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Summer 2021

# The Wharfinger

HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST



EDITION 148

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## *From the desk of the Chairman*

Firstly, within this edition you will see the Annual Report from the Trustees. I would like to thank my fellow Trustees for all their work on helping to move the Trust forward and, with the help of the many volunteers and overall membership of the Canal Trust, we will continue to work at restoring this beautiful canal.

Our Finance Trustee, Philip Marshall, has done a great job of getting the accounts ready, passed by the accountants, and then approved by the board. The accounts and report should be found on the web site by the time you get this edition of the Wharfinger. Should you have any questions on these, please contact myself or Philip - details are on the inside back page.

Secondly, within the report, you will see that we are working the canal on many fronts. One that has been silent recently is the Inclined plane at Newent. You may well have seen programmes on the Canals on the BBC and other channels that are available. Have you come across IWA TV? It can be seen via their website or recordings via YouTube. Some remarkably interesting webinars and one recently on boat lifts.

AGM – notice of this on another page. I just want to add that whilst you will, of course, be able to ask questions at the AGM, it would be extremely helpful if you could send questions in beforehand - contacting us on [agm@h-g-canal.org.uk](mailto:agm@h-g-canal.org.uk).



Thank you to a number of wood workers we have in the trust or via friends. See here a further batch of bird boxes, some painted, from the Scouts of South Marches Scout District. They have been passed around the sites for installation.

We have also received some very stylish donation boat boxes from South Wales. These went through the paint shop in Herefordshire and then a further trip up north for customisation.

The pictures here show the first one of four - Kymin, Newent and Malswick will be launching soon at other locations and events we hope we can get to when restrictions allow.

Keep safe and well.

Ralph - Chairman



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# Annual Report and Accounts for 2020/21



## *of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust Limited*

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 28 February 2021. A non-profit distributing company no. 2704407, formed in April 1992, and a registered charity no. 1010721, which replaced the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Society launched in 1983.

### **Governing document**

The charity is constituted as a limited company, limited by guarantee as defined in the Companies Act 2006, and as such is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

### **Organisational structure**

The charity is run by a team of volunteers who pay an annual membership fee. It is managed by the Trustees who meet each month and are supported by site based groups and committees responsible for sales and other commercial activities. The board appoint trustees to run The Wharf House Co. Ltd. The Articles of Association allow for up to 10 trustees to be appointed but does allow for the co-option of 2 more to cover special projects. One third of the trustees stand down annually by rotation but can apply for re-election.

Potential new trustees are elected at the AGM or are co-opted during the year, but they must stand for formal election at the next AGM. When new Trustees are appointed, they are introduced to the work of the Trust and provided with the information they need to fulfil their roles, which includes information about trustees and charity law.

### **Risk management**

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are put in place to reduce risks of fraud error or unsafe acts.

The Board of Trustees is aware of the general guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. The Trustees have regard to this guidance and consider the activities of the charity have been carried out demonstrably for the public benefit and this applies also to their plans for future action. The charitable objects are defined as rebuilding a sustainable canal between Hereford and Gloucester.

The Trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year were:

Ralph Barber

Nigel Jefferies

Philip Marshall

Ed Helps

Eamonn McGurk

Tony Sellwood

Keith Vaughan Welch

Deborah Barber

### **Chairman's Report:**

A month into the year we went into Lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. All the promotional events we had planned to attend throughout the year were cancelled. Our own Social events were also cancelled as well as our own event in Newent at the end of the year. We went virtual with our AGM in June. It was good to see so many attending and gave people a chance to attend from further afield.



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My thanks go to all Trustees and Volunteers for their ongoing support and involvement in the Trust.

An ongoing strategy review continues. This has further brought together a number of groups looking at sections of the canal. A team in Hereford are looking at the start of the canal and discussion and work is occurring with the local council on several sites in Hereford city and further afield in Herefordshire.

The concept of an inclined plane for Newent continues in model form and we look forward to sharing it at shows once out of lockdown.

The Wharf House Company operation having changed from a directly managed to a leased operation (now The Lock Keepers and The Moorings), the lockdown has affected our tenants. As the country opens further, we wish them well and we look forward to a profitable relationship for the Trust.

One of the keys to a solid restoration is the involvement of others - councils, locals, all types of groups. A lot of work has occurred to continue to ensure the canal route is protected and supported by all. Many positive comments have been received about the change in direction the trust is now taking, after a few years of some negative comments. The sharing of ideas and use of social media with Facebook, YouTube and Twitter now being used for interaction is seen as a positive.

Looking further forward, like every other person and organisation the Covid 19 coronavirus has had and is having its effect on the Trust. Work slowed down, but volunteers continue to progress matters where they can.

### **Objectives and Activities:**

The trust espouses the following core values: -

- Restoring, enhancing, and protecting the canal for all
- Integrating the canal corridor as a sustainable resource into the life of the communities along its route
- Endeavouring to complete the work in partnership with all other interested parties.

### **Interested Parties**

This reporting period we have engaged further with the Neighbourhood Plans under development in Newent via Zoom meetings due to Covid-19.

### **Voluntary help and gifts in kind**

The volunteers form a critical part of the trust, not just in restoring the canal but also maintaining the restored sections and promoting widely through local and national events. All these aspects have continued throughout the year in question and are set to expand. The value of the volunteer work that we have recorded adds up to around £155,841 but we know this does not reflect all the time dedicated to the business of H&GCT by all our hardworking volunteers.

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## **Risks to the Charity:**

The Trust continues to negotiate new sites and to rejuvenate former sites with developers and landowners at various places along the line of the canal - including locations in Hereford and Ledbury. These can take years to conclude but we continue with an on-going diverse portfolio of negotiations so that a flow of announcements can realistically be expected over the coming years.

## **Reserves policy:**

The charity aims to hold funds that are at least anticipated to cover the normal operating costs for 12 months.

## **Charitable Activities and Achievements**

With the Covid-19 lock down site work was a challenge through out the year.

