



Published by The Wey & Arun Canal Trust

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The purpose of this newsletter is to provide residents of Bramley with updated information following our exhibition at the Village Hall in October 2004. At the exhibition we displayed four possible routes for a restored canal through Bramley.

These were produced by the engineering firm, Halcrow, of Crawley. We also asked visitors to fill in a simple questionnaire form so that we have the views of those living in and around the village. The preliminary results of that questionnaire are shown overleaf.

The answers given in the questionnaires are very important to us as they give the Trust an idea of how you view the idea of a restored waterway.

The Wey & Arun Canal was opened in 1816 to connect the Thames basin navigation network to the south coast. It runs

from near Shalford on the navigable River Wey to near Pulborough on the River Arun and was used for trade for 55 years.

Following the development of the adjacent Guildford to Horsham railway the canal's

commercial viability diminished in the 1860s and the canal was abandoned in 1871 and finally closed in 1888. Land reverted to the adjacent existing landowners.



The large majority of the 23-mile length of the canal remains undeveloped as it crosses the rural West Sussex and Surrey countryside. However, for a length of approximately 1.8 miles the route of the canal through Bramley was developed during the 20th

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Special points of interest:

- How the Canal Trust started
- Preliminary results from the questionnaires
- How to contact us with your views
- How to become a member
- Contact details

Bramley Exhibition held in October 2004

Speaking immediately after the exhibition, Bramley Link Project Manager, Chris Harrison, said he was delighted with the results. There were over 700 visitors, including the Mayor of Waverley, Councillor Victor Duckett, the Mayoress

of Waverley, Guildford MP Sue Doughty and representatives of local authorities. The exhibition was supported by Waverley Borough Council, Surrey County Council, the Environment Agency and SEEDA.

The summary results showed that 66% were in favour of restoring the canal through Bramley.

A large majority of those in favour preferred a route following the river rather than the old railway.

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A restored section near Wisborough Green

century and a number of residential properties and properties, associated gardens and private land now block the original route.

The Wey & Arun Canal Trust was formed in the 1970s with the objective of restoring the canal as a link in the national waterway system and so recreating the direct water link between London and the South Coast. Also forming a key part of the Trust's strategy are the improvement of access for recreation, tourism and leisure

and the increase of bio-diversity by improving wildlife habitats during the restoration process.

The work of the Trust over the past 30 years has been aided by the support of the Environment Agency, Waverley & Guildford Borough Councils, Horsham and Chichester District Councils, West Sussex and Surrey County Councils, British Waterways, The Waterways Trust, South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and the Inland Waterways Association among

others. The local planning authorities have recognized the importance of re-establishing the canal by ensuring no development will be permitted which will obstruct the achievement of the through navigation. Where the canal has been restored it has provided a point of regeneration for the local community, bringing sustainable employment and economic growth and access to areas for leisure, recreation and education.

What was the purpose of the exhibition last year?

The Bramley Exhibition demonstrated that there was a lot of interest in restoring the Canal .

Members of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust are keen for Bramley residents to understand something of the historical background of the Trust and the progress that the members of the Trust are making in the restoration of the canal. We were particularly keen to explain how important it is to seek a way of bringing

the restored waterway through Bramley and it was important to receive your views as part of the consultation process.

The Trust, as part of its commitment to conserve the habitat of the restored canal, operates a series of policies including undertaking ecological surveys and clearance

management procedures before and during works.

If you would like to see the section of canal fully restored, then please visit our operation at Loxwood, just behind the Onslow Arms on the main B2133 road. Boat trips are available Saturday and Sunday afternoons from Easter through to September.

Comment from Chris Harrison



A peaceful scene on the Wey & Arun canal

The high level of interest shown by local residents at the exhibition in Bramley Village Hall last October really took us by surprise. Over 700 people attended the exhibition, which was many more than we had expected.

