

Working Party News

For WACT Volunteers
January 2009

Editorial Comment (*Wendy Andrews*)

Happy New Year to You All!

Thank you to all the regular contributors throughout 2008 without whose input there would have been no WPN. Nobody's come forward to take over from me as editor as yet so they're stuck with my nagging for the time being.

Recycling Newspapers and Magazines (*John Wood*)

Although we will not know until the end of January what we are to receive for the 4th quarter of 2008, it will be over £5,000 for last year. With the current financial crises likely to last during 2009, it is more important than ever to try to increase the amount of old newspapers and magazines for recycling. We receive £87 per tonne (including recycling credits from the relevant local authorities) and our merchant, Aylesford Newsprint make a donation to Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital for every tonne the Wey & Arun Canal Trust can collect.

Some of you will know that copious amounts of paper are transported from the Lancing, Worthing and Littlehampton areas every week, but our nearest Aylesford Paper Bank is located in our car park at the Onslow Arms public house at Loxwood. I have been trying without success to find a site for another Aylesford Paper Bank in the Lancing, Worthing and Littlehampton areas, but without success. Can anyone help please? If a suitable site can be found, may I ask that permission be sought from the owner of the site? When they know which Registered Charities will benefit this may help to persuade.

At present the demand is still there for old newspaper and magazines because it is recycled to produce high quality newsprint that is used by most of the daily national newspapers. Aylesford's slogan is 'Yesterday's news – Tomorrow's front pages'! The downturn in the market for recycled paper is with 'Mixed Paper' which is that mainly collected by local authority 'kerbside' collections. 'Mixed Paper' is mainly used for the production of cardboard and packaging material. With the tremendous closure of thousands of toy making factories in China the demand for cardboard has dramatically slumped but not so with newsprint.

Many Trust members support this easy form of fundraising and may I take this opportunity of thanking them, but let's see if we can obtain and support some new Aylesford Paper Banks, particularly on the South Coast. We can supply A5 size flyers about our paper recycling that might help to recruit friends and neighbours to save their old newspapers and magazines for the Trust.

For more information please contact John Wood on 01903 753099 or email john_wood@weyandarun.co.uk

Recycling Mobile Phones and Print Cartridges (*Wendy Andrews*)

Further to John's appeal for recycling paper there is also an opportunity for charities to raise money through recycling redundant mobile phones and spent print cartridges. I had every intention to carry this initiative forward on WACT's behalf but, frankly, haven't made the time. Is there anyone out there who would pick up the baton? I have all the relevant information to hand – it's mostly an armchair and computer job for someone with a little time to spare to set the wheels in motion.

Please contact me on 01403 752170 or email wendy_andrews@weyandarun.co.uk

Mid Week Working Party (*Richard Watson*)

Firstly, I stand corrected on last month's report; it was of course post-and-wire fencing we put up at Tannery Lane, not post-and-rail.

December saw us spending the first couple of weeks at Beevers Farm doing preparatory work for an access track to our leased section down by Cranleigh Waters. This included ditch digging and clearing small trees, brambles and all the usual things that Nature finds to populate an unused bit of ground. Beevers Farm lies under Chinthurst Hill from which a lot of water drains and this is quite apparent by the soggy nature of much of the ground down to the river. The work involved in ditch digging was quickly repaid by the sight of a steady flow of water either side of the new track boundaries.

Our third week was at Run Common where we did our best to disrupt the flow of traffic on the road with the smoke from our several bonfires. Being our last before Christmas (see next paragraph), this was in true festive spirit with mulled apple (courtesy of Di Miles), and homemade mince pies (courtesy of Trish Loveland).

There were only four weeks of organised activity last month because some of the less dedicated members weren't prepared to turn out on Christmas Eve (me being one). However, poor Peter J. and Ian Edwards were out that day in response to a call from Surrey CC to remove timber we'd previously cut at Tannery Lane from where it was impeding the flow of flood water through a culvert.

Last Wednesday we were back at Tannery Lane removing or burning all the loose timber that could possibly cause problems in flood conditions.

Winston Harwood Group (*Ron Chamberlain for David Junkison*)

December was a very short working month as we only managed two Thursdays. Both the days were spent clearing more bracken and weeds from the towpath at Rowner Lock working towards Loves Bridge. Some progress was made to widen the path where the invasive bracken was gaining foothold. This is where we will continue when we resume our activities in the New Year.