**Burcott Road:** Ongoing tree pruning and maintenance of the site.

**Holmer:** A lot has happened with Holmer which has been reported in the press over the years. We are currently in discussions with the current landowner supported by Herefordshire Council with a view to agreeing a transfer of the land on the canal corridor.

**Aylestone Park:** We were able to hire two reed boats in this year. One uses a cutting device to cut the reeds underwater, and another uses a rake on the front to collect and move the reeds from the water. A couple of days work proved to be greatly beneficial for the canal in this part of the park. Feedback from the public walking by was very positive.

**Kymin:** Ongoing site maintenance carried out. Installation of bird boxes supplied by a volunteer as well as regular mowing and the removing of assorted trees that had fallen in the storms. The site is very popular with local walkers.

**Yarkhill:** Regular maintenance and vegetation clearance continued on this stretch of canal.

**Adjoining Yarkhill:** The team have gained access to the site next to Yarkhill and have been clearing the site when Covid-19 restrictions have allowed the team to work.

**Ledbury:** In the summer of 2020 a number of us attended a virtual appeal for the development of Site about a mixed-use development including the erection of up to 625 new homes (including affordable housing), up to 2.9 hectares of B1 employment land, a canal corridor, public open space (including a linear park), The appeal result was announced after the period of this report. For completeness the decision was for the development to go ahead and support for the canal in land and money was also awarded.

**Dymock:** The pump that tops up the water levels in the winding pool stopped working and the team have worked several solutions that are developing into a more flexible approach to keep the water to the right level in the pond.

<b>Oxenhall:</b>	As with all sites we had restricted access due to Covid-19. We also lost our long-term site leader Brian Fox who over the years had been a Trustee, Volunteer and a great supporter of the trust. His knowledge of the canal and the Oxenhall site will be a great loss. His surveying career in the Ordnance Survey helped us immensely with the details of the levels of the canal.
<b>Newent:</b>	Longer term investigations are still underway to start the process of obtaining planning permission and grants for the Station project with the inclined plane employed to carry the canal over the road from Newent to Dymock.
<b>Malswick:</b>	An application for planning permission to build this section was submitted in October but withdrawn in January due to additional environmental considerations and requirements. The planning application was re-submitted in April 2021. Other preparation work was undertaken on site as well as building out the workshop area behind Malswick House and ensuring the wood store was kept full.
<b>Moat Farm:</b>	Routine maintenance including mowing of the grassy areas continued to be the focus of work here. The 'wilder' areas occasionally needed some intervention to enhance the habitats that have been created.
<b>Over:</b>	The land slippage at Vineyard Hill - the area has been pegged out and continues to be monitored. There is a plan to improve the ability to get boats along the section of canal at the bottom of the hill. Ongoing maintenance occupied the team, including the clearance of weeds by the boats that we used at Aylestone Park.
<b>Heritage Boats:</b>	The boats continue to be worked on. Mr Maysey was lifted out of the water. A survey was completed, and repairs are now underway. With the Covid-19 restrictions the work has been slow. The superstructure will be replaced, and the outboard motor given a full-service.
<b>Mill Barn:</b>	As reported in editions of the Wharfinger throughout the year we are continuing to work this forward. We have a design; the original planned location has had to be changed due to underground pipes. We are getting the paperwork aligned ready to apply for planning permission.
<b>Llanthony:</b>	The smaller property was re-let immediately following extensive refurbishment in Spring 2020. In February 2021 the tenants in the other, larger property left and that is in the process of being re-let.
<b>Membership:</b>	Sadly, we lose a few members each year but we gained 23 new ones - the overall figure decreased slightly to 1180. We missed being able to get out to shows and events which is a good source of new members, clearly an impact due to Covid-19. We thank members for their generosity with all



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their donations.

**The Wharfinger:** Its high standard has been maintained thanks to many volunteer hours given by writers, photographers, editors, proof-readers, layout and delivery. We have also had items used in national newsprint from the Wharfinger and our published walks leaflets have been selling well.

**Website:** This is constantly running behind the scenes. Queries are passed to the relevant Trust member for a response. Apart from the new layout and look, extra features such as payment of membership and donations can now be done online.

**Sales and Promotion:**

With Covid-19, no shows were attended and we had to also cancel our own Winter Bazaar which was to be held in Newent last year.

**Socials:** Went the same way as the Sales and Promotion due to Covid-19. As we move out of lock down, we hope we can restart them at the Royal Oak and see friends, members, and supporters of the trust to hear talks on a range of subjects from both paid speakers and our own members.

**Grand Holiday Draw**

Raised £1,300 – lower than usual as we did not hold any Open Days. Our gratitude goes to those who donate all the prizes.

**Financial review, Achievements and Performance**

The Trust group's financial position again strengthened during the year, showing a combined surplus of £43k compared with £26k the year before. This is on the back of increased rents although donations and legacies are down. Expenditure on sites amounted to £29k being spent (compared with £27k in the previous year) of which £16k was on the site at Malswick. The combination of the results removes any confusion that might arise with inter-company interest, which is not related to current operations.

The results of The Wharf House Co Ltd showed a profit of £13k for the year before inter-company interest (compared with a loss of £35k in 2020), with rents at a similar level to 2020 but costs dramatically reduced by more than £22k. This business has been affected by Coronavirus to the extent of at least £7.5k cash although the opportunities lost are unquantifiable but probably not insignificant. The company has been able to start repaying debt in a small way and it is expected that, subject to Coronavirus, this process will gain momentum in the current year which will provide liquidity to the Trust.

With the sale of the property in Dymock in April 2021 (after the end of the year in question) for £260k large amounts of debt has been repaid. Part of this was a requirement of the bank and part was to reduce exposure to high interest charges.

**R A Barber**

Trustee

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# Notification - Annual General Meeting 2021

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**The 2021 Annual General Meeting of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust will be held on Wednesday, 23 June 2021 at 7:30pm.**

The formal notice of the 2021 AGM was published on our web site as required under the Articles 28 days prior to the above date. The Agenda, the Annual Report, Accounts and Finance Statements can be found on the web site.

