

Wendover Arm News

Newsletter of the Wendover Arm Trust



Walk an Arm's Length Press Launch



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In This Issue

The bad news is that the 2012 festival is not to be but the good news is that the **Walk an Arm's Length** event is going great guns. We have all the membership news with the lucky winners of the Club 100 Draw and a plea for help whilst having a great day out. A proposal is put to restructure the membership fees whilst Bob details how you can raise money for the restoration. A copy of Roger's update to the Chiltern

Society reminds us all of the progress we have made since the start of this fantastic journey.

This year's **AGM** will see a new venue at the DDBC (Dunstable and District Boat Club), full details and direction with map in the next issue of **Wendover Arm News**.

The Trust has a new general enquiries phone please call 07547181857 to get hold of anyone on the council or to ask any questions

Where is the Restoration? When does it happen?

I have had several enquiries recently, both from members of the Wendover Arm Trust and members of the public, concerning our restoration work. This made me realise that there are many people who, although they would like to visit the restoration site to view the work in progress and see what we are up to, are unaware of when, where and how often the work takes place.

I therefore thought it would be a good idea to publicise the details of our work parties for the remainder of 2012, including the dates, location and an idea of what work is planned (although this can vary due to many reasons not least the weather).

Please do come along and visit us at work and if you visit please do not be afraid to make yourselves known. Any of the lads (and lassies) will be only too pleased to stop work and have a chat, explain what is going on and answer any questions you might have.

If you feel you would like to or are planning to visit us and require further information please free to contact me on 01494 786868
Looking forward to seeing you at our work parties

Ray Orth

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Membership News

As of May 1st, the Trust has 680 members spread across 452 households. This is very similar to the previous 3 months. Now spring is here and summer is around the corner, we hope to welcome new members to the Trust.

If you know anyone who is interested in our canals and local heritage, please do ask them to join the Trust.

Postage increases again!!

Everyone is feeling the pinch since Royal Mail increased their prices to 60p for first class and 50p for second class post. The Wendover Arm Trust only uses second class mail to keep costs down, although occasionally members donate a book of first class stamps, which are gratefully received. We have already cut our postage costs significantly by using email where possible, although we understand not everyone uses email. Some members are enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for their acknowledgement letter, again thank you for helping us to keep costs down.

Decreasing our postage costs means more money for canal restoration.

Membership acknowledgement letters

Do you value your acknowledge-

ment letter and membership card or perhaps not? That is the question.... Several members have sent notes to me recently with their renewal cheque saying they do not need (or want?) an acknowledgement letter to say I have received their payment. Therefore from June, I will add an optional tick box to the tear off slip, where you can choose to have a letter or not. If you simply want to make sure your cheque has arrived, put a phone number and I can send a text message or call, again this is cheaper than a stamp! Crazy, but that's the way of the world.

Gift Aid

Apologies for my mistake in the previous issue, we can claim back 25p for every £1 donated through the gift aid scheme, not 20p as stated, sorry!

At the end of second half of the 2011/12 financial year, the Trust has submitted a claim for just over £1,000 from the tax man.

To check if you have registered, simply check your membership number. If the letter "G" appears, then you are already signed up. We can back date claims for a few years, so long as you were eligible to claim gift aid. If you want to gift aid your membership fees and any donations, contact Katherine who will ask you to sign a simple declaration and that's it.

Standing Order Payment

Over a third of Trust members now pay their subscriptions by standing order. This method is the quickest and easiest way to pay for Trust membership, as the money is transferred directly from your bank account to ours. No need to write a cheque and post it, your membership will never lapse as the payment is made automatically every year. Time and money is saved as renewal reminders are not needed. Your money is still acknowledged either by email or letter.

If you would like to set up a standing order either online or using a mandate form, contact Katherine.

Club 100

The Spring club 100 lottery draw was made at the April Council Meeting. The winners were:

1st 148, Mrs Carol Prosser, Wiltshire £156.00

2nd 112, Mr Clive Wilson, Sandy, Beds £65.00

3rd 145, Mr Ken Walsh, North Yorkshire £26.00

Congratulations to all our winners.