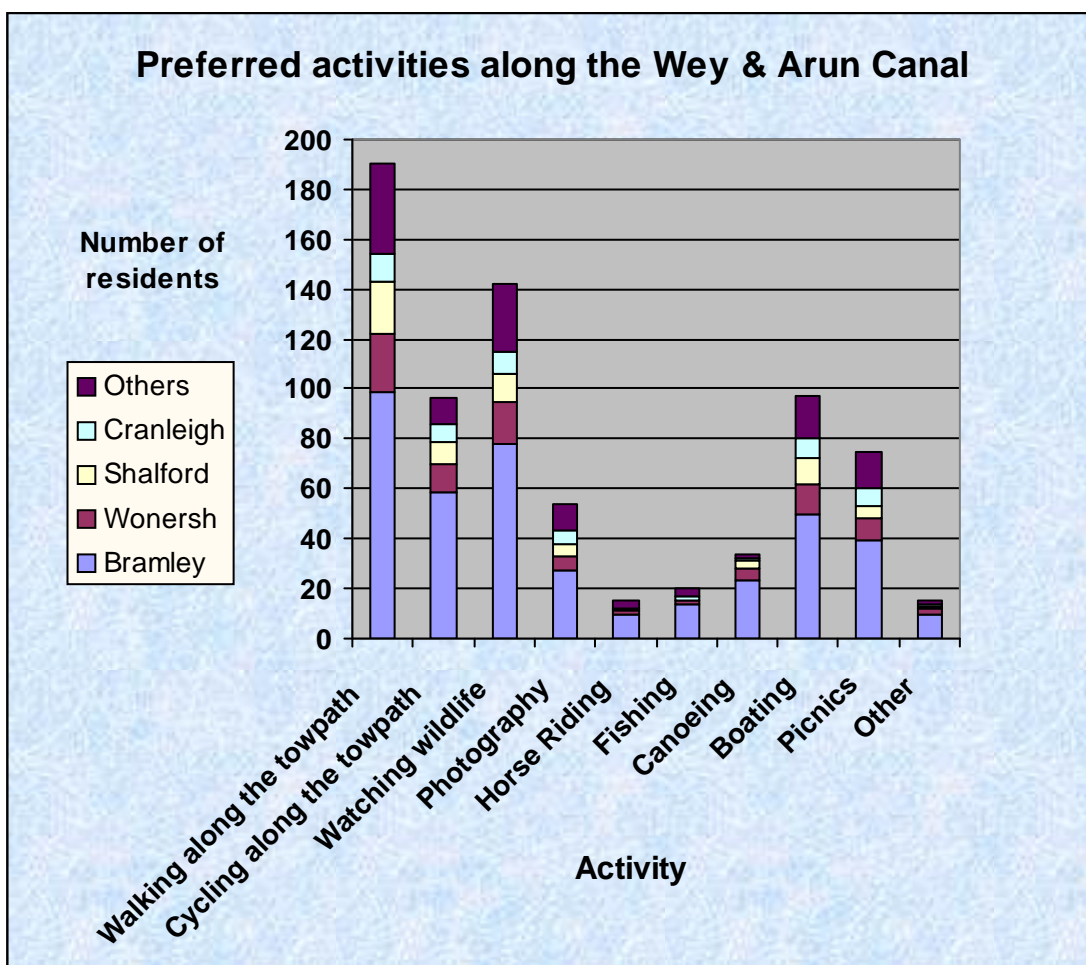
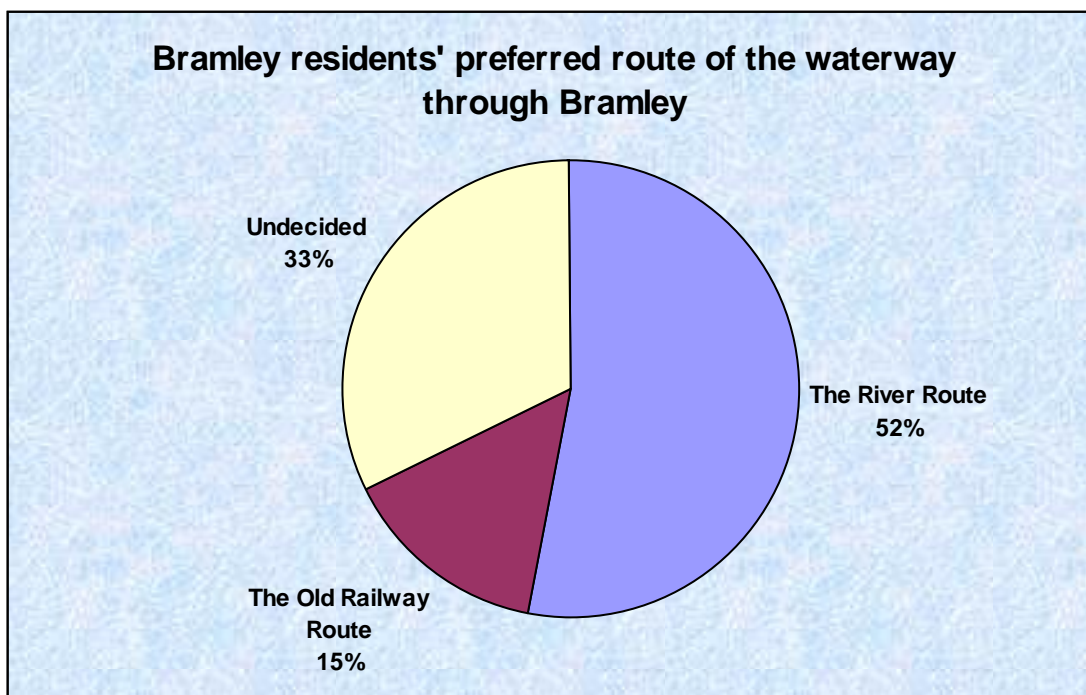
A key way in which we were able to achieve this feedback was from the 270 questionnaires which were completed