Due to the current government restriction on public meetings this meeting will be held virtually over the internet using the Zoom video conferencing service. 'How to connect' for the AGM can be found on the web site and within this edition of the Wharfinger.

In accordance with the H&G CT's Articles and Memorandum of Association, those members of the Board of Trustees who are retiring on rotation but offering themselves for re-election do not require to be formally nominated to serve an additional term.

## **New Nominations**

New nominations to serve on board of Trustees are Welcome. Requests for a nomination form should be made by the person making the nomination by email to [agm@h-g-canal.org.uk](mailto:agm@h-g-canal.org.uk). Nominations should be submitted in the period between 28 days and 7 days prior to the AGM.

## **Proxy voting**

Every member who is entitled to vote at an AGM may appoint a proxy to vote in his/her stead. A proxy must be someone entitled to vote at the AGM. Proxy forms are also available via email to [agm@h-g-canal.org.uk](mailto:agm@h-g-canal.org.uk) and should be completed, signed and returned to arrive at least 48 hours before the start of the AGM.

With the government Covid-19 restrictions currently in place and our continuing legal requirement to hold an AGM the Trustees have agreed to convene the AGM on a virtual meeting basis – i.e. the meeting will not take place at a conventional venue, but will be a gathering of people using the internet and Zoom or joining by telephone. The virtual meeting will be able to be seen / heard by all involved, using a means where everyone can contribute live as the meeting takes place.

## **What do I need to do to take part?**

Register your interest by emailing your name, address and contact details to [agm@h-g-canal.org.uk](mailto:agm@h-g-canal.org.uk) by end of business day(17:00) of Monday 21 June. We will then check our membership records (only bona fide H&GCT members can "attend" and take part in the meeting), and you will then be contacted to confirm all is correct.

With this confirmation we will ask if you wish us to retain the email address provided on our Membership database, whether you wish it to be added to our electronic email list for further communications in future, or if you wish us to delete it after the AGM. If you have a Joint Membership and you both wish to "attend" then please tell us when registering.



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**If you do not have email**, or do not wish to share it with us, then please contact the Trust Chairman Ralph Barber (01432 853086) so we can confirm you are bona fide members and supply you with information about how to connect on the day via telephone.

### **How do you connect to the meeting?**

A couple of days before the meeting you will be contacted via email (or phone) and provided with the means to link electronically to the meeting over the internet, which will include a username/meeting ID and password to be entered at the time. If you connect using the hyperlink provided in the email you will be able to connect without having to enter the username/meeting ID or password. Those choosing to take part by phone will receive similar instructions as needed. Please do not try to connect prior to the designated time and day of the meeting.

### **On the day of the meeting**

Please try to connect from 7.00 pm onwards so we can start at 7:30pm. If we then have some technical issues, we should have time to help you resolve them and still enable the meeting to start on time. One hint: Make sure your volume is up high on your PC.

### **What about security?**

The details needed to take part in the meeting are confidential and should not be shared with others. We will only share these with our members – and will not be published on the website or elsewhere for all to see. This should eliminate any “gate crashing” or other inappropriate behaviour.

## **Help Needed**



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**Would you like to help the Trust more but are unable to get out on the sites or is it just not your thing? How about helping with the Management of the Canal Trust?**



**Your canal trust needs you!**

As a trustee you can help the trust and support the restoration in many other ways. We meet once a month and during lock down have been meeting via Zoom. As restrictions are lifted, we plan to look at interspersing virtual meetings with physical ones - moving around the canal corridor to visit the different sites. This would involve meeting the local site leaders to gain more insight into the work the teams are doing.

Never done such a role? Want to know more? See if your experiences can be of use? Have a chat with any of the current trustees. If you would like to know further information about what is involved about being a trustee, please check out the Charity Commission website - they give very good information about the role.

One of our current trustees will be leaving the Board at the coming AGM and we will then only be seven in number – this is too few. If you really want the canal to become a reality - please consider becoming a trustee.

*The Trustees*

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## Anthony (Tony) Austin Bailey 1938-2021 RIP



A long-standing Honorary Life member of the Canal Society and Trust, Tony Austin-Bailey passed away peacefully at home near Hereford on 16th March, 2021, aged 83.

Tony was a personable individual who joined the Society after returning from working in South Africa. He was also on the board of Trustees, becoming Vice-Chairman in 1985 and a year later serving as chairman for 3 further years. He remained a member of the Council of Management until 2012.

On page 112 of Dick Skeet's book he is shown receiving a donation from Chairman of the IWA, Ken Goodwin in 1988, with the length of the Canal at Crew's Pitch in the background, where he was actively involved in the restoration of this length of the Canal.



*Nigel C. Jefferies*



I did not know Tony in his early days with the H & G but he was a great supporter. When I took over distribution of the Wharfinger – as many by hand as possible to save postage - Tony delivered those south of the Wye in Hereford – an area I did not know. Like many of my “deliverers” he lived at the farthest point of a village or estate but I found him! He was a regular attendee at the Social evenings – always arriving

early so that I knew we had at least one member in the audience. He also came to help at a number of IWA Nationals a welcome additional member to spread the word about the canal

*Janet Moulton*

Tony bringing me back from the National at Wakefield - a very wet experience - which everyone asks "do you remember Wakefield?". Anyway, I had gone up for the day, with Liz and Roger Connors and Cliff Penny so needed a lift back. Tony kindly volunteered. We were chatting and I mentioned that I had made a mandarin flan and needed to transport it,



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can't remember the details now except suffice to say, I was worried the topping would come adrift from the bottom. Tony mentioned that he had lived in South Africa and one of the tricks he had used, was to secure the topping with cocktails sticks. I found him to be a lovely, genuine and caring guy, always ready to help or to say Hello.

