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Winter 2020

The Wharfinger

HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL TRUST



EDITION 146

REBUILDING A SUSTAINABLE CANAL BETWEEN HEREFORD & GLOUCESTER

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From the desk of the Chairman

May I take this time to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Talking of the new year – WE NEED HELP - as you will see in this edition of The Wharfinger we have a lot going on, a lot planned and to enable us to be successful in restoring the canal we need more help.

The layout editor of The Wharfinger lives up north. You will see an item on the model of the Newent Inclined plane – the maker also lives up north. Your location is not necessarily a barrier to helping us. Do you like to work in wood - we need bat and bird boxes for our sites? We have had requests for sales material at a few visitor centres - some donation boxes in the form of a narrow boat would be brilliant

Electronic communication. Helping us to spread the word on all social media platforms available could be done by someone who uses LinkedIn, Instagram or Pinterest. We have many great pictures that we could share, but we need help in getting the material online.

Our administration team needs help with sending out invoices; someone to visit our buildings, boats, plant and ensure we are covered for insurance purposes. In addition, the board would like a Minutes writer. We currently have a Trustee doing them - but it is difficult to take minutes and partake in discussions. Our meetings are currently done on Zoom, so again could be done remotely.

With the new environment laws coming we need to up our game and understand how we can ensure we are meeting the Bio-Diversity Net Gain plans that the government is pushing forward. This may be something as simple as using coir roll on the offside of the canal to give nature a start or how to consider the canal can be used as an eco-highway.

We have applied for planning permission for Malswick – this has taken a huge amount of time and work in the background by the project team. We have also been working on a piece of land that will enable Yarkhill to extend further towards the A4103. We would like to get other teams up and running to take on the next projects.

Whatever you do I am sure we could find something for you to help with the Trust and the ultimate aim of restoring the canal.

Looking forward to 2021 - hopefully, the social evenings can start up again and we are already scheduling the Promotional events that the Trust will attend, and planning an Open Weekend at Over in July.

A note - most of the articles within this Wharfinger had been created prior to the knowledge of a new English lock down. Please keep safe.

Ralph Barber

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It is true to say that following the almost complete shutdown of the site during the spring, progress has been made on several of our projects during the summer. Considerable steps forward have been made in some areas, although not all of these have yet to translate into obvious progress on the ground.

It is also true to say that in some areas, the rate of progress has not been as high as we would all perhaps like - but for very good reasons. Some projects have been hampered by a combination of reasons.

These include the weather, and also the effects of the Coronavirus on our volunteer numbers at the present time. Some of our members have been shielding, others having to self-isolate as a precaution through possible contacts.

Thankfully though, none of our regular volunteers have found themselves to be positive for Covid-19. Long may that situation continue in the future ! Working within the requirements for Covid Safe operations brings its own challenges at times, but despite this we continue to make progress.

Site upkeep

Generally, the site is now looking cared for and tidy, with most of the grass cut and the canal banks trimmed. The reeds at the basin end of the canal have been cut back, although there is still a lot of work to do to clear more reeds along Vineyard Hill.

Maintaining the water level in the canal has caused a few problems recently, due largely to the big variation in the level of the River Leadon, where water is extracted to pump into the canal. For much of the time, the level has been very low- leaving the end of the suction pipe out of the water.

In between, there have been a number of very high tides or bores in the River Severn, which flood into the Leadon bringing up logs and branches. This debris then in turn gets tangled and fouled up with the suction pipe, needing to be cleared when the level drops again.



The pictures show some of this debris being removed.

Compare the water level to that in this picture showing when the bore comes up.

Mr. Maysey repairs.

Some of the metal work repairs on the hull have been delayed, partly due to weather being unsuitable for welding and also due to demands on the Malswick team for their expertise in getting other pieces of essential

equipment from various sites back in good working order. However, work on the cabin rebuild has begun and replacement timber for the work has been procured. (We are now much wiser about the minefield surrounding “Marine Plywood”)



The picture here is part of the cabin rear bulkhead, showing the result of using a version of “Marine ply” that seems to have complied with the British Standard in name only.

It is certainly the intention that the rebuilt structure will have a significantly longer life.

Machinery

Our Roper ride-on mower has been a bit under the weather for a considerable time.

Following some initial work on site, it was decided that more drastic measures were needed, and the machine was transported to Malswick.

Whilst there, the Mechanical Magicians of Malswick performed their special brand of magic, with the result that the Roper is now back on site in a better condition than it has been for a very long time.

The Water pump has also been brought back from the bank of the Leadon to be stored for the winter and serviced ready for next year



Heritage Boats

Renton continues to operate well and is, at the moment, the most effective means of keeping the waterway along Vineyard Hill in a navigable state.

After a long period of starter motor problems, Alder is now fully functional and also being run along the canal

Note - we appreciate that crew travelling on the side deck of the boat is not normally recommended, but social distancing on the rear deck of Alder is not a practical proposition

With this being the only boat on the canal, the side deck is considered the lesser of the evils.



Mill Barn

A considerable amount of time has been given both at Over and by members of the Board, to developing plans for the building of a new facility. Associated with this will be the re-location of some of the storage containers and the fuel storage tank.

There is no evidence of this on the ground at the moment, but plans are being worked on and there are more details of this elsewhere in this edition.

Volunteers

There will be a considerable amount of work to do in the coming months and more volunteers will both be needed and welcomed.

We will be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to help to maintain and develop the present site and facilities at Over, and also hopefully to work towards extending the canal further towards Hereford.

Malswick Excavator



The Malswick excavator was due a service from the engineering team and, on cue, it suddenly refused to start. The usual suspects were checked (fuel, battery, stuck solenoids etc.) to no avail. A faulty starter motor seemed to be the most likely culprit.

Unfortunately, the starter motor is in an extremely awkward position and Chris Phelps spent a couple of hours heroically removing the exhaust assembly and associated bits. A small wire from a sensor was found dangling near the starter motor. When it was put back in place the beast sprang back into life. Some fun was then had trying to get all the removed parts back in their rightful places.

The service was then carried out and the Kubota is once again ready for action.

Alan McBride

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Moat Farm Trees

At Moat Farm we have cleared many brambles and reeds from the path of the canal, but we have also planted many trees.

Some of the finest are the alder that Martyn Tilford and his son George planted 6 years ago. Alder trees thrive in damp locations as the one in the picture clearly shows.

During the last routine maintenance of the site we saw a volery of long-tailed tits in this very tree - alas no camera handy.



Nearly all of the other saplings that were planted at around the same time are also growing well (mostly spindle, wild cherry and birch).

Alan McBride

Trees for the Canal



H&G member Ginny Birkett loves nature and, for some time, has been potting up the nuts, seeds and self-sown seedlings of local trees, found in her garden, and on local walks.

