

### Editorial

Still lots going on, making the most of the warmer weather. It's tempting, when it's hot, to skimp on protective equipment, but I know all of our workers are well ware of the value of staying as safe as possible on site - hard hats, safety boots, plus eye and ear protection when needed are really important.

*Bill*

### Thursday and Sunday Group

Aeropuerto Internacional Mariscal Sucre, Quito, Ecuador - never heard of it? Well we did, when Robin spent a day there due to aircraft unserviceability and that changed the TSG work schedule. OK, Quito, a fact mentioned just in case it comes up in *Pointless*.

JJ Price and Geoff Thomas have been doing the extra days bricklaying, pulling the programme back on plan. The gang making the copings have caught up with the bricklaying in the lock walls. Getting timber and steel off the site to Tickner's is now in hand, there being no prospect of moving onto another construction site in Sussex. To help the bricklaying on the lock sill, the stop planks not being available, a temporary wall has been built to divert water coming down the canal to the ground paddle sluices. The ground paddles themselves aren't there either yet, so special actions will have to be taken to get them in before the autumn rains.

The site mains cabinet has been moved into its final place and the cable put into the trench at the back of the lock. This will give access for the lock back-pump to its electricity supply, whenever that will be - anyway, it is ready.

Right at the end of the May the fourth newt pond was dug. Not really exciting, as the earliest the great crested newts will be using it is next year. It is however another milestone in completing Gennets Bridge Lock. The final piece in the jigsaw is the 'pond' created in the canal pound. To be able to remove that, we have to have GCN in two of the three ponds we have made, including this one. The final report reflecting this saga to Natural England, will be made in 2022.

The Thursday and Sunday Group normally meets at 09:30. Please email Eric Walker if you want to get on the email circulation list for details of when and where the TSG is working

*Eric Walker*

### Summit (Northern) Working Party

A relatively quiet month compared with some. Although Compasses Bridge is at last looking like the finished article. The grass is coming up on the completed (pub) side and the water has been let in with half of the main dam removed.



**TSG at work at GBL, creating ponds  
(picture from Eric Walker)**



**New Compasses Bridge, starting to look finished  
(Picture from Bill Nicholson)**

On the airfield side, the towpath ramp has been completed down from the bridge and the (NWPG) landing stage recovered from its temporary burial. It has survived - remarkably - intact and will be ready for use by boat trips later in the year. The bank from the ramp down to water's edge has been re-profiled to a more realistic gradient and the rubble covered in clay and top soil. Path edging has been installed down the ramp and is

ready for more crushed concrete and a final surface. This path needs to be extended as far as the dam next time.

The footway at the junction with the road has been paved and a fence and gate post erected. A new path security gate awaits installation to prevent uncontrolled pedestrian access onto the airfield. Then there is the clearing up and moving of the compound which will be no mean task. Some of this will go to a new compound at the slipway site, the rest will go to Tickner's Depot until such time as the new project comes on stream – wherever that may be!

In June (9 -12th) the team is decamping to Hunt Park where we have many metres of riverside bank protection to install following damage caused by the 2013 winter flooding. Not sheet piling I hasten to add! Any offers of help to augment our team of stalwart volunteers would be gratefully received. We are working for a full four days. Please call or e-mail Dave Evans or me if you would like to help us.

*Bill Nicholson*

## Mrs Bucket Group - Keeping Up Appearances on Mondays

As mentioned in last month's WPN, on 8 May a first visit this year was made to Run Common. We also tackled Southland and Devils Hole locks, including reinforcing the noticeboard at the latter. Visits were made to Loxwood and the Drungewick aqueduct site. Although not one of our 'regulars', we tidied up at Drungewick lock as well. A good day.

We gave Lordings much needed attention on our second monthly meeting. The banks and towpath around the lock, the flood lock and the bridge were all cleared in preparation for the Poddle. We tidied up around the flood lock noticeboard in readiness for its repair next time; the 'chain' stile was removed and taken away for repair and its eventual return. Newbridge was visited too and, as requested, time was found to install three notice

boards in Sidney Wood, one near Firtree copse, one at lock 16 and one in the middle of that section.

June for Haybarn again and other locations as required by the growth in vegetation!