To be in with a chance of winning the next cash prizes, sign up today! Each lucky number is £15 per year, for entry into four consecutive quarterly draws. Contact Katherine for further details. The next draw will be in July.

Please can you help us.....?

Over the next few months, we will

be attending local events to promote the walk, encouraging people to sign up as well as giving information about the Trust and selling Grand Draw tickets.

As the Walk is now our main fundraising event for 2012, it is vital that we get as many people signed up to take part on the day and to collect sponsorship. The Grand Draw is another fundraising initiative that brings in further income to the Trust and the lucky winners get good prizes.

Can **YOU** spare a couple of hours of **YOUR** time to help staff our stand? No experience is needed, all materials will be provided. Just bring your enthusiasm, a friendly face and make a difference. The events we are going to attend are:

4th June Wendover Carnival

17th June Marsworth Steam Rally

30th June Tring Carnival

14th July Tring Farmers Market

28th July Linslade Canal Festival

27th Aug Music Festival at The Grand Junction Arms, Bulbourne

Please contact Bob or Katherine if you can help out. Every little helps, so come on volunteer today and have a good day out, whilst supporting the Trust.

Membership Fee Change Proposal

Following Katherine's announcement at last years' AGM and a brief mention in a previous issue of Wendover Arm News, here are some further details on the proposed changes to the membership subscriptions and types of membership available.

Membership fees were last increased in 2005 to £8 single and £12 family per year. These rates are some of the lowest of any canal society. It is therefore proposed that the annual membership fees rise from October 2012, to £10 single and £15 family per year.

A review of other organisations charges and types of membership identified areas that the Wendover Arm Trust could enhance the membership options currently available.

Many societies offer Life membership as well as annual memberships. We would like to give our members the option of upgrading their current membership to a Life membership; £150 single and

£250 family; which would also be available to new members joining the Trust for the first time.

Members could also sign up for a 5 year block membership, but get a 20% discount, so paying 4 years fees up front.

The above options are more efficient for Trust members and the Trust itself, as it saves the annual renewal process, allowing continuous membership and the Trust to claim the gift aid on the money at the current 25% rate.

All the above changes are subject to approval by Trust members at the 2012 AGM in October.

Official notification of these proposed changes to the Trust's Articles of Association will be sent out later this year. If you have any comments or questions please contact Katherine, membership@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk or 01442 246523

	Single (annual)	Family (annual)	Life (single)	Life (family)	Corporate
Current	£8	£12	N/A	N/A	£20
Proposed	£10	£15	£150	£250	£25

The Festival is Off



Unfortunately, due to a combination of low water levels and low bookings, the very difficult decision has been taken to cancel this year's festival. 2013 will see a

focus on achieving funding from a variety of sources, before a return of the canal festival activities in 2014.

One Door Closes

... and another door opens. Our Festival is cancelled this year so we have lost the chance of a good income from that. However, we are working hard on 'Walk an Arm's Length' for Sunday Sept 2nd.

We want (need!) to get a healthy income from the walk – how are we going to do that? Well sponsorships by companies and local organisations are crucial to the success of the Walk, and in principle cover the cost of organising it. But for the event to be successful we rely on personal sponsorships.

There are three main ways anyone can donate to the event:

- By making an online donation direct to Walk an Arm's Length.
- By collecting sponsorship for your own participation in the Walk.
- By sponsoring someone else who is walking.

It is mainly by having enough walkers collecting their own sponsorship monies (i.e. being fundraisers) that the event will be the success we all want.

Go for It!

Every person that takes part in the Walk helps to raise publicity for the event and for the Trust. A well-attended Walk is more likely to become a repeated fixture in years to come. Your registration fee is designed mostly to cover the costs of the event. Return transport is included, as well as much more. See www.wendoverarmwalk.org.uk to find out more and to register for the Walk.

Don't Just Walk It!

Just imagine the result when each walker is sponsored by family, friends, neighbours and acquaintances for (say) £50 in total. In no time we have an event which rivals the Festival for income. Sponsorship can be collected online directly, or on paper. A major benefit to the Trust of getting sponsorship online is that the money is passed

instantly to the Trust, i.e. you don't have to chase donors and collect funds after the event. The donor gets an automatic 'thank you' from you. Another benefit is that Gift Aid is more easily declared and the Trust gets the Gift Aided part of the sponsorship earlier.

