

CUT BOTH WAYS

Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust



The Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Ian Dudson, presented
The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service certificate,
signed by Her Majesty, The Queen,
to our President Eric Wood. (See centre pages)

Issue No. 102
Winter 2019/20



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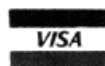
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A new decade, and, ever the optimist, I hope that during these ten years the ever accelerating progress made by the Trust will see us able to open up the Ogley Locks section of the old Wyrley and Essington Canal, which we have of course renamed The Lichfield Canal.

We finished the last decade with the “high” of the actual presentation of The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service on 6 November. We were one of just six voluntary groups in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to gain the award in 2019, and we are one of only seven canal restoration trusts in the country to have ever gained this prestigious award.



I used the phrase “ever accelerating progress” above: that progress will be reported in more detail elsewhere in this edition, but it is astounding to witness the weekly changes that our superb teams of volunteers make. And that progress is so visible that we are gaining more and more support (and a few grumbles, of course – but very few!) from passers by who join as members or who join as volunteers or who simply congratulate us on what we are doing.

Those gains in numbers are also very much down to what I think I am correct in saying has rarely, if ever, featured in CBW: the superb website and social media reach that our dedicated and hardworking experts achieve. There is a snowball effect from these and from our very visible progress.

On snowballs: we haven’t had any – yet.... but, my word, have we had rain! It doesn’t seem to put our stalwart volunteers off- they just find inventive ways to overcome the problems. While not crucial to the restoration progress which the “heavy brigade” stalwarts have achieved despite the weather, the “never mind the rain” spirit saw about 40 of us Carol Singing just before Christmas at Fosseyway, under Wacker Neuson canopies, braziers constructed by Duke of Edinburgh volunteers, mulled wine and mince pies donated by Fradley Co-op, May Brown and Hunnypot Cottage while the heavens opened. Lusty singing and enjoyment typifies the LHCRT indomitable spirit! Despite having put fliers around the adjacent housing estate they clearly don’t share our imperviousness to the weather!

Pretty upbeat so far! It shouldn’t imply that we haven’t got headaches and challenges, because we have. There are constant battles with all forms of bureaucracy: HS2, Highways England, Network Rail are the ongoing ones, but gradually advances are being made due to the diligence and persistence of those Directors and Officers spending hours and hours on their computers on emails, research and reports, on their phones and in meetings.

Not newsworthy like the physical progress, but without all that “behind the scenes” work the physical progress could not happen. If you can help with any of that “unsung” work, please get in touch. And on that note, thanks to those several people who have offered their help with H&S, finance, funding, legal assistance.

Chris Bull, (Chairperson)

Welcome to the board Steve Webster

Steve has been working with us as a volunteer for a few years now and has been co-opted to the board as plant and operations director.

Steve has a wealth of experience as a service technician at Wacker Neuson, so really knows his way around all of our plant. He's already been keeping our over-worked machinery going, as well as building bridges, an “Oss” and ensuring our workparties have all the machinery they need. His appointment to the board means that he will now be able to have a bigger input into the planning and strategy of our work



Record numbers of Duke of Edinburgh volunteers

The Duke of Edinburgh award is about helping young people along the “path to a productive and prosperous future”. Part of that experience is a three or six month volunteering placement. We've had a long record of young people joining us for their volunteering, with Harry, Luke and Josh over five years ago.

But now, word has spread and we have a record number of Duke of Edinburgh volunteers (16 at present). They come from a range of schools; King Edwards and Netherstowe in Lichfield and Bishops Vesey in Sutton Coldfield, joining us at the weekend to help.

All Correspondence should be addressed to :- Trust Secretary,
Dora Hancock, 2, Elias Close, Lichfield, Staffs. WS14 9TX

Membership rates are:

Adult £10; Family £15; Junior (under 18), Student, Retired or Unemployed £6;
Group (Clubs & Societies) £25; Small Business £100,
Large Corporate £200; Life Membership £200,
Family Life Membership £300 (includes children up to age 18).
To join, please contact the Membership Secretary (see above),
view our website www.lhcrt.org.uk or email members@lhcr.org.uk

GALLOWS WHARF NATURE TRAIL

Find attached photos from Gallows Wharf Nature Trail during the visit by WRG Forestry Group (2 days) the Veolia (2 days) and JLR (2 days) with the finished new hard stone Nature Trail path fully opened for use by the community

A great example of the amazing work that can be achieved by the Trust with the help of visiting corporate volunteer groups and friends



The opening of this section of Nature Trail at Gallows Reach is a significant milestone achievement towards the restoration of the Lichfield Canal and allows us to divert the public along this new path while the Trust takes the steps to expose and restore the original towpath and canal wall through this area.