When she got to 100 pots, she offered the more mature saplings to us for planting along the canal. The Malswick team have created a nursery bed for saplings already collected, and Ginny brought down her first batch to be planted in there too.

Next autumn, they will all be ready for planting into their final positions on the Malswick project site.

Here is Ginny with the first wheelbarrow load.

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Newent Crossing

We have talked before about getting the canal across the road at Newent. We received a number of emails after the piece about the inclined plane, mentioned in Wharfinger 141. Different ways were proposed, considered, and refined. So, how are we getting on?

Each of the emails received helped us to focus the solution further and whilst drawings can help, how about a model?

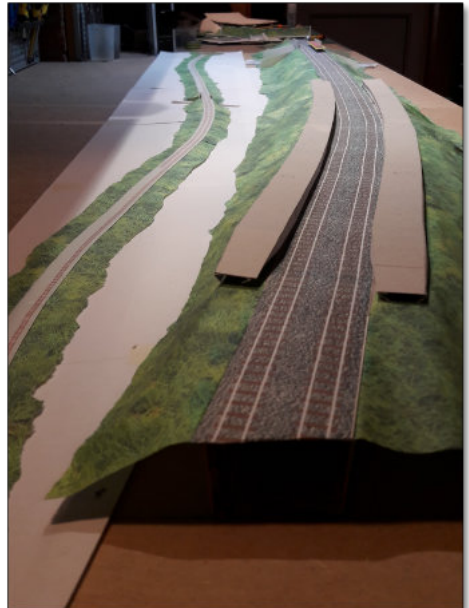
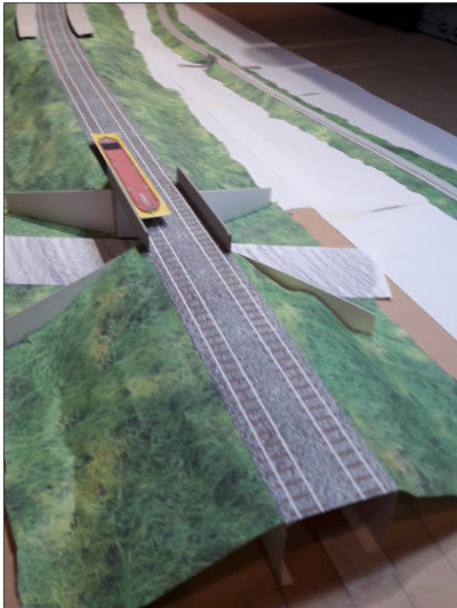
Thank you to Neil Nuckley for his crafting skills. A retired Design and Technology Teacher he has created an initial model that will help us focus on the solution of getting over the road.

Two tracks can be seen going through the station. An idea for one track is a carriage that could be used for a café or display area – remaining static in the station. Anyone have a spare railway carriage in the back garden and would like a new home for it?

The second track is designed for the inclined plane. Initially a passenger boat riding a carriage – going from the canal on one side up and over and down the other and back again.

Once the canal is open to boat traffic the carriage will take passing boats up and over.

In the meantime, the model is under development up north. It is great to see not just local volunteers, but also those many miles from the canal.



Some progress has been made on the retaining wall by the lock and we have now finished the concrete foundations for about 10m which is half the total length. The next challenge is to lay the stonework on top to finish the wall up to towpath level. Unfortunately, the stones we will be using are very large and heavy and certainly not a job for one man or even two to lift. A risk assessment for the job has already been done which involved the use of a steel tripod with non-adjustable legs with a block and tackle attached but unfortunately it proved to be too heavy and extremely difficult to raise into position over the stone to be lifted. So on to plan B.

Richard improvised a trolley on wheels for moving the stone about site, but this proved impractical so on to plan C. This involved the use of three scaffold poles clamped together in the shape of a tripod and with one shorter leg to cope with the differing heights on the site. It did work but was deemed not to be safe to use so Richard has now volunteered to have another attempt at a tripod - we wait with bated breath.

While these tests were underway a small section of the towpath collapsed into the canal and needed urgent repairs so we have put up some temporary shuttering to stabilise it and then fenced it off.

During this last week our job priorities have changed again and we will have to abandon the wall for now anyway. Readers will recall that about two years ago we had to do some urgent work on the remains of the old railway bridge by Newent station. The bridge itself was taken down many years ago leaving 4 stone pillars overlooking the main road. A casual inspection had revealed that one of these pillars had been disturbed by the roots of a tree growing adjacent to it and it was leaning towards the road. Weighing about 2 tons it could clearly not be left so the council safely demolished the pillar and the offending tree was cut down.

The three remaining pillars, which still stand overlooking the road have now been closely inspected revealing that they are covered in ivy and there are small trees growing close by but are not a danger. The bridge remains are now owned by the Trust and we have been informed that we must clear all vegetation growing on and around them and to keep them cleared in the future. Exactly what is involved has yet to be determined but it will probably not be possible to do it all with volunteer labour.

Brian Fox

Yarkhill photos by Bob Comba and Chris High - from top

Tangle of trees - typical of the challenges we face.

Trunk cleaned and partly winched on to the tow path

Briefly the boat came into use

Even bigger trunk pulled from canal

Tree rigged for pulling - prematurely - it was still attached to the wild side bank !

View of clearance so far

Beyond Yarkhill

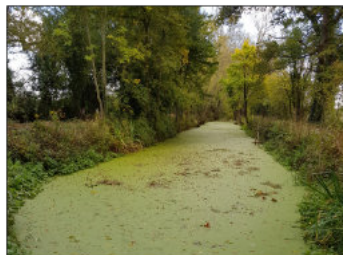
Last year John Kilpatrick liaised with Major Barnes and, following a site meeting, it was agreed that the Yarkhill Team could carry out some clearance work on the Major's stretch of canal just up from the site hut to the road.

Initially we concentrated on getting a work access along the tow path then a start was made removing the fallen trees from the canal. It soon became clear that this would involve access to the wild side so the boat was brought into use. This approach was hard work, even if fun, which I am not allowed to have. P.S. there were no other volunteers for this job. I was forced to accept Harold's offer to make us a pedestrian access down the wild side. He started digging removing the major bumps and filling holes and then just kept digging week after week! It wasn't long before Paul joined him at this task.

Ralph and Penny Ward came back to the Team and joined the rest of us clearing and burning the brush whilst Robin followed cutting and logging up the larger wood. It was about this time that Matt Padden, a professional tree surgeon joined us which greatly assisted us with the wild side access and canal clearance. Harold and Paul were still digging!

It was then time to address the more serious large tree debris in the canal. Ropes, grappling hooks and winches came into use. The hot dry period provided a very low water level and easier access which enabled considerable wood clearance. Work continues. Please help by noting and observing that currently there is no public access to this part of the Yarkhill Site - Thank you.