We have made it very simple to be a fundraiser. Go to www.BtMyDonate.co.uk and click on the green 'Start Fundraising' button. Click on 'Join an organised event', then type 'wendover' as the keyword to find the Walk event. Follow the simple steps and you are up and running as a bona fide Wendover Arm Trust fundraiser!

If you want to see what a fundraiser's page looks like, take a look at <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/johannaswalk>

OK, not everyone feels comfortable setting up an online fundraising account. No problem – we will do it for you! Send a request to funding@wendoverarmtrust.co.uk and we will go through the set up steps on your behalf. You will be given your own online access details which you can later change to something more memorable. You can also add your own photos.

One idea worth following is to prepare a sheet of labels already printed with your fundraising link for you to give as a request/

reminder to possible sponsors.

However, if you feel more comfortable collecting sponsorships in the old fashioned way you can download and print sponsorship forms from our new website www.wendoverarmwalk.org.uk, or we can send you one (call 07860 286155). If you do this, don't forget to collect the monies!

Be a Sponsor

Can't do the walk? Don't want to collect sponsorship? We have a dedicated team of volunteers from RAF Halton who will be our 'last man walking'. Their mission is to check that the route is clear, collect the safety marshals, take down signs, wake up any sleeping walkers, etc. Their team name is 'Tail End Heroes'. You can sponsor them by going to <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/tailendheroes> and making an online donation, or by sending a cheque to 'Heroes, Wendover Arm Trust, 467 Bideford Green, Leighton Buzzard LU72TZ'. Cheques should be made payable to Wendover Arm Trust.

Whichever way you choose to support the event, remember that any profit from the Walk will all go to restoration of the Arm.

One final thing we can all do, and that is pray for good weather!

Restoration Director, Roger Leishman Updates the Chiltern Society on Progress

Since my previous article some ten years ago significant progress has been made in restoring the Wendover Arm Canal. For those of you who did not see that article, this is the background information to the restoration.

The 6¾ miles Wendover Arm runs from Wendover through Halton, Aston Clinton and Buckland Wharf to Bulbourne Junction on the Grand Union Canal and is owned by British Waterways (BW). BW will become the Canal and River Trust in April this year. The Arm opened in 1797 as a navigable feeder essential to maintain the water level on the Chiltern summit of the present Grand Union (London to Birmingham) Canal.

Due to leakage, it was closed to navigation around 1900 and the water entering the 1¾ mile leaking section at Drayton Beauchamp was first diverted into Wilstone Reservoir and then, in 1912, piped under the leaking section to flow into Wilstone and Tringford Reservoirs from where it is to this day pumped up to summit level to flow the 1¼ miles of open canal to Bulbourne. The records from the water flow gauge at Wendover Basin date back earlier than any other water flow gauge in the country, possibly even in Europe.

In 1968 the first moves were made to re-water the Arm; a leading light in the campaign was the late Chiltern Society member Bernard Banfield. At this time a proposal to demolish Little Tring Bridge was strongly opposed by many bodies that supported restoration of the Arm, including the Chiltern Society and the Inland Waterways Association (IWA). Despite the protests, in 1973 the bridge was demolished and filled in.

Nevertheless, moves towards restoration continued and the Wendover Arm Group was formed to restore the Arm to water and, among their initial works, with the help of Chiltern Society Volunteers, cleared the overgrown towpath between Drayton Beauchamp and Bulbourne. In 1989 the Group was formalised as the Wendover Arm Trust, a registered charity.

An obvious question is “Why is BW, as the owner of the Arm, not carrying out the restoration?”. The answer lies in legislation at the time of nationalisation of canals that does not permit BW to spend any money, other than for essential maintenance, on ‘remainder’ waterways such as the Arm. Nevertheless, BW strongly supports the work of the Trust.

Restoration commenced in 1997, exactly 200 years after the Arm was first opened, and is proceeding in three Phases:

Phase I

This has now been completed at a cost of £400,000 and opened up a further ¼ mile of navigable canal, including the rebuilt Little Tring Bridge, from Bulbourne Junction to a former basin at Little Tring where boats can now turn. Financing was £250,000 raised by the Trust, £50,000 in donations, mainly from IWA Branches, and a £100,000 legacy from the waterways author, Tim Wilkinson.