Peter Buck, (Engineering Director)

Donations to the Trust: 1st October to 31st December 2019

Donations during this period from individuals and groups, plus ancillary items, totalled £13,061 including those to the Tunnel Vision Appeal plus Gift Aid tax claims for UK taxpayers who completed the required formalities.

Assistance in this period was given by the following, in alphabetical order;

Site work:-

- Balfour Beatty Vinci corporate teams.
- BT Corporate volunteering day.
- Chasetown Civil Engineering Ltd, site materials and plant.
- Jaguar Land Rover corporate teams.
- Laing Murphy O'Rourke JV for HS2, corporate team.
- Netherstowe School student activity.
- Savilles, Lichfield, corporate team.
- Seasalt Ltd, corporate team.
- South Staffordshire College, carpentry students.
- Queens' Croft School, Lichfield, regular volunteer teams.
- Veolia Waste Management Co., corporate team
- Walsall College, bricklaying students.

Events:-

- Grasmere Christmas Fayre, Brownhills, 23rd November.
- Swinfen Hall Hotel, Lichfield, Christmas Carols by the Trust's "choir".
- "The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service" presentation by the Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent, 6th November.
- "Transportation Professionals" magazine article survey.
- Trust Autumn Show, Whittington Village Hall, 30th November
- Carols on the Cut - our annual sing-song with mulled wine, this year at Fosseyway Heath.

Other activities:-

- Caja Ltd, consultancy input for National Lottery grant development.
- Lichfield City Council project management support.
- Lichfield Mayor & Sheriff's charity fund-raising events including LHCRT.
- Talks & Walks donations from several groups.

And all L&H Trust volunteer teams on...

- Canal restoration, plant maintenance and repair;
- 'Green and Grounds' Team, planting and vegetation control;
- Maintenance of Heritage Towpath Trail.
- Sales and marketing team and all the volunteers behind the scenes.

Our sincere thanks to all.

Welcome to New Members – 1st October to 31st December 2019

Mr C Aston, Burntwood
Miss S Mallett, Fradley
Mr S Broadfield, Burntwood
Ms S Pearson, Burntwood

Mrs S Weatherhill, Ledbury
Mr B Williams, Walsall
Mr P Bourne, Alford
Mr P Parker, Pelsall

During this period, new membership has dropped off a little. In total, we had 15 new members join our ranks, but only the eight above gave their consent to having their names published. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) requires 'consent' and we respect the individual wishes of our new supporters. Welcome to you all.

Well, the end of the year and decade, and the beginning of another, and yes it is a 'Leap' year. As the Trust leaps forward into this new decade, and year, I would like to see a leap in new members. I know that I am preaching to the converted in this publication, but I am sure that you have friends or relatives with whom you could pass on your enthusiasm and encourage them to look at your magazine, and hope that what you get from this, rubs off on them. I would be delighted if we could make the 2000 mark of members, or even more by the end of the year.

Every time I am working on one of the restoration sites, passers-by stop and ask what we are doing, and remark on how well we have done thus far. Not only me, but the other gentlemen and ladies of our work teams also get asked, and we pass on our enthusiasm to them we hope.

Each member is a financial support to the Trust and the membership fees go a long way towards restoration, and this is appreciated very much. Any project like ours is dependent on the generosity of the members, and I do thank sincerely all of you who are paying your subs. Sadly some members forget to renew each year, so if you don't already use the Bankers Order system of paying, would you consider it please. Contact me and I will send a form to you. There are some members who have not paid subs for several years, but they are still receiving the Cut Both Ways magazine. It's an expense we can't really afford, so I will be looking at this in the New Year and see who is receiving, but not paying.

And then there are the others who, not only pay their subs, but add to them a donation for the ongoing work. It might be a few pounds to round it up to £10.00 if a retired member, or substantially more from those who can afford it. Small or large, we will accept any amount with grateful thanks. A cool £40 million would see the canal restored to full navigation, but perhaps not this year, unless someone wins the lottery.

