



# Wendover Arm Trust



## Operations Report 24th December 2020

Website: - <http://wendoverarmtrust.co.uk/>

### Overview

The work party in December 2020 started on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> and ran through to Monday 14<sup>th</sup>. We added an extra day (Mon) to allow ready mix concreting at the Swing Bridge walls. Flood water from previous heavy rain was a problem during the whole work party.

Later, a Tree Planting team worked on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> to plant 420 trees. (reported separately)

### Health and Safety

We had a minor accident with a volunteer falling from a Dumper last month. The H and S review of the incident concluded that Drivers should not stand behind the driver's seat/roll bar when the dumper is being loaded because this area is not designed for walking on and does not have any high grip material provided. Previously Drivers could stand there during loading into the dumper bucket with an excavator. Guidance for drivers' documents have been updated.



This picture sums up the conditions we were working under. This can be funny for observers but is not fun if you cannot get your foot or boot out and a vehicle is approaching. Whose boot is this?

### Water and Mud

The combination of large amounts of rain two to three months ago, and restricted working due to the C19 virus has meant a large build up of water between bridge 4 and the car park. This in turn gets churned into a slurry by the plant machines passing through. We hired a different type of pump to our normal ones and this one handled the mixture of slurry and vegetation quite well.

We pumped water and slurry for most of the work party to create a dryish area between the old Swing bridge walls. In addition, several earth bunds were created to control the water.

As can be seen later the flooding caused several problems.



## Whitehouses

Before and after pictures. (Guess which is which!)







### Bridge 4 Stop planks

These planks were designed using the standard CRT calculations and they have been made specifically fit the stop plank channels in the Bridge 4 new walls. Further work will be needed to ensure that they fit the channels correctly.







And this is where the stop planks will fit.

Finishing the top of the new walls

### Building dog steps and “animal access” points

We have had a constant problem with dogs and other animals getting into the water filled section of the canal at a mooring wall or similar vertical structure, and then struggling up the next available soil surface to get themselves out. This has caused erosion of the bank down to the Bentomat layer. The repairs to the damage in the “wet” section will be done when better weather comes along. In the meantime, we have decided to build these simple block structures at the end of the walls and bridge abutments to alleviate the problem.

Additionally, during recent environmental surveys, it was recognised in the restored but dry section that there were several animal tracks that ran down one bank, across the bed, and up the other bank. We have made more “animal access” steps at these points.



“Sunbeams on Dog steps”



## Concreting at Bridge 4

The task was to cast 300 mm thick reinforced concrete (2 x 4 cubic m of concrete) between the newly discovered lengths of swing bridge wall foundations. The excess rainwater and mud had to be pumped out and the bed cleaned up with an excavator and by hand.





All was ready for concreting on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> morning and the first concrete arrived on schedule at 10:00 at the car park 400 metres away. After a few dumper loads had been delivered it was realised that the mud/water was breaking through the series of mini bunds along the bed. Towards the end of the concrete pour this is what it looked like, with the new concrete under water! (Concrete does cure OK under water!) Must try harder next time.....



#### Excavating the Historic refuse tip.

As mentioned last month a small group has been set up to evaluate the various options we now have to get on and move the tip material off site. The group is currently working with CRT and sub-contractors to finalise the various agreements and contracts for the first phase. A phased approach has been taken so that lessons learned from the first excavations and delivery to a remediation works can be incorporated into the next, larger phase. There are around 5,000 tonnes to remove!

#### International rescue!

Here we have the owner of the boot!! To be able to get P.L. out of the mud, I had to manoeuvre a dumper truck very carefully to him so he could climb out and retrieve the boot. Wet socks for the rest of the day. Luckily, with waterproof socks on, his feet stayed dry!



Not exactly "Thunderbirds", slower, but effective

Volunteers “thank you lunch”

“Thank You” to all the volunteers and Organisations who have worked together to make such good progress over the year, under unusually challenging conditions!

A “Thank you lunch” will be organised when the C19 virus situation is under control.

Merry Christmas to all.

Tony Bardwell

Operations Director