*Joyce Potts*

When I first joined the board in 2010, I remember thinking how professional he was taking the minutes, one of the first times I had attended a meeting with a voice recorder used. After he left the board, he went to work at B&Q and I often had a chat with him when I found myself in B&Q which was a little more often than I liked. We had some very interesting discussions that also continued at the many socials that he also attended.

*Ralph Barber*

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## Malswick Project Update



Tony Sellwood and Bob Hargreaves have spent many hours calculating the exact centre line of the canal at Malswick. Then, armed with pegs, 30m tape measure, lump hammer and wheelbarrow, they set it out on the ground with the white markers shown.

The near fence in the photograph indicates the small brook that will be ducted before the canal passes over it. Our next hurdle!

The final line of the field boundary needed some adjustment and thanks to some fine weather in the Spring this was completed ahead of schedule.

The photograph below shows site leader Robert Heigham demonstrating how to set up a straining post to volunteers, Mark Atkin, Bob Hargreaves and Ian Bateman.



In the distance the floodlights and stand of the Newent Football Club can be seen. Our canal will one day pass just behind them.

*Alan McBride*

The past year of uncertainty and upheaval has affected all of us in a variety of different ways. Our normal routines have been changed, our perspectives may have shifted, and our priorities altered.

One consequence of this as far as our volunteers are concerned is that for some, our traditional Wednesday working day is no longer the most convenient day to volunteer. Volunteers are a valuable and precious asset to any organisation and so anything we can do to retain their support is worth trying.

After seeking the views of our team, we have therefore gone ahead in mid April with a change to our working way. The consensus was that **Thursday** appeared to be the most convenient for the majority, so **this is now the day** for Over volunteering - see p32.

Coupled with this, as restrictions are slowly eased and the weather hopefully improves a little, we have returned to a full working day rather than a half day.

The chance to return to limited use of our site hut after May 17th will also be a great convenience and will no doubt be welcomed by us all.

## Site Upkeep

### *Vineyard Hill*

As reported briefly in the previous issue of *Wharfinger* (147), February saw an attack on the reeds that had been slowly choking part of the canal along the bottom of Vineyard Hill. The attack was carried out by a pair of special boats which between them cut the reeds down to the canal bed then scooped out the debris and deposited it on the offside bank. The result was a canal that now looks better than it has for several years. Photographs and some video of the work carried out may be found on the Trust Website.

Also in connection with Vineyard Hill, a further measurement of the pegs placed in the land slippage area was carried out in April. This indicates that since February 2020, a small amount of slippage has taken place, mainly in the centre of the slope, with the bottom of the slope moving approximately 60mm towards the canal during this time. Monitoring of the situation will be continued.

### *Osier beds*

The osier trees on the bank of the River Leadon were cut back in March and the osiers collected. Due to the lock down in March last year, a number of the trees were not cut back at the time, so the stems this year are heavier than is ideal for use by the weavers and basket makers. However, things should now be set for a good crop next year.



## Selwood Pump

The canal level at Over is maintained by a sizeable multi-cylinder diesel pump cared for by the onsite volunteers. The pump is used to raise water from the river Leadon into the canal has performed without fault for a number of years. After many hours of duty, the time came for a well-deserved service by the Malswick Team.



The oil and filters were refreshed and a thorough check-over ensued. This revealed the trailer brake seized and the fuel tank badly contaminated. The tank was painfully removed and thoroughly cleaned to remove many years of sludge build up. The hand brake linkage was stripped, de-rusted, lubricated, and refitted, so, with much anticipation, after refilling with clean fuel and bleeding out, a trial run was attempted.

The 3-cylinder high speed diesel burst into life accompanied by a thick blanket of bees who seemed to have taken up residence in the output chamber of the 100 millimetre pump outlet. A discreet distance was adopted until the poor bees decided on a more appropriate residence; whereupon the engine could be shut down, a final clean up, and then the much valued pump could be towed back to Over to continue its stalwart duties.



## Overspill Weir.

Some improvements to the overspill weir have been under consideration for a time, but due to the high water level in the canal, work has not been a practical proposition.

April was an exceptionally dry month and the water level has dropped well below the weir. Work is therefore taking place to make the improvements before the level is raised again.

## Heritage Boats - Mr.Maysey

Work on Mr. Maysey came to a complete halt last year, but with restrictions easing and weather improving, work on repairing the hull has begun. Once completed, this will be followed by a complete re-build of the cabin, a re-paint and an overhaul of the outboard motor.



See more on Mr Maysey on page 22.

The paintwork on our small electric powered trip boat has suffered a little over the winter and now needs attention. A re-paint of the cabin exterior and the deck is being undertaken and will be followed by work on the cabin roof. Some further work on the interior and re-varnishing of some areas is also planned.

### **Kayaks and Paddle Boards.**

We are pleased to welcome a new activity to our canal - during April, the Trust was approached by "Discover Paddling", a company which already runs water based activities in Gloucester Docks, but felt that our water would be an ideal location for children and family sessions.

After discussion with the company, the Board of Trustees agreed that sessions on Saturdays could begin as soon as practical. The intention is that these will take place over the coming months, with the situation being reviewed at the end of the summer.



More details of Discover Paddling may be found in the article on Page 21.

To facilitate this activity, a storage container holding all Discover Paddling's equipment arrived on site on April 23rd and for the time being has been placed alongside one of our own containers.



*Andy Fowler*

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## **Sam the Over Swan**



Nothing much to talk about Sam this time round. He spent most of the winter wandering up and down the river Leaddon and would turn up on the canal occasionally, just for a brief encounter.

His partner Sadie has been gone a year and he returned as if he knew the anniversary of her death or perhaps just that he was trying to find her. It was heart-breaking to see him looking so sad and lonely but with lots of TLC from his human friends, he's beginning to pick up once more. He comes and goes as he pleases but it's always a great pleasure seeing him on the canal.