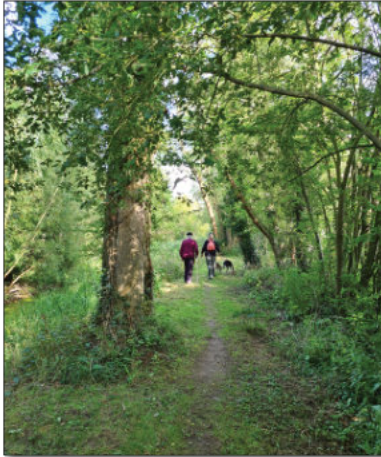
Chris High.



Kymin Canal Walk



Well - we managed it!



September the 5th was a bright and sunny day, which was fortunate as we arranged for cars to park in Mr Clews field – but not if pouring with rain.

People parked up and then either walked the canal at Kymin first - some carrying on up and around Yarkhill – or they fortified themselves first with tea and cake in the Chairman’s garden before setting off.

The Grillo had done sterling work in clearing a wider path for walkers. Thanks to the team at Yarkhill for making the canal look very neat and tidy.

Fortunately, a quick inspection walk down that morning proved useful as part of a tree had come down the previous day on the Yarkhill section on the ‘wild side’.

A quick tidy up cleared it away in short order.

We had a good chat with all who visited – except for the couple who weren’t aware of the canal but just happened to be passing. They parked up, went for a walk and then sent a donation up to the garden via another walker.

A generous donation from a member plus tea/coffee and cake proceeds raised over £400 pounds.

Ralph and Debbie Barber



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Going Back Almost 100 years - Llanthony

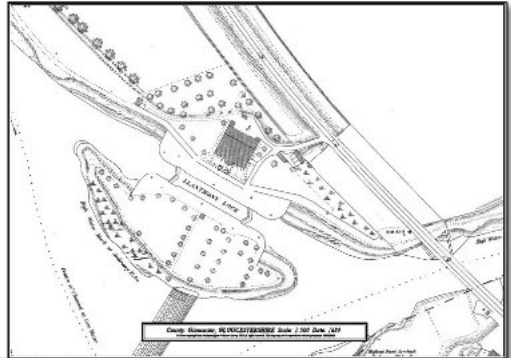


Following on from the aerial photographs in the last Wharfinger Michael Hunt has told us about this fine historic aerial photo of Llanthony Lock and Weir from 1928.

To view please go to Britain From Above and either search by name or put in EPW024157. Alternatively, the full URL is <https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/en/image/EPW024157>.

The image clearly shows the lock and its approach channels, the weir across the river with the attendant foot and rail bridges immediately upstream, along with the overlooking lock cottage.

The Trusts digital image archive contains a number of other archive images of Llanthony Lock and its surroundings, including those shown below.



The upstream approach to the lock seen from the railway bridge

A high aerial view showing the former power station and the associated ponds to the top, Llanthony Lock lower centre, and the docks to the lower right corner.





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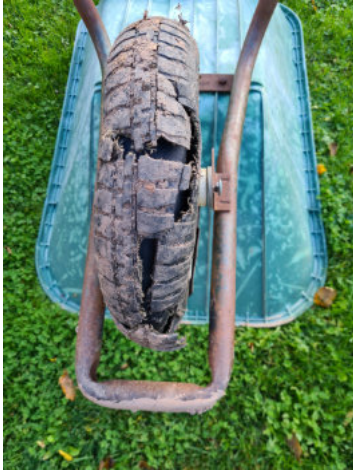


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Don't think the Workshop could fix this one.



After a frustrating day working on a tree stump at Kymin, which is still not moving, the tools were put into the wheelbarrow for the short walk back to the site office.

All of a sudden, the wheelbarrow stops, the handler thinking that it was a bit wood jamming it. Before the chance to investigate, a very loud bang. The wheel had had enough and not just the inner tube, the tyre as well. The wheel barrow now has a solid wheel!!!

Grand Holiday Draw 2020



This year's Grand Holiday Draw has been very different in some ways but not in others. The Draw took place in the Chairman's garden and was made by canal landowners George and Irene Hicks.

The winning ticket numbers and winners were

- 02207 Mr Woodyatt of Newent
- 09890 Mr Bence of Southam
- 04149 Mrs N Gilbert of Tillington



Thanks to the generous donors of the prizes - Black Prince Narrowboat Holidays, Droitwich Waterways(Pamela May) Trust Limited and The Lock Keepers Company and also for the anonymous donation for the printing of the tickets.

All proceeds go to the H&G CT. Thanks to the support of our members we raised over £1,300 despite not attending any canal events.

We look forward to starting again next spring for a "normal year" of fundraising.

Many thanks, Janet Moulton

History - Over Civil War Sconce

Adrian Smith received permission from Jon Eeles to send in this piece to us about the Civil War Sconce at Over.

Jon Eeles is a Gloucester born and bred resident with an avid interest in Civil War history and gives talks as well as conducting tours of the City with a Civil War theme. In this article he writes about 'Sconces' which were earthwork based defences used in the Civil War including one at Over near the H&G Canal.

As many of our members will be aware, the City of Gloucester played a significant part in the English Civil War from 10th August until 5th September 1643 when 1500 defenders held out against constant attacks by 15000 Royalist troops until the Siege was lifted by King Charles I due to the threat of counterattacks by other Parliamentary forces.



A fact not known by many is that Gloucester had two Sconces that helped defend the City and these are quite substantial earthwork defences, usually situated near strategic defensible areas. They would have housed men and women too and were often armed with cannon at each of the four "star" points. One of Gloucester's was just over the River Severn opposite the Customs House near the Prison. Superbly placed to control traffic using the River and also able to cover the approach to the West