This is the restored basin at Little Tring at the time of its opening in 2005 by the Trust's Patron, the actor David Suchet. The rebuilt Little Tring Bridge can



be seen in the background. What is now a flourishing towpath hedge can be seen as new plantings financed by a grant from the Countryside Commission. Cowslips bloom on the low bank below the hedge. It is now open to navigation and abounds with wildlife. Herons and terns can be seen catching the many fish in the basin. In the foreground is a reed bed with newly planted reeds, rushes, reed mace and yellow flag iris. It is now a solid mass of plants and home to several moorhen families every spring.



Phase II

This is the relining of 1¾ miles of dry bed from Drayton Beauchamp back to Phase I at Little Tring. It includes 630 yards of canal diversion with Bentonite waterproof lining for the Aston Clinton by-pass already completed at the expense of the Highway Authority and 120 yards through Drayton Beauchamp Bridge relined by BW as essential maintenance to replace a length of pipeline that allegedly caused flooding in Drayton Beauchamp. The remaining 1¼ miles of relining is currently being undertaken by the Trust's volunteers at an estimated cost of around £1m. The first ¼ mile is already in water as illustrated overleaf.

This re-watered stretch is already home to a kingfisher, a reed warbler' nest and families of swans, coots, moorhens and mallards. The banks are covered with a large variety of flowers and a butterfly enthusiast told us that before restoration he had never seen so many species of butterflies on the banks. Local farmers have worked with the Trust to restore and manage hedges on both sides of the canal as havens for wildlife.

Before relining, the 100 year-old earthenware pipe laid in 1912 that carries the water from Wendover had to be considered. There is a danger that the pipe, that is badly cracked in places, could collapse sometime in the future and the subsidence rupture the waterproofing membrane to be laid above it, especially as the pipe was laid in a trench cut into solid chalk but back-



filled with loose material. It was decided, in conjunction with BW, to cast a reinforced concrete slab over the trench to protect against this possibility and it also has the advantage of providing a future drain to cope with any hydraulic pressure from the water table below. BW had already budgeted for renewing the badly cracked pipe so was able to grant the Trust the £200,000 cost of the pipe renewal towards restoring the Arm. In these days of energy conservation, returning to gravity feed from Wendover will drastically reduce BW's electrical consumption for pumping.

After the pipe is capped, the profile of the canal before lining is prepared to receive the lining of Bentomat waterproof matting. The matting consists of two layers of artificial fibre between which are granules of Bentonite clay that expand to ten times their size when in water. The fibre layers are pin stapled together to prevent the granules migrating. To ensure a water-tight seal the Bentomat must be compressed by either 6"/150mm of concrete or 12"/300mm of spoil. The technique used is to cover the sloping banks with dry laid concrete blocks to just below water level, lay 12"/300mm diameter coir rolls along the top of the blocks and then cover the bank above water level with grass seeded spoil. When this is completed the Bentomat on the bed of the canal is covered with 12"/300mm of spoil and has proved to be an ideal habitat for many forms of aquatic life. The margins at water level can be used for aquatic plants just above the coir rolls but experience with the A41 by-pass diversion has shown that it is prudent to leave this planting until the canal is again navigable by boats. BW are having to employ a reed cutter to keep a clear channel

flowing from Wendover to Drayton Beauchamp as the plant life is choking the water flow, whereas the regular passage of boats keeps a clear channel with much less harm to wildlife than intermittent reed cutting.



The banks lined with bentomat and the concrete blocks and coir rolls in position



The bank top covered with spoil and sown with grass seed, the bed lined with bentomat and covered in spoil all ready for re-watering

This Phase includes the archaeological investigation and restoration of the site of a former Newcomen steam pumping station for the canal that was closed in the early 1800's. It is hoped to make this the subject of a future article.

Phase III

The Trust is very concerned that the 4 miles still in water between Drayton Beauchamp and Wendover Basin is becoming overgrown with water plants and silting up. Indeed, there is a danger that BW will have to resort to a narrow concrete channel to preserve the essential flow of water if the Arm is not restored to navigation.