*Monica Hamer*



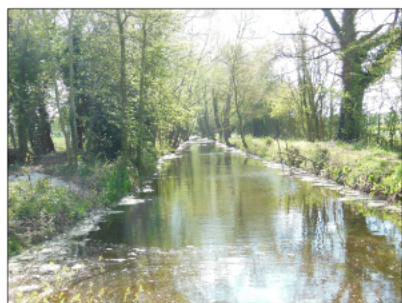
# Yarkhill Update.

Yes! We are finally back and working at Yarkhill. Since returning volunteer attendance has been good so has the weather. We were also pleased to welcome a new volunteer Richard Crallan.

Work started with clearing a fallen tree from the wild side and opening up the circular route for dog walkers. Considerable brush burning was also undertaken.

Meanwhile a large tree had fallen down across Major Robert Barnes' Section (MRBS) of the canal. Clearing this tree required a lot more effort. Top branches and part of trunk removed. Bottom of trunk cut from the tree from which it had split. Trunk winched from across the canal and moored along the bank. More cutting and then more winching of trunk up the bank. Still more cutting to do but the view down this section of the canal has been enhanced.

From the towpath of 'MRBS' further work of brush debris removal from the canal took place using grappling hooks and the mower had its first outing with the access being cut.



Chris High.

*Clockwise from top:*

*Fallen tree on the wild side*

*The wild side opened up again*

*Large tree down on MRBS*

*Tree cut from stump and pulled across the canal*

*Tree pulled aside showing clear view up MRBS*

**NOTE - No public access is yet available on this site**



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## Oxenhall Update.... and a plea!

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The five members of the Oxenhall team have over the last month, removed the fallen trees and associated build up of flood debris from the Ell brook. This proved to be a difficult task to complete and having cleared the brook we can now see sections of retaining walls that will require repair and reinstatement.

As with all sites, the team at Oxenhall now need extra help as they face some labour intensive work on the canal wall just below the cottage. Please consider joining us.

*Roger Coombs*

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## Dymock - A Return to the Pool

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After a long Covid-19 absence a return to Dymock was called for...

A long and wistful gaze at the control panel whirring away revealed that all was not well. The magic meter was dragged out and made awful reading with some very strange numbers. Lots of black boxes were interrogated and the digital run timer was found to be processed and feeding strange volts into the system. Lots of attempts to correct this failed so a call was made to the makers.

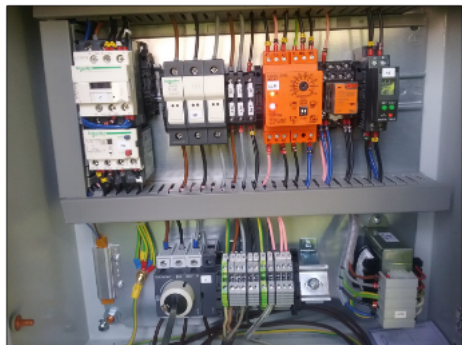
Fear not they said we have a box of spells you cast over our creation, just follow our instructions. The depth probe was reset and the first programme was entered, the spell was cast and the magic word uttered.... Nothing.... Despair!!

Re-enter the secret programme, cast another spell, another magic phrase uttered and hey presto a flash of light, a comforting whumph and off it went. The magic meter said its full of good numbers to salvation and a thank you email to the lads at TT.

But we still ring our hands. It all works magnificently but the pool remains perilously low and we bite our nails - will it rise to its winter level. The pump whirrs away happily and almost continuously but Philip watches the meter in trepid despair.

Is salvation at hand...?

*Ian and Chris*



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# Paddle Boarding at Over.

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Sometimes things move very quickly in the canal world. Discover Paddling contacted us via the web site in April. The following week Andy Fowler and I met with Mike the owner of Discover Paddling. They have recently moved into the area due to job changes and having run their business on the river Avon are now running it in Gloucester Docks.

While this is great for some water activities when it comes to a family wanting to try out paddle boarding (something I have never understood as why not just sit down in a canoe when travelling on the water?) the docks are not as suitable as the more sheltered water at Over.



A proposal was put to the April Board meeting. An agreement was confirmed that Discover Paddling could use the water at Over for sessions on Saturdays 9-6. They will launch in the basin and use the full length of canal so that they can complete the training out of the way of the houses overlooking the canal.

Discover Paddling is a family friendly paddle sport provider, offering kayaking and paddle boarding experiences to individuals, groups and families. They

have a couple of group paddle boards that can fit up to a family of four, along with double kayaks, perfect for young families to discover the waterway. All groups are led by a qualified instructor and offer games, challenges and skills to increase confidence on the water and enjoy the paddling experience away from mobile phones and tablets.

Mike and his wife Grace started Discover Paddling in 2016 alongside their day jobs. They have recently moved to Cheltenham from Bristol. Grace works in the Centre of Cheltenham as an audiologist and Mike works from home.



From the age of five Mike discovered his love of adventure and paddling. After years of committed training, he was selected to proudly represent Great Britain for five consecutive years. Following a BSc in Sports Science and winning Sportsman of the year at Loughborough University, Mike became a Canoeing Development Officer for British Canoeing to promote paddle sport in the South West. Grace discovered kayaking in 2012 at Bristol University. Suffering from a ruptured cruciate ligament, paddle sport became her new passion replacing her previous hobbies; skydiving and netball. Grace has since enjoyed paddling all over Europe and loves nothing more than giving everyone the best paddling experience.

They are looking forward to sharing the beautiful waterway at Over with family groups.

Feel free to check out their website at [www.discoverpaddling.co.uk](http://www.discoverpaddling.co.uk)

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## Return to Mr. Maysey



After the long Covid-19 break the lads returned to Over to progress with Mr Maysey's re-plate. They swept onto site, threw back the covers on their impressive diesel generator and pressed go. Whirr, whirr phut. It was pronounced deceased. No probs we'll beg theirs. They grabbed their flashy angle grinder and tore off along the hull, buzz buzz, phut, it was pronounced deceased. No probs we'll beg theirs...

The welding went well, foot after foot until purr purr, phut. The magic meter was grabbed and swung into action. Nothing, blank, a hasty repair, a return to the welder, much thinking and it was pronounced deceased.