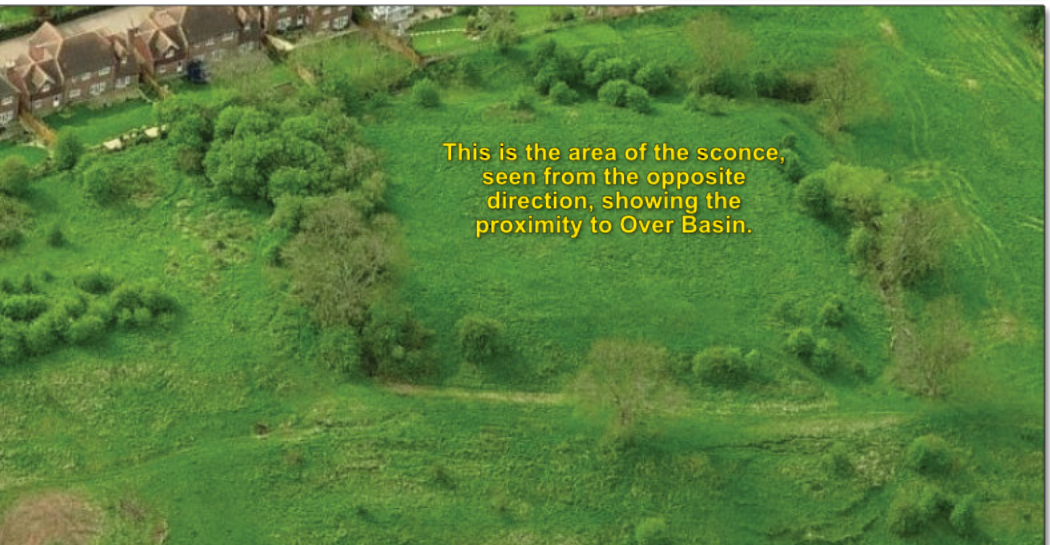
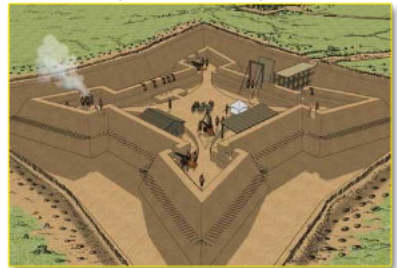
Gate, in turn it was close enough to the city to also be able to rely on fire support if attacked.

Sadly, over the last 400 years the river has burst its banks many times and the flooding has washed it away and destroyed all trace of it. However, of interest to our members, the other Sconce is at the back of the new houses at Over Basin, very near to the H&G Canal at Vineyard Hill and still exists to this day.

Built and occupied by the City's Parliamentary troops, it certainly would have saw action before the Siege. The leader of Gloucester's defending troops, Colonel Massey, withdrew all of his troops out of the Sconce as soon as the Siege began, leaving it to the enemy, and it would have then been occupied by the Royalist Welsh forces. This is a fantastic bit of Gloucester's Civil War history that still exists but be aware that it is a protected site with very rare opportunities to visit so please respect the local residents privacy.

Gloucester's bravery in holding out against the Siege had a massive bearing on the result of the Civil War because if the King had taken the City, he could have taken London in the Autumn of 1643 and ended the Great Rebellion. This in turn could have meant that England may have lacked its famed Parliamentary tradition and reverted to an autocratic Monarchy on the continental model and the whole of British history and possibly World history would have been very different.

On the picture to the left (from Google Earth) you can quite clearly see the fortification and top left and bottom left two of the four "star points" that would have had cannon placed in each. An artist's impression has also been included to assist with identification.



Notification - Annual General Meeting 2021



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

The formal notice of the 2021 AGM will be published on our web site as required under the Articles 28 days prior to the above date. 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 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 and should be completed, signed and returned to arrive at least 48 hours before the start of the AGM.

An advertisement for WaterNav, a mobile application for waterway navigation. The background is light blue. In the top right corner is the WaterNav logo, which consists of three blue water droplets above the text 'WaterNav'. On the left side, the text 'WaterNav.' is written in a large, bold, blue font, followed by 'The waterway's SatNav.' in a smaller, blue font. On the right side, there is a black smartphone displaying a map of waterways with various colored lines and markers. At the bottom left, there are two small logos: 'Formerly' followed by 'wcca-ner' and 'e-canalmap'.

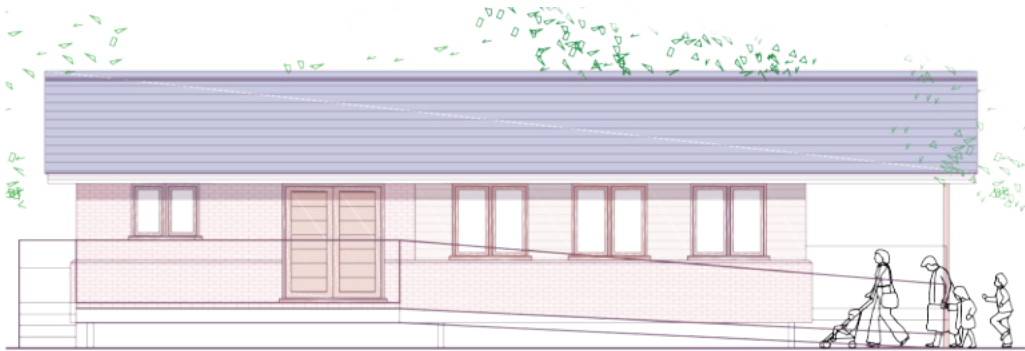
Mill Barn

We talked about our plans for the new Mill Barn in the last edition. Here you can now see the initial concept drawings of what we have planned.

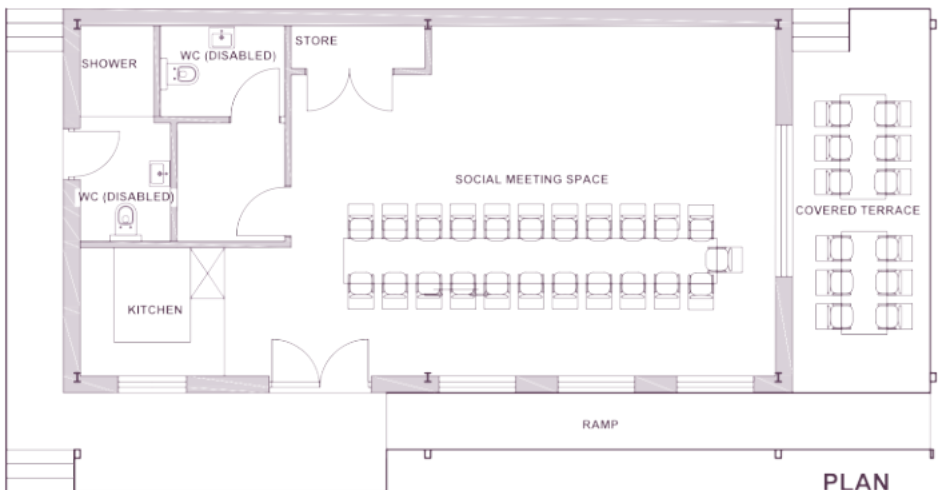
As you can see it will be fully accessible to all – including the shower should someone fall in! We expect to be doing some tweaking on the interior but it covers all our basic needs as a welfare block for all our Over basin users, a meeting and possible project room, and a useful space for social events such as Over Open days.