We wish everybody in the Trust a Very Happy New Year. See you then

Monday Working Party (*Nick Wood for John Empringham*)

Early in December we visited Malham Lock and Bignor Bridge. The former was in a right old state again, all overgrown and looking unloved. We've changed all that but we must make a return visit in April/May to 'keep up the appearances' of this restored lock (Leader please note!). We were pleased to welcome Alison, Jennifer and Richard from MWWP to our working session in Sidney Wood prior to the Navvies lunch. This is the start of tidying the towpath bank from Firtree Copse to lock 16. The brambles and other vegetation have grown more than we expected in the past year, so we shall need probably three more visits to complete the job. We have the culverts to clear as well. Roll on 2009!!

We meet next on the 5th and 19th January. Site details can be obtained from John E if you would like to join us. Finally, it was good to see everyone at the Navvies lunch and to see so many friends again. Thanks Geoff for making all the arrangements.

Thursday/Sunday Group (*Eric Walker*)

So, May 9th has provisionally been set for the opening of the B2133 Crossing, "Coming, ready or not"! But currently it looks as if Burras will not be clear of the site for some time, say end of January. And at one time they were saying we could not be on the site whilst they are there – insurance. I am just hoping that there is not a lot of frost in late winter. Burras had their 7.5t digger, complete with tracker, stolen before Christmas so that will cause some delays.

However we have started, initially by placing some of the copings for the towpath, on the east side of the road up, behind the Onslow, to the bridge. The rest of the copings in that area will probably be the last job, once the bund has gone.

We have also started the wall, where the piles were, between the road bridge and the lock. The idea is to put a brick face up but with concrete blocks below what will be water level. With all the blocks in place we will need scaffolding to be erected for the bricklaying.

The sheet piles have been galvanised because they are permanent and the wall is to be built in front of them with concrete backfill.

Hence a busy time is forecast, I was going to say whatever the weather, but of course if it is fine and warm all the better.

Hedge Laying Group (*Keith Nichols*)

Whilst the Loxwood Road "Crossing" hogs the limelight and cash flow, erstwhile cheap teams like us, MWWP and, well, everyone else really, plod on regardless in the background. Three cheers for us all!

December saw us get into the actual hedge laying down at Drungewick and with only 3 days spent on site we managed to lay 49m plus binding and some stake trimming which was a good effort.

Monday 1st saw a new version of "The Navy Lark" as a quickly conscripted crew transported stakes in one voyage and binders in another, on the Keppel, round the bend from the slipway to (1) the heavy plant crossing (2) the Aqueduct and (3) the east side of Drungewick bridge. No one fell in, how unusual. It could have been a rum do but no one had any (note to Jim Phillips RN retired – "where is our Rum Ration?")

Three more crab apple saplings have been planted into the hedge to add variety. The weather has been cold but mainly sunny with just one 10 minute shower of sleet which was nice!

We have been visited by the local pair of Buzzards, a Bunting and a Barn Owl which inspected our layed section for Field Voles and caught one on the east side of the canal. The Swans have kept an eye on us as well from the water, field and air.

Well, that's it for 2008, so "Happy New Year" everybody and I wonder what 2009 will bring apart from 3 million unemployed (canal volunteers possibly?) and 1 Euro = £1.

The beer beckons so cheers to all.

Dates: Jan 2nd, 12th, 20th, 28th, (1 day in the week of 5th – 9th)

Feb 5th (?), 23rd, (1 day in the week of 9th – 13th)

Mar 2nd, 11th, 19th, 27th

If anyone fancies doing a Sunday, please ring me.

Personal Accident Insurance (on behalf of Michael Bates)

There's still time, just, to express your interest in signing up for Personal Accident insurance to cover you whilst working on WACT's behalf. Please contact Michael if you need a copy of the relevant form

Saturday Group (Wendy Andrews)

Since David Jessop is no longer available to manage the Saturday Group it would be great if someone would come forward to take over and revitalise it. Examples of jobs to be done on an ad hoc basis are hedge planting and wild flower cultivation, plus any other ideas on the conservation front. Please get in touch with Turlough or me if you could be tempted to take on such a worthwhile cause.

Working Party Diary for January/February/March

Usually first & third Mondays of the month	'Mrs Bucket' – Keeping Up Appearances	Details from John Empringham
Most Tuesday mornings	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Needs a volunteer to lead the group
Every Wednesday	Mid-Week Working Party	Check with Peter Jackman or Alison Saville for confirmation of venue
Every Wednesday	Loxwood Link Maintenance	Contact Peter Wilding
Every Thursday & Sunday	Mainly construction work. Meet at the Onslow Arms, 09.30	Contact Eric Walker for details
Every Thursday	Winston Harwood Group	Contact Ron Chamberlain or Tony Clear for details
Varying dates in the winter months	Hedge Laying	See Keith Nichols' piece for this season's dates

Working Party Directory

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