Despondency now filled the air. We'll switch to preparing for the crane lorry to move this stuff around, he's due shortly, ring ring, crane lorry diverted to urgent breakdown.

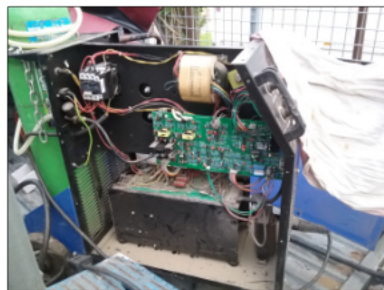
Move the little tractor out of the container so we can put the kit away and give up, whirr phut nothing. Despair engulfs, the fast failing magic meter croaks - duff key switch.

So close to tears with hunched shoulders the duo trudge homewards to fix their broken toys, hearts heavy with failure hoping for more luck in the coming next episode.

*Chris Phelps*



*Deceased angle grinder.*



*Deceased welder.*

---

## Mill Barn



Once we understood that we were not able to place Mill Barn against the back of the site, by the trees, we have been looking for the best position for the building.

We have met with the architect and discussed options. It will now have to be placed over on the canal side of the site – with the result that the previous design won't 'fit' – so it is back to the drawing board and a new layout of the building required. New plans are therefore now being drawn.

Also being looked at are new level and flood surveys. Once these are all to hand, we hope to be putting in for planning permission as soon as we can. Then comes the fundraising!

*Debbie Barber*



# Grand Holiday Draw 2021



**Friends and colleagues will be eager for the chance of a great holiday for just £1!**

Once again we have some great prizes, so let's make this another successful fundraising event!

**1<sup>ST</sup>  
PRIZE**

## **NARROW BOAT HOLIDAY for FOUR**

ONE WEEK PRIOR TO 31/5/22 excluding Bank Holidays. *Donated by Black Prince Holidays*

**2<sup>ND</sup>  
PRIZE**

## **One Day's BOAT HIRE on the MON & BREC CANAL**

*Donated by ABC Boat Hire*

**3<sup>RD</sup>  
PRIZE**

## **ONE NIGHT DINNER BED & BREAKFAST for TWO**

at The Lock Keepers, Over Wharf, Gloucester. *Donated by The Lock Keepers Company*

**Tickets still just £1 each.**

The prize winners will be drawn at the Social Evening at The Royal Oak, Much Marcle, on 21 September 2021.

Our thanks to our friends and supporters **Black Prince Holidays**, **ABC Boat Hire** and **The Lock Keepers** for donating the holiday prizes – every pound raised is a pound towards restoration of the Canal.



Members have been sent two books of tickets to sell to family and friends. If you would like more books or as a non-member wish to purchase some tickets please contact Janet Moulton via the Contact Us page on our website.

Alternatively, virtual (but valid) tickets can be purchased on the Trust website **Fundraising Makes a Difference** page.

**Thank you.**

*Janet Moulton*

Promoter: Mrs J Moulton, 18 Coningsby Court, Coningsby Street, Hereford, HR1 2DF.  
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# Caravan Capers....

It was decided with the avalanche of exciting construction work ahead that a mobile site office was needed to fulfil the Malswick canal construction and the proposed inclined plane project. The station site caravan was deemed a suitable candidate but with a naturally irrigated roof and rotting plywood window some TLC was needed.

Phil the skip man kindly offered to pull the van onto the road for us and chained the draw-bar to his excavator and dragged the unit onto the road, however the van stayed put but the remnants of the draw-bar peppered the road, sadly rusted completely away. Phil suggested we totter off back to Malswick House and he would kindly uplift our stricken project there on a lorry.

Back at base the caravan was precisely levelled on the corner stays which promptly fell off. So first job was to cut out the rotten back timbers and replace after disc cutting all the fixings off. The van now on an even keel and safe Roger C kindly stepped in and made up and welded in a new draw-bar .



The window had rotted out so it was stripped out and Roger sourced a replacement. We offered it up and found it was going to compromise the structure so off to Walford Timber for tanalised timber and a new window was fabricated in the garden shed. Lots of hacking and sawing and in it went. Off to H.B in Gloucester to hunt for perspex for glazing which was met with a sympathetic frown.

Every inch of Perspex has gone into Covid screens but a sheet of riot shield screen was found in a dusty corner and purchased for the same price.

A gaze upwards spurred the purchase of a roll of roofing felt which surprisingly ran out half way across the roof so more felt and black sticky stuff was sourced, then finished with an all-round scalloped felt trim which made it look very much more suitable for palm readings than the intended site office.



As a site office, a plan table was called for so casting around, the pub bar dividing wall looked suitable so hack hack ,chop chop and a plan table emerged, some architrave surround was fitted and it could double up as a cocktail bar, a thought for open days.



An entry door seemed a good idea but when Walfords' were contacted for shed grade T&G they fell about in mirth, every bit of T&G has been hoovered up for Covid sheds so a scabble round threw up lots of door bits but no suitable complete door... so hack and chop and the missing bits were fabricated, treated and built up into a splendid door if viewed in reasonably poor light. But it fitted the hole amazingly well.



Steps were called for so began the step hunt. Finally some old timber from the Oxenhall aqueduct rebuild was found and a set of steps fit for any equestrian mount up were constructed. A bit of a sweep and a compact square of Axminster and a caravan to put Airstream to shame was proudly presented. A test run by the civil lads found they could hover over the plan table and puzzle and worry in comfort and coal face workers could shelter from the elements once the plague has passed. Philip had to be comforted when presented with the material costs but we assured him it would last forever.

Richard bravely offered to tow it to its new site whilst we all hid back at Malswick House but no bang or sirens just a little graunch so great relief and it proudly sits awaiting its new role.

*Chris Phelps*

## Promotion / Events



The pandemic continues to produce a lot of uncertainty around events.

The Braunston Historic Boat Gathering and The Newent Onion Fayre have both been cancelled by the organisers. We have therefore regrettably decided to cancel this year's H&G Over Open Days.