Wishing you a very Happy, peaceful and healthy New Year. Until next time.....

Brian Williams, Membership Secretary

Membership Total at **30th September** :- 1946
(Comprising 345 Adult, 956 Family, 218 Life, 416 Retired, 11 Other)

"500 CLUB" Capital Fund

Our 500 Club gives members a chance to win prizes of up to £400 every three months! 50% of the 500 Club income will be retained for capital expenditure essential for restoration of our two canals... and 50% paid in prizes to its members.

Membership renewal notices were issued in February when several members added extra numbers to increase the chance of winning four times a year. Completing our Bankers Order will make it easier for you stay in the Draw and reduce our bank charges.

In accordance with Rule 10, we report a slight revision of the 500 Club Rules in Clauses 3 and 4 regarding the extent of eligibility. A full copy of the

updated rules is available on our website.

261 subscribing members were eligible to share £391.50 in the December draw.

So please spread the word.

The winners of the December 2019 draw are (abbreviated for GDPR):

First prize £ 203.58 No 20 D. Dwyer, Lichfield.

Second prize £ 133.11 No 109 C. Buckley, Redditch.

Third prize £ 54.81 No 165 S. Faulkner, Loughborough.

The "500 Club" Capital Fund has been established to raise funds for capital expenditure on land purchase and rebuilding structures on the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals. For an annual subscription of £12 Club Members are allocated 1 chance in each of 4 successive quarterly draws. Based on a membership of 500, the maximum prizes will be:

1 st Prize	£400	approximately 26% income
2 nd Prize	£250	approximately 17% income
3 rd Prize	£100	approximately 7% income

If there are more or less than 500 members, the prizes will be proportionally increased or decreased. So the more 500 Club members we have, the higher the prizes. Remember, membership of the 500 Club is open to everyone, not just members of Lichfield & Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust.

So please spread the word. If you want to subscribe, you can download an application form from our website www.lhcrt.org.uk. Pending appointing a new administrator, please contact Bob Williams, Norfolk House, 29 Hall Lane, Hammerwich, Burntwood, WS7 0JP

(advertisement)



Michael Fabricant MP

Member of Parliament for
the Constituency of Lichfield.

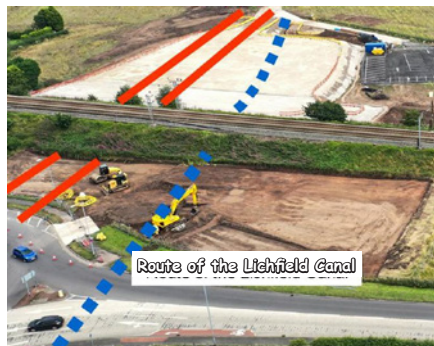
If you live in the Lichfield Parliamentary constituency, and you require assistance and think your MP can help, you can either write to Michael Fabricant at the House of Commons, Westminster, London SW1A 0AA; or you can email him by using the webform at **www.michael.fabricant.mp.co.uk/contact.html** or telephone his office at 01543 419650 where you can also make an appointment to see him at one of his regular surgeries.

(advertisement)

MORE PROGRESS

Since our last edition, we can now report that the long-awaited Lichfield Southern Bypass railway bridge was successfully installed by AMEY, the contractors, during a brief railway possession over Christmas 2019.

This mammoth task, led by Staffordshire County Council through years of detailed preparation, relied on occupying large areas of land on both sides of the embankment for plant and establishment needs. Only when the contractors will have cleared away



their site materials will it become possible for the Trust to tackle initial enabling works for the canal tunnel near the new road bridge in conjunction with other developments.

Acting with LHCRT, professional consultants CAJA Ltd, submitted an Expression of Interest in October to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a major grant under their new Heritage Horizon Awards. Given that such schemes are very competitive, it is hoped that engaging with Lottery Regional staff in January will guide our combined objectives towards the next stage, including features relevant to the canal tunnel as an essential component of the entire Lichfield Canal restoration.