*Nick Wood*

## Mid Week Working Party

MWPP have had a busy month with numbers still averaging over 20. We have been clearing land near Harsfold Bridge and towards Lordings in preparation for the Poddle. The area is now looking much tidier but not pristine. A small group spent two days at Gosden Aqueduct helping with an archaeological dig to find out the way it has been built and what is required to repair it. The group ably used a mechanical digger and helped dig three large trial pits to aid this and then at the end of the day filled them all back in again. They spent one day in the pouring rain getting very wet so I was very indebted to them. We also have been clearing the bank and towpath between Tickner's and Compasses. It is now looking much better but there is still a few yards to do which we will do when we continue to the other side of Compasses. One of our members continues to keep the area around the Canal Centre looking neat and tidy, planting bulbs and plants where necessary.

*Margaret Darvill*

## Hedgelaying Group

Well, this season finishes on Tuesday 30 May with the team having their summer break until late September when the 17/18 season starts. Check your buckets, spades and bikinis chaps.

We will have spent seven days at Lock 10 by the end of the 30th and will have laid about 90 yards, just 20 yards short of the whole 'lead-up' to lock-side. This is a lot more than I expected to do at the site. In laying we have felled nine trees but we have laid 10 trees into the hedge line and planted/

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**The Hedgelaying Group's recent work:**

**Above - after laying near Lock 10.**

**left - Broomrape, a parasitic plant unusual in this country**

**(Pictures by Keith Nichols)**

transplanted over 60 saplings into it. The lock-side looks more open than before we started due to the nine trees being felled and the hazel stools being coppiced but there is a net gain of 50-plus trees. The Grand Total for laying this season is - sound the trumpets - 360 yards, which is a good effort. Health & Safety wise, we removed a tree that had almost fallen but was being held up by other trees, and would have blocked the towpath. What goodies we are!

Once again Lock 10 gave a surprise, certainly for me anyway. On my trips to Spain looking at wild flowers, birds, geology and beer, I've seen many broomrapes but never seen one in the UK until now when we found three examples of the parasitic plants that have no chlorophyll and rely

totally on their host plant. I think they were ivy broomrape but am unsure due to the lack of ivy?

Well, I have to say a 'Big Thank You' to the rest of the team as I couldn't have done this by myself, so **thanks** to Bob, Chris, the two Daves, John, Nick and the two Steves, also for the laughs and company!

Cheers all, see you in September.

*Keith Nichols*

## Tickner's Heath Depot

Well, here we are and with the warmer weather we at last turned our attention to making better use of the space at the depot. This is going to be increasingly important in the coming months once the operations at Gennets Bridge Lock and the Compasses projects start to wind down. Space will be at a premium as the larger items of Trust equipment start to arrive.

Looking around the depot our eyes were drawn to the old plant trailer that had been quietly rusting under the encroaching vegetation, so Mick Jones and Richard Powell set to remove anything reusable and to then cut up the remaining frame and place all the ironmongery in our newly acquired skip. It turned out to be quite a job and at times the whole team had to be called upon to lend a hand but at last it was cut into manageable chunks and placed in said skip.

Our signboard expert David Robson hasn't been quiet either after he and Ken Bacon had finished painting the backs of the 'Walker in the Road' he set to, to produce a couple of parking signs for the Poddle, only for your truly to be informed that it is unlikely that they will be needed this year. But they are here at the depot should they be required in the future.

Our new recruit John Piper hasn't been idle either and between his trips into foreign parts with his other hobbies he has managed, in between his scrap sorting enterprises, to sort out a troublesome starter cord for one of our generators. A man of many talents is our John, not unlike the rest of the team really.

Well I think that about it for this month. All the best.

*John Smith*

## Working Party Diary

Every Sunday and Thursday	Mainly construction work	Contact Eric Walker for details
Usually first & third Mondays of the month	'Mrs Bucket' - Keeping Up Appearances	Details from John Empringham
Every Wednesday	Mid-Week Working Party	Details from Margaret Darvill
Every Wednesday (plus Thursday and Sunday as required)	Loxwood Link Maintenance	Check with Kev Baker
Every Wednesday	Maintenance sessions at Tickner's Heath Depot	Contact John Smith/Ken Bacon
Various Tuesdays	Hedge Laying	Contact Keith Nichols
Third Saturday of the month	Summit level	Contact Dave Evans