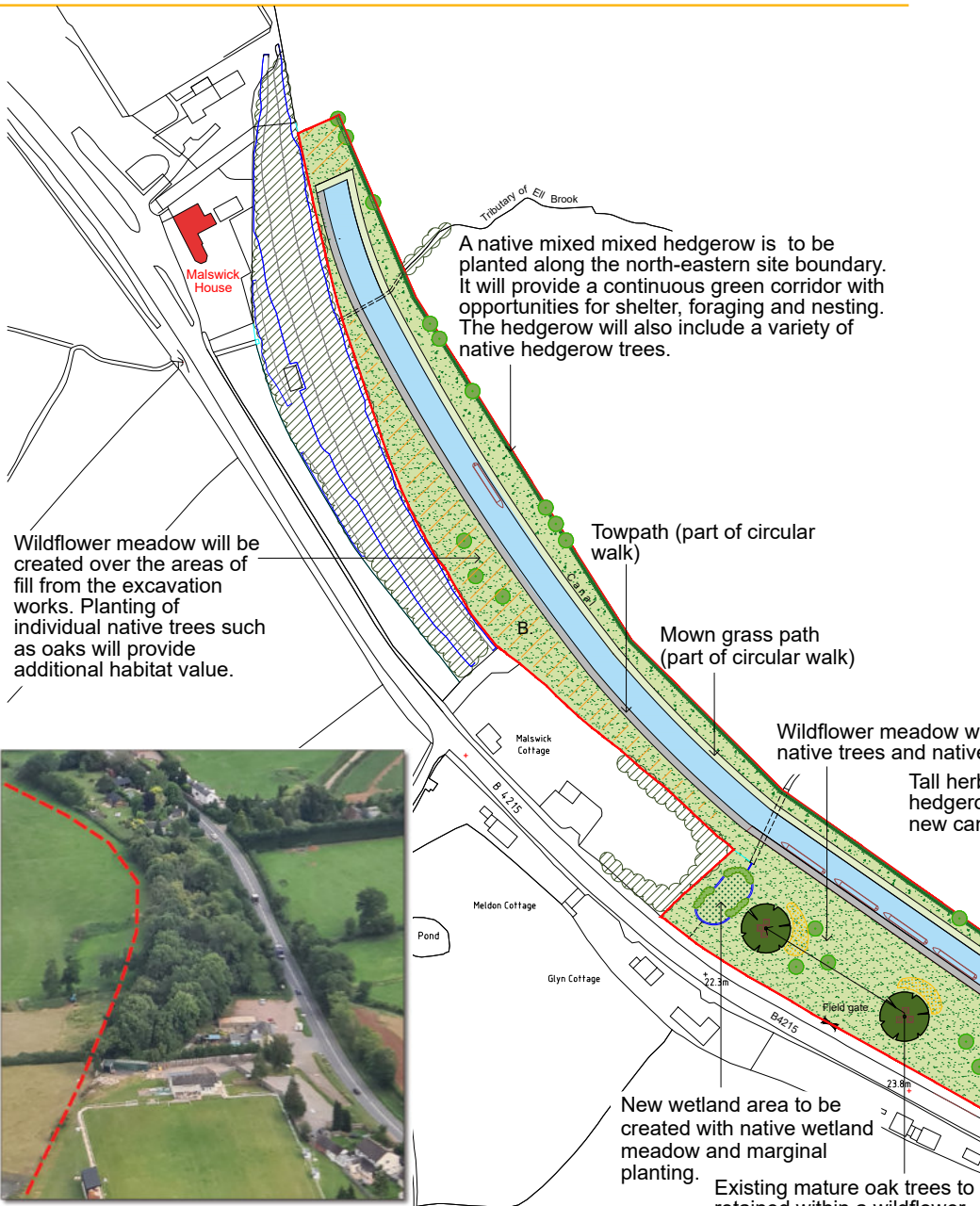
We just have to decide where exactly it will be placed on site. Our initial plan was to have it close under the trees, leaving a nice large open space in front next to the canal. However, we have an interesting dilemma - a large underground sewer to contend with. Nothing is ever straightforward is it?

Debbie Barber



FRONT ELEVATION





A native mixed mixed hedgerow is to be planted along the north-eastern site boundary. It will provide a continuous green corridor with opportunities for shelter, foraging and nesting. The hedgerow will also include a variety of native hedgerow trees.

Wildflower meadow will be created over the areas of fill from the excavation works. Planting of individual native trees such as oaks will provide additional habitat value.

Towpath (part of circular walk)
Mown grass path (part of circular walk)

Wildflower meadow with native trees and native
Tall herb hedgerow
new car

New wetland area to be created with native wetland meadow and marginal planting.

Existing mature oak trees to be retained within a wildflower meadow. Bird and bat boxes to be fixed to the trees.



View from the north looking southeastwards
Line of canal indicated in red.



Canal Restoration, Malswick, Newent

L a n d s c a p e S t r a t e g y

Exist
be m
and v
mea

The team has done it! The planning application is in. It is unlikely that we will know the result until mid-January.

The plan shown here is a simplified version of one of the planning application documents and shows details of all the work that is to be done to improve the natural habit of the canal route.

As reported in previous editions of the Wharfinger, the team have already spent several years here working with the local landowner to create bridges for farm traffic.

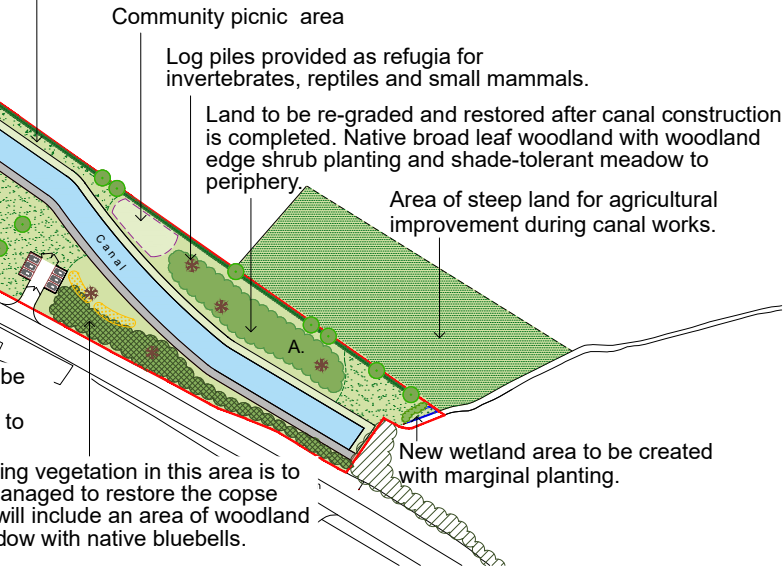
Once the work is complete, we will have public access for walking along the restored canal. We have made this a circular route of 1.2Kms with wildflower meadow and native mixed hedgerow – this will increase the species diversity, giving an overall net gain of trees, hedges, grass land and wetland. We are retaining the two existing, beautiful mature Oak trees.