However, we do expect our own Winter Fayre in Newent on 13th November to go ahead, fingers crossed! Please look at the advert poster elsewhere in this edition.

Social Evenings.

We are considering when to restart and are tentatively looking at September.

The Virtual Zoom meeting held in April was a great success. Those attending thoroughly enjoyed Dick Skeet taking us on a ramble through historic news articles about the H&G - including all about the celebrations on the opening of the canal at different times and the tragedies of drownings.

*Debbie Barber*



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## Gloucester & District Model Boat Club

### 20 Years at Over

In the last Wharfinger there was a long article, with plenty of pictures, celebrating The Gloucester & District Model Boat Club's 20 years at Over, recently a small select group, only six allowed, gathered for a photograph for a very muted celebration of the 20 years that we had been there, we were not allowed to do more than this because of Covid-19.

We are back (again)!

We recommenced boating, maximum of six at a time at the end of March, by the time the magazine comes out we hope to be unlimited and can then restart properly including Micromagic Racing on a Friday afternoon.

Below are photos from an early April Sunday session when the sun shone and it was really pleasant, please come down and visit us at play. We are here Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday (sailing boats only) and Sunday, both mornings and afternoons although the afternoon sessions are the most popular.



*Photos - Jill Exell*

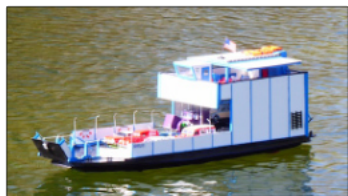
*Bryan's PT Boat*



*Mike L's HMS Nelson*



*Dave E's Barge*



*Chris L's Ferry*

## Canal Walks



H&G Canal Trust has produced a series of walk leaflets which explore various parts of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal.

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OXENHALL and OVER BASIN**

*All proceeds towards the promotion and restoration of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal.*

*More details and ordering options available on the website.*

## Logs for Sale Proceeds to Trust Funds

These logs are processed by our volunteers from the clearance work during canal restoration. The sale of them helps to fund the cost of our work restoring the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal.

Logs are available for purchase at £75 per builders dumpy bag.



Purchases can be arranged by contacting our Malswick site team by email: [malswick@h-g-canal.co.uk](mailto:malswick@h-g-canal.co.uk)

# Winter Fayre

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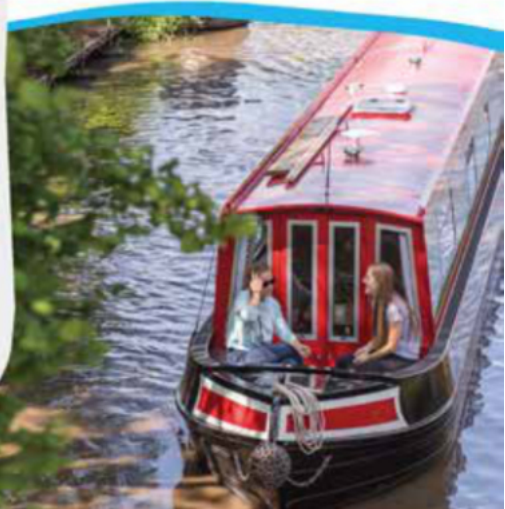
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# Sailing4Disabled

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Hello, this edition is nothing but good news, (fingers crossed). As for being back on the water this is going to happen but as and when I would not like to commit just yet, as our main source of income is operating via ZOOM! No matter how I try we are not able to operate boat trips via that system, so start dates will be posted on FB - (S4D) will find us.

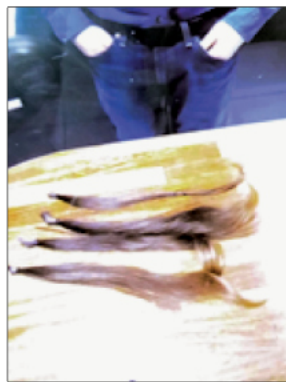
Other good news: Callum has managed to raise £750 by having his hair cut. Like most of us did, but he's been growing his for "The Little Princess Trust". They make wigs from real donated hair. Check their website - very touching work they do. The "go fund me" donations are split between S4D/RP and LPTrust. Thank you, Callum, and those who donated.

Does anyone have the number of the person who programmed the helicopter that has just flown on Mars, as I can't get mine to stay within my garden fences?

And last but not least thanks go to Mr. A Dodds (A well-documented consultant surgeon for knee and hips) now documented as having added my knee operation to his portfolio, and a very satisfying outcome too!

*Pete RWB*

Callum Quinton - 2 years hair growth for the Little Princess Trust and S4D/RP. His donation of 29cm x 4 of hair will make a Little Princess somewhere very happy.



## *Regular Volunteer Work Parties*

Due to the ongoing Coronavirus situation, at the time of going to print limited volunteer working is taking place on site until further notice.

### **Tuesdays**

Malswick

Robert Heigham

[malswick@h-g-canal.org.uk](mailto:malswick@h-g-canal.org.uk)

Oxenhall/ Newent Station

Roger Coombs 07801 455779

[oxenhall@h-g-canal.org.uk](mailto:oxenhall@h-g-canal.org.uk)

### **Thursdays**

Over Basin/Vineyard Hill

Andy Fowler

[overbasin@h-g-canal.org.uk](mailto:overbasin@h-g-canal.org.uk)

### **Thursdays (cont)**

Yarkhill

Chris High 01568 615 575

[yarkhill@h-g-canal.org.uk](mailto:yarkhill@h-g-canal.org.uk)

### **Ad Hoc**

Hereford Roving Team

John Pritchard 01432 272972

[hereford@h-g-canal.org.uk](mailto:hereford@h-g-canal.org.uk)

Kymin

Ralph Barber 01432 853 086

[kymin@h-g-canal.org.uk](mailto:kymin@h-g-canal.org.uk)

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The Lock Keepers	10	Everything Canal Boats	30

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## General enquiries -

information@h-g-canal.org.uk

6 Castle Street, Hereford HR1 2NL

## Want to Help?

The Canal Trust is always in need of new volunteers as our activities continue to expand. We can normally find a use for any skill from gardeners to first aiders, brickies to those willing to help with a shovel, pen or laptop.