**PLEASE SUPPORT
THE DAVID SUCHET TUNNEL VISION APPEAL**

LHCRT Ltd, 29 Hall Lane, Hammerwich, Burntwood, Staffs. WS7 0JP
or through our website at:

<http://www.lhcrt.org.uk/tunnel-vision.html>

Bob Williams, (Finance Director)

2019 accounts

Subject to professional examination for presentation to the AGM which we plan to hold at the Park View Centre in Brownhills in early June 2020, preliminary figures for last year are:-

Total resources brought forward	£784,760	
Income	£175,682	(51% restricted)
	£960,442	
Expenditure	(£120,454)	(47% restricted)
Asset depreciation	(£16,024)	
Total resources carried forward	£823,964	(70% in monetary funds)

98% of resources held in monetary funds are restricted to the purposes for which they were given, particularly for the Tunnel Vision Appeal, leaving little latitude for general expenditure. Subject to Charity Commission rules, Directors must apply funds at their discretion to maintain the Trust's ongoing work and planning for further projects. Additional donations are always welcome towards ongoing operational costs: visit our website at:- <https://lhcr.org.uk/mobile/m.donate.html>

Staffordshire County Council, Local Community Fund

As previously reported, the Trust was awarded a grant of £2,800 towards work around the entrance to Fossey Heath on Falkland Road, Lichfield. Delayed from 2018 by legal transfer of ownership of the land not required for the Lichfield Southern Bypass, this was finally settled in December 2019 to enable the grant funds to be released to the Trust. It has thus been possible to commence work on this new section of canal diversion alongside the highway which is very visible to the passing public, dominated by the "Iron 'Oss"!

David Suchet Tunnel Vision Appeal

Deferment of Staffordshire County Council's Lichfield Southern Bypass railway bridge project from Christmas 2018 to 2019, and revised tunnel methodology, tempered the urgency for the Tunnel Vision Fund. However, now that the bypass railway bridge has been installed – as reported in this edition - it paves the way for moving ahead with initial enabling work for the canal tunnel project. Gross income into the Fund is heading towards £600,000 which still needs to be boosted to a higher value to attract other high value funding streams but read this

Our previous report of the YouTube 'vlog' by David Johns filmed on the route of the Lichfield Canal at Fossey Heath in September 2019 is still attracting a world-wide interest with 580,000 viewings – by far the most for any of his popular canal series! There have been some surprising responses of support for our work with high regard for the magical UK Inland Waterways, several vowing to visit Britain to enjoy it for themselves. Helpful donations have come from America, Australia, Canada, Finland, Netherlands, New Zealand and even Russia! If you have not had a chance to view it.

Visit: https://youtu.be/j6_nZYR2nK4

Bob Williams, (Finance Director)

Again, at this time of the year, as I have in the past, I will remind you of some of the work that has been going on towards restoring the canal this past year. The years seem to fly past at ever increasing speed, and as I sit here trying to put in chronological order what we have done this year I have to keep reminding myself that some of the things that come to mind didn't happen this year at all but in the previous year. For example, the moving of the culvert sections from Great Wyrely to Darnford Lane happened the year before but its still fresh in ones memory. The "beast from the east" and all that.

This year started out in an altogether different fashion. The weather was much better for a start. We had loan from Chasetown Civil Engineering of an eleven tonne JCB excavator and a six tonne dumper truck to augment our own earth moving equipment. This equipment was put to good use clearing all the infill from the bed of the canal just below Lock 18 all the way back towards the steps crossing the canal. The material that was dug out was used to establish the wide footpath on the railway side of the canal. A massive undertaking that would have taxed our own ageing plant.

Throughout the first half of 2019, much time was spent on re-establishing the towpath on the field side of the canal. The brick towpath retaining wall was finally completed and the wetlands boardwalk established during the summer months. Consecutively, work in the canal narrowboat 'turning area' continued. Wall building, using both 'Moody' blocks near to the railway bridge and the concrete sandwich /concrete blocks method of construction elsewhere within the 'turning pound', continued at a pace. More sandbag wall construction was used to contain the outside of the bund wall alongside Falkland Road. To participate in the 'City in Bloom' endeavour this 2019 year some of our efforts involved the building of a half sized narrow boat on top of the above mentioned bund. This boat was coupled to an 'iron horse' across our access road via a towing rope.

Elsewhere around Lichfield canal workings, tidying up our original work area along the Tamworth Road became necessary to enable property developers to regain control of the field adjacent to the turning Pound and the narrows near to the A51. A much neater and tidier area evolved as the area was cleared of our plant, machinery and stored materials, all neatly stored in to the much smaller shed/ cabin compound alongside our site entrance.



Back to Fosseway. In late June early July, concurrent with a planned Wergie training weