ing	R Orth	K Graves	
Sat 4 Sep	Little Tring	<i>E Evans</i>	O Revel	P Cardy	R Orth	R Pittaway am
			F Marshall	B Everett	B Fletcher	K Graves
Sun 5 Sep	Little Tring	<i>R Leishman</i>	O Revel	P Cardy	P Batchelor	R Orth
			B Fletcher	K Graves		
Mon 6 Sep	Little Tring	<i>R Leishman</i>	R Orth	B Ing	K Graves	
Sun 12 Sep	Little Tring	<i>R Orth</i>	B Everett	K Graves		
Mon 13 Sep	Little Tring	<i>R Orth</i>	K Graves			
Thur 30 Sep	Little Tring	<i>R Leishman</i>	P Bowers	K Graves	R Orth	
Fri 1 Oct	Little Tring	<i>R Leishman</i>	P Bowers	K Graves	R Orth	
Sat 2 Oct	Little Tring	<i>R Leishman</i>	B Fletcher	K Graves	R Orth	
Sun 3 Oct	Little Tring	<i>R Leishman</i>	B Fletcher	K Graves	R Orth	
Thur 21 Oct	Little Tring	<i>P Bowers</i>				
Fri 22 Oct	Little Tring	<i>P Bowers</i>				
Thur 4 Nov	Little Tring	<i>P Bowers</i>				
Fri 5 Nov	Little Tring	<i>P Bowers</i>				
Sat 6 Nov	Little Tring	<i>R Leishman</i>	B Fletcher	K Graves	R Orth	
Sun 7 Nov	Little Tring	<i>R Leishman</i>	B Fletcher	K Graves	R Orth	
Thur 2 Dec	Little Tring	<i>P Bowers</i>				
Fri 3 Dec	Little Tring	<i>P Bowers</i>				
Sat 4 Dec	Little Tring	<i>R Leishman</i>	B Fletcher	K Graves	R Orth	
Sun 5 Dec	Little Tring	<i>R Leishman</i>	B Fletcher	K Graves	R Orth	

(.....) Indicates provisional

Please ring the person in charge and let them know that you are coming as soon as possible.

The name of the person in charge on a particular day/site is printed in italics.

P Bowers	01255 504540 or 07880 744730	E Evans	01628 526237 or 01628 526898
R Leishman	01442 874536 or 07850 170858	R Orth	01494 786868 or 07733 092034
R Pittaway	01296 630968 or 07946 484156		