This will form a Community amenity area, accessible to walkers using the footpath, boaters, and for bird and wildlife enthusiasts. We believe it will be a great asset for the area. As we further restore the canal it will create a safe walking and cycling environment for travelling to Gloucester and Hereford and even canoeing and boating as we further restore the canal.

Please note during restoration the canal here will not accessible to the public.

with individual
e bulbs.

o meadow created along
ow margins to the north of the
nal.



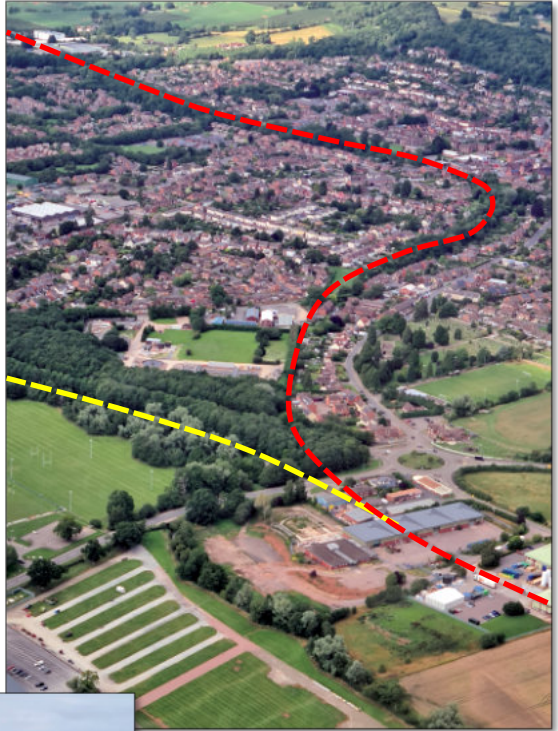
be
to
ing vegetation in this area is to
managed to restore the copse
will include an area of woodland
dow with native bluebells.

Flight - Part 2

In the last edition the flight pictures finished at the entrance to Oxenhall Tunnel.

The tunnel construction of 1.24 miles, or 2000 metres, was finished in 1798. When it was built it was the 14th longest on the national canal system. Fortunately, when the M50 was built it passed safely over the top. The H&G Dymock Canal Walk also crosses under the M50 – in two different places. Hopefully if you do the walk you won't find one of the underpasses flooded as I did last winter (should that happen you can divert along the road, cross over the M50 and then re-join the path further on).

Dymock and the winding hole pool was on the front cover of the last edition. We carry on and get our first view of Ledbury. The line of the canal comes in at the bottom of the view to the right, passing through the old Countrywide car park.



The original line (indicated in red) would then have swung right past the old wharf where the Full Pitcher pub stands, and then follow the line of the trees through Ledbury.

The modern line (of the restored canal yellow) will follow the bypass to the left, continuing north along the line of the trees seen in the view to the left.

Further to the north, we get the first view of the Ledbury Viaduct.

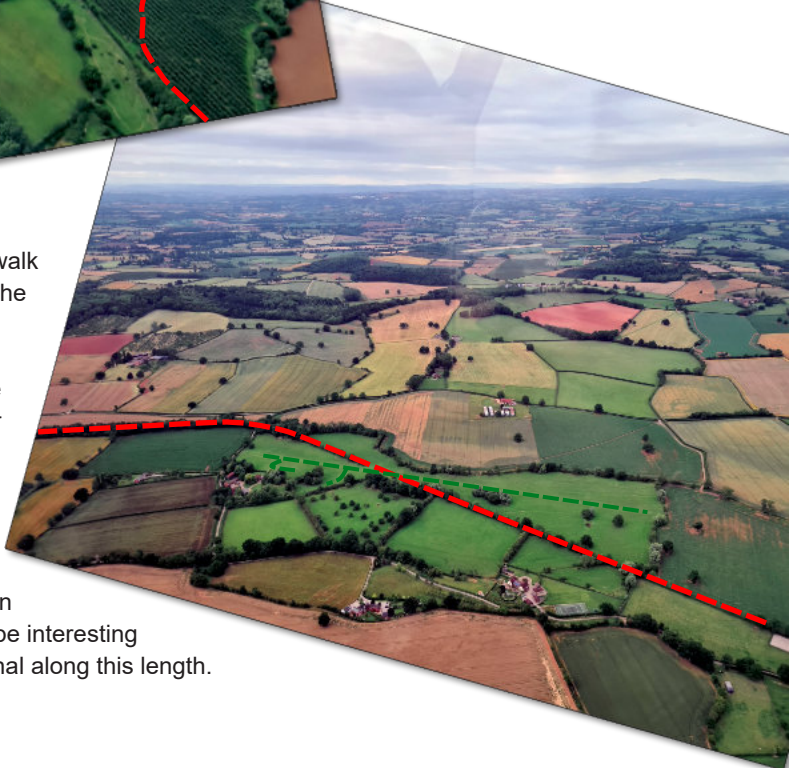
After going under the viaduct, the line of the canal passes between a series of poly tunnels on the route and beyond them the line curves left behind Priors Court .



Cutting across a field with lines of trees it crosses the Bromyard road, north of the Oak Inn at Staplow, and onwards up the picture.

We have a great canal walk available starting from The Oak and following the canal, as we did on the flight, with a return route that will get you back for a pie and pint - if you plan your timing correctly.

On the walk along the route we come across an airstrip (green) that will be interesting when we restore the canal along this length.



Carrying on we are on the approach to the Ashperton tunnel - the one with a cricket pitch above it!

Ashperton tunnel is 400 yds long much shorter than Oxenhall and currently in water. If you want more information on this, do a search online for Ashperton Tunnel and you will find some further details.

Thanks again to my pilot John Hamer and we will continue our journey in the next edition.



Geocaching



You may remember the piece on Geocaching in last winter's Wharfinger? There, Julia Bomken said what a dream it would be to have a series of caches following the route of the canal – well, read on.

Geocaching at Oxenhall

My name is Mike Williams and one of my hobbies is Geocaching, an internet-based treasure hunt. It is fondly known as the hobby that uses “multi-million-dollar satellites to find small Tupperware boxes”. It all started in May 2000 when the American Government allowed access to the then military satellite system making it available for anyone who saw a potential use for it.

One man, Dave Ulmer, thought “If I hide a box and publish the co-ordinates on the internet; I wonder if anyone might then find it?”. They did. By the end of that year Geocaching, as it came to be known, was born. Today there are more than three million Geocaches worldwide with around a million Geocachers looking for them through the site of Geocaching.com.

I discovered the game late in 2010 while perusing the internet one evening with a friend. I realised it could combine the love of the outdoors, dog walking, discovering new locations and a use for IT all in one application. I was bitten by the bug and to date have found in excess of 4000 caches. Geocaches come in all shapes and sizes and come in various guises. The simplest form is a Traditional cache which is a container you can find just with the given co-ordinates. Then you have two types of cache that involve solving some sort of puzzle; these are Multi-caches and Mystery caches. These puzzles, when solved, give you the co-ordinates for the final cache location.