by visitors. The questionnaires also included a multitude of comments, which will take time still to analyse. The comments [both 'for' and 'against'] provide a valuable basis for methods of alleviating some concerns expressed, which include fear of flooding, lack of privacy and security issues.

Some comments taken at random include: "A worthwhile

cause which we fully support and hope to see completed one day" and, "What a wonderful project". Having now established that a significant level of support locally for the canal does exist, we are in a position to plan our future activities accordingly.

Results of the Survey



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PLEASE SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE WEY & ARUN CANAL TRUST BY BECOMING A MEMBER. Information from membership@wact.org.uk or phone 01403 752403 for membership form. Forms are also available in Bramley Library.

Q What is the estimated date for completion?

A There is no planned completion date for the restored canal. The Trust has been working on restored sections for 30 years.

Q How do I find out more about the work of the Trust?

For further information about the Trust and the achievements towards restoration so far, please visit our website at www.wact.org.uk



So what does restoring the canal offer Bramley?

Eric Walker, project manager responsible for extending the restored section at Loxwood, explains:

The restored canal supports a wide range of aquatic birds, swans, herons, moorhens, duck, wagtails and kingfishers.

In the Loxwood area the Trust has in the past set up many bird boxes and an otter holt by the river.

The local schools visit the canal as part of their “know our village” project and are referenced to the Victorian landscape it represents.

Trust members organise special walks focusing on butterflies, or dragonflies or the unusual plants (cowslips) that have been encouraged to grow along the canal.

Visual amenity (pleasantness) of the area

That the canal in Loxwood has a very attractive, rural ambiance is generally agreed. The volunteers of the Wey & Arun Trust have achieved this through a lot of effort. For their efforts, the Trust was awarded two national awards including the Community Award by British Waterways.



Left to right:

Victor Duckett (Waverley Mayor), Chris Harrison and Peter Foulger (Chairman, The Wey & Arun Canal Trust)