The H&G CT also welcomes offers of gifts of good quality used tools and machinery from those who no longer need or cannot use it.

## Want to Join?

Please support our voluntary work by becoming a Member of the H&GCT. A membership form is available online or from our Membership Secretary.

### H&G CT New UK Membership Rates

	Annual	Life
Individual	£15.00	£300.00
Joint/Family	£20.00	£400.00
Electronic	£10.00	-
Corporate	£40.00	-

PLEASE NOTE: All subscriptions and donations are as being made under the Gift Aid scheme unless you state that you do not wish us to do this. Payment made by Standing Order greatly assists us and payment remains under your control. All payments please to: H&G CT, 6 Castle Street, Hereford, HR1 2NL

## Visit our website:

[www.h-g-canal.org.uk](http://www.h-g-canal.org.uk)

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Membership records are computerised. Your entry is available for inspection if you send a SAE to the Membership Secretary. We try to ensure details of talks/events are correct — please verify with the relevant organiser if travelling long distances.

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Our objective is to rebuild the 34 mile Canal linking the centre of Hereford to Gloucester and its connection with the 2,500 mile inland waterway network. We have major restoration sites in each county, together extending to some 4 miles. The intention is to provide a financially sustainable independent Canal which does not require regular financial support from public bodies for its future operation and maintenance.

## The H&G Canal Trust

The Canal Society, formed in 1983, became the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust, a registered charity, in 1992. It has an ordinary and corporate membership approaching 1,400, here and abroad.

## The original Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal

Work started in 1792 reaching Ledbury from Gloucester by 1798. In 1827 Steven Ballard was appointed to oversee the Canal's completion, which reached Hereford in 1845; this was one of the last major canal routes completed in Britain. The Canal stretched from the River Severn at Gloucester, via Newent, Dymock and Ledbury to Hereford, using 22 locks and 3 tunnels. It was closed in 1881 to allow construction of the Ledbury-Gloucester railway which in turn closed in 1964.



= Canal Walk leaflet available.



= Restoration sites suitable for public access.

*It should not be assumed that Rights of Way exist.*

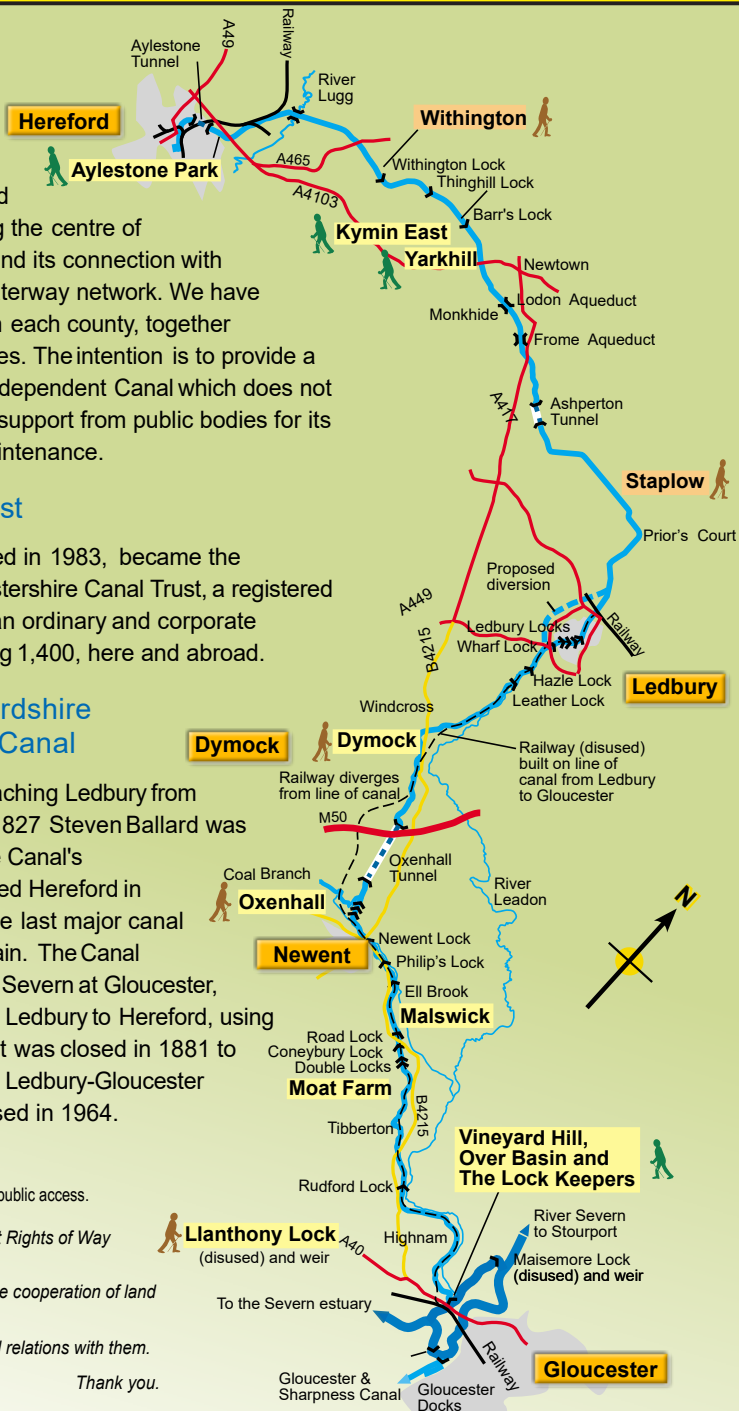
*We work on the Canal with the cooperation of land owners and their neighbours.*

*Please help us maintain good relations with them.*

*Thank you.*



The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service



Map based on original by Martin Ludgate, Canal Boat Magazine.