There are other types of cache beyond this too giving a variety of interest for the budding/experienced Geocacher. Each cache page gives information to help you find your target; size, difficulty rating, terrain rating, a hint (sometimes) to name but some. The containers can range in size from Micro – something as small as the end of your little finger – to Large. These can be a large chest or even an old telephone box as I have done. At the very least, each container will have a log sheet in it which is signed when the cache is found. The larger containers can contain swappable trinkets of one sort or another. It is always said that if you take something, you should replace with an item of equal or greater value. At the end of it all, you log each find on the corresponding cache page with a short paragraph.

There are other aspects to geocaching which enhance the game; Trackables, Geo coins and Events to name some. Most people cache today using their smartphone and one of the Apps that are now available. A GPS is not so necessary these days but I prefer this option on a long session. And, of course, it is possible to cache using an OS map which is how my wife and I first started.....X marks the spot and hopefully the hint will help!

A recent innovation is the Adventure Lab cache which is being trialled by selected Geocachers. These have no physical container but are a form of virtual cache. I was fortunate enough to be given the chance to set one up and decided that the canal at Oxenhall would be a nice spot to show fellow cachers. The Adventure Lab (AL) cache involves setting up five virtual locations where an answer to a question must be found. Each question must be answered in sequence in order to progress through the adventure.

The stretch between the canal bridge on the lane running down from Oxenhall Church and Ell Brook aqueduct gave enough points of interest to reach five locations. I also added a Mystery cache linked to the Adventure Lab as Geocachers do like to find a container! The clues to the final location of this cache are hidden in the AL cache which then allow the cacher to work out where the container is.

I spent a few weeks pulling everything together; that involved sourcing correct and interesting information, taking photos, getting accurate co-ordinates and working out the questions with their answers. It was then a case of developing the cache pages to go on the internet and testing them to make sure they worked!

Finally, I asked for permission to allow these caches to be placed – probably the most important part of the whole exercise. I contacted Ralph Barber and Brian Fox and duly met with Brian to talk things through. With their consent I was allowed to proceed and both caches are now live and have been found. I am most grateful to all concerned in allowing me to share this interesting place with others. The H & G website was a great source and highly informative too. It was an interesting experience putting all this together and I hope fellow cachers will find it enjoyable – time will tell.

You can start caching with a basic membership which is free. For more information, www.geocaching.com is the place to go.

Mike Williams

Membership Subscriptions



The Trustees have completed a review of membership subscriptions and yes you have guessed it – subs are going up. All new members will pay the increased subs rates on joining and we encourage all existing members to change their standing orders to the new rates. Existing members will not be forced to pay the new higher rates, but please please would you consider increasing your contribution - we need all the money we can get for the restoration of the canal!

Individual/ Adult £15.00 Family/Joint £20.00 Electronic £10.00
Corporate/Company £40.00 Single Life £300.00 Family/Joint Life £400.00

FAQ's	Answer
Why the increase?	We have not increased our subscriptions since 2012 and, as we all know, costs are rising. Postage rates have more than doubled since 2012. We also need funds to pay, for example, towards legal services and planning applications before we can consider moving on to new sites. An increase in membership subs will help, in part, towards these funds.
When will the changes take effect?	New members will start on January 1st. Existing members at renewal.
Why the changes to membership groups?	It was felt that we should not be discriminatory between age groups.
What is the Electronic Membership?	Electronic membership is a new group that supplies an electronic version of The Wharfinger only. No printed hard copy for people in this group of membership. You will still have all the same member and voting rights as the other categories. We believe that this type of membership may be suitable for younger members.
Can I not get an Electronic version of The Wharfinger from the web site?	Yes, an electronic version is available on the web site, but not the latest edition. It is always the previous edition to the latest one supplied – i.e. a 3-month delay in posting to the web site.
Can I have an electronic version of the Wharfinger as a member of other groups of membership?	Yes, you can. You need to contact the Membership Secretary and request one. You can also stop the printed version if you wish. This will help your membership funds go to the restoring of the canal.
If I cannot afford the increase?	We will continue to have you as a member but perhaps you could consider transferring to the electronic membership level to reduce our costs.
Does this not have to go before the membership at an AGM?	Previously yes, however with the updated Articles of Association we no longer have this requirement.

David Williams RIP



Earlier this year we reported the death of Elizabeth Williams and we now regret to announce that her husband, David has also passed away. They were both keen members and volunteered at Oxenhall some years ago.

Brian Fox

H&G Stamps Appeal



Yes, the Stamps Appeal is still alive and kicking (and totally Covid-free!) so don't forget that we can turn anything vaguely philatelic (any used and unused stamps, old postcards, old stamp albums etc) into cash for the H&G.



With Christmas on the horizon, please remember to save all of the stamps from your Yuletide Mail, even the common ones, and either hand them to Janet Moulton or send them direct to me at:

35 LIME ROAD, SOUTHAM, WARWICKSHIRE, CV47 1EQ

Thanks to your past sendings we've so far raised more than £3,500 for the Trust, so let's try to break the £4,000 barrier during 2021.

Steve Bence

Bequests to the Trust - Thank You



Over the past few months we have received a number of donations from bequests of long term supporters of the Trust. These bequests help greatly in funding the continuing work of restoring the canal.

Please consider leaving the Canal Trust a bequest in your will.

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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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DYMOCK,
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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

Turn on AmazonSmile in the Amazon app to generate donations.

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AmazonSmile customers can now support **Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust** in the Amazon shopping app on iPhones and Android phones! Simply follow these instructions to turn on AmazonSmile and start generating donations.

1. Open the Amazon Shopping app on your device
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Please help support H&G. So simple to use if you do your shopping with Amazon.

Keeping in Touch



The present restrictions have highlighted that we have no direct contact for most of our members, other than by post.

We would love it if you would please send your current email address into our Membership Secretary Nigel Jefferies so we may update our records – thank you.

membership@h-g-canal.org.uk

Your information will be stored securely and can be amended or deleted on request.

Sales and Promotion Events 2021



Fingers crossed that we may be back to some form of normality next year. These are the events we are currently planning to attend. See the Events Page on the Trust website for more details. If you would like to come along and help at any of the events you would be very welcome.

May 1st

St Richards Festival,
Droitwich, Worcestershire
Held in Vines Park, right next to the restored Droitwich canal.

June 26th/27th

Braunston Historic Boat Rally & Canal Festival
Braunston, Northamptonshire
Held at the marina. Wonderful old boats in the working historic narrowboat rally.

July 17th/18th

Our Trust Open Weekend at Over Basin,
Over, Gloucestershire
Joint Open Days with the Lock Keepers. Boat trips, stalls etc.