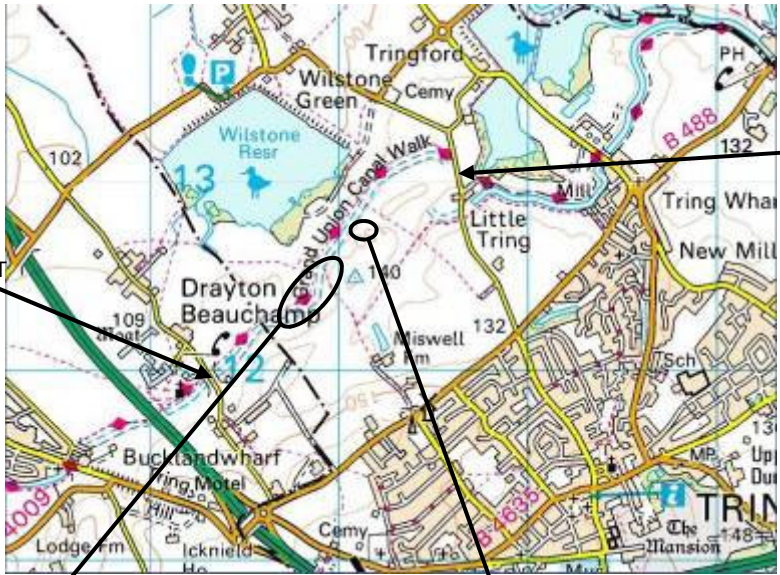
This length will require dredging and bank strengthening to accommodate an increased water level and provide a channel alongside the towpath. There are also three road crossings that require raising. These are at Buckland Wharf under the former A41, at Halton Village and an access bridge at Buckland Wharf.

The anticipated cost of this phase is £2m - £3m.

The Trust has to raise all the funds for restoration. A main source of funds to date has been the annual boat festival held over the late Spring Bank Holiday at Little Tring but since the festival site was sold to developers it is now being held on Box Moor Trust land at Hemel Hempstead. Do come and support the Trust - Sunday 3rd, Monday 4th and Tuesday 5th June 2012.— **NOTE** This has now been cancelled, the main fund raising event this year is “Walk an Arm’s Length” **Ed**

The Trust invites you to become members, join in fund raising activities or become a member of our restoration team. Visit our website www.wendoverarmtrust.co.uk for full details.”

Roger Leishman, Restoration Director, Wendover Arm Trust (a Chiltern Society member).



notes
 The post codes refer to access points from local roads.
 Access can also be gained from Wilstone Reservoir car park and by following the footpath around reservoir.

Site 1
 Canal restoration

Site 2
 Whitehouses pumping station

DATE	DAYS	LOCATION	WORK
8 th – 14 th June 2012	7	SITE 1	Canal excavation, bank profiling and lining
6 th – 12 th July 2012	7	SITE 1	Canal excavation, bank profiling and lining
14 th – 20 th July 2012	7	SITE 2	Restoration work at Whitehouses pumping station. This work is being carried out by one of our visiting groups. The KENT AND EAST SUSSEX CANAL RESTORATION GROUP
4 th – 12 th August 2012	9	SITE 1	Canal excavation, bank profiling and lining and bed lining
31 st Aug – 6 th Sept 2012	7	SITE 1	Canal excavation, bank profiling and lining and bed lining
5 th – 11 th October 2012	7	SITE 1	Canal excavation, bank profiling and lining and bed lining
2 nd – 8 th November 2012	7	SITE 1	Canal excavation, bank profiling and lining and bed lining
30 th Nov – 6 th Dec 2012	7	SITE 1	Canal excavation, bank profiling and lining and bed lining

Go with the flow...



WALK AN ARM'S LENGTH!

Sponsored Canal Walk



Wendover to Tring

**Sunday 2nd
September 2012**

Register NOW!

Please help us raise funds to enable our volunteers to continue restoring the beautiful Wendover Arm canal. To find out more visit our website:

www.wendoverarmwalk.org.uk

or call: 07547 181857



Wendover Arm Trust

Restoring canal history in the Chilterns.

Registered charity number: 801150