Aug 28th-30th

IWA Festival of Water,
Perdiswell Park Worcester.
Bank Holiday weekend of fun by the Worcester & Birmingham Canal.

Sept 11th

Newent Onion Fayre,
Newent, Gloucestershire
World-Famous annual street festival, celebrating the onion.

Nov 13th

Winter Fayre, Newent, Gloucestershire
Our own local winter fayre.

Social Evenings at The Royal Oak 2021



We are desperate to re-start our social evenings so that we can meet up with old friends and be entertained by a variety of speakers.

As it is still uncertain as to whether gatherings will be allowed at the beginning of the year, I have not confirmed any speakers so please check the website or give me a ring on 01432 264366 a few days before the 3rd Tuesday in the month.

In the meantime – keep safe and take care.

Janet Moulton

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The popular Oak Inn is nestled in the heart of the beautiful Herefordshire countryside, not far from the glorious Malvern Hills, and offers delicious food and friendly atmosphere. This traditional free house also boasts four luxury en-suite B&B rooms.

THE OAK INN STAPLOW



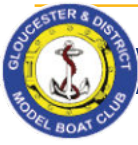
A country inn dating back to the 1600's, the Oak Inn can be found a mere two miles north of Ledbury. There are two cozy bar and dining areas with log fires, fl agstone floors and glorious old oak beams decorated traditionally with local hops. The informal restaurant offers a varied menu seven days a week.

The Oak Inn prides itself on its focus on the freshest locally-sourced ingredients from the highest quality food producers and sustainable fisheries. Three real ales and a guest beer are always available, and they have been in The Good Beer Guide since 2009. The Oak Inn also hosts great live music events (see their website for more details).

All these factors make the atmosphere of the Oak Inn that of a quintessential country inn, where you can dine, relax with a real ale, and, if you wish, settle down for the night in one of their luxurious guest rooms.

Did we mention they are also super dog-friendly? Your furry friends can even eat with you or stay with you overnight in a B&B room.

**The Oak Inn
Staplow HR8 1NP
01531640954
www.oakinnstaplow.co.uk**



David Exell reports...

We cannot claim to have beaten the weeds this summer, more an uneasy truce, but at least one of the winter pleasures is that the stuff dies down and allows us pleasanter and less propeller jamming boating. Your scribe has given up fighting the weed with his latest boat which will be, when built, paddle driven.

We are slowly building up sailing members at Over as members have drifted back to sailing, also now that we have four days a week when we sail and the booking system working quite well, We do have to, these are the rules, and we have to obey them which fortunately the vast majority do so. We are also gaining new members, which is the sign of a healthy club, and getting enthusiastic support from young members.

We weed the basin quite well, however the rest of the Canal at Over needs a good weeding including removing the mass of bulrushes that are rapidly working their way across the Canal from the Vineyard Hill side.



Whilst we have to book a time, we will be sailing at Over basin on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday morning & afternoons (weather permitting). You should find somebody sailing between 10.00am and 4.00pm. The Club members will be pleased to talk to you about their models and the Club. (But please keep your distance!)

The photograph is of Bob's (our Hon Treasurer's) Schwimmwagen - fully amphibious it can launch itself from the slipway and also recover itself. (Photo Geoffrey Anthony)

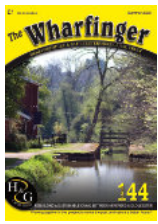
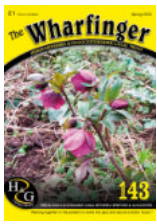
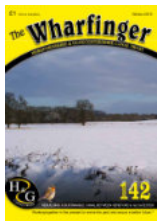
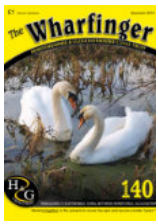
Members' have models of all descriptions including amphibious craft, the best time to come is after lunch from 2.00pm - yachts are very popular.

Chairman. Ted Tedaldi

Wharfinger – electronic version



If you would like to receive a digital version of The Wharfinger – whether instead of a paper copy or as an addition - please let Nigel know. Details on the Inside Back Cover.





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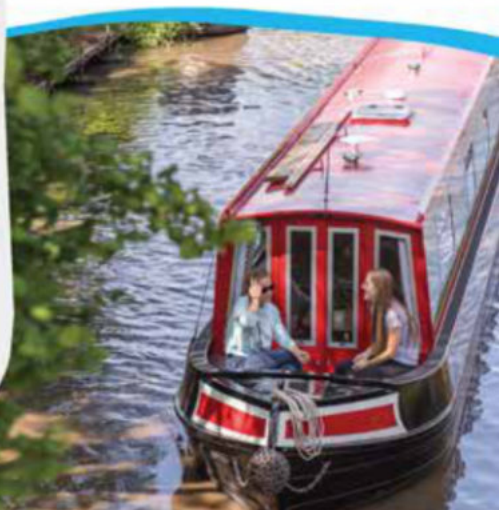
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Hello everyone.

As those who frequent Over Wharf will have noticed we (Sailing4Disabled/RowingPirates) are not operating during this troubled time of Covid19. We had to make the sad choice not to operate and place the boats in mothballs (reducing the insurance) for the foreseeable future due to the lack of regular clients.

The groups that make a donation to our cause have had to close and now operate for the time being via "Zoom". Now as the younger readers will know this would not work in sailing. Although that is good for social distancing, this would not bring in the amount of funds that we need to keep us with our heads above water!

So, all I can say is sorry to those who miss out on my cakes and banter from volunteers. May I, on behalf of us all at S4D/RP hope you all remain safe, wash your hands, wear the face mask and like "zoom" keep your distance.

Have as enjoyable a Christmas as possible.

Pete (Long Gone Silver) Pete RWB

Site Days



Regular Volunteer Work Parties

Due to the 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

Oxenhall/ Newent Station

Brian Fox 01432 358 628,
oxenhall@h-g-canal.org.uk

Wednesdays

Over Basin/Vineyard Hill

Andy Fowler
overbasin@h-g-canal.org.uk

Thursdays

Yarkhill

Chris High 01568 615 575
yarkhill@h-g-canal.org.uk

Ad Hoc

Hereford Roving Team

John Pritchard 01432 272972
hereford@h-g-canal.org.uk

Kymin

Ralph Barber 01432 853 086
kymin@h-g-canal.org.uk

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For information on advertising in **The Wharfinger**,
 please get in touch with Ginny Birkett - see opposite page for contact details.

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01452 790498 malswick@h-g-canal.org.uk

Yarkhill Site Leader - Chris High

01568 615575 yarkhill@h-g-canal.org.uk

Kymine East Site Leader - Ralph Barber

01432 853086 kymineeast@h-g-canal.org.uk

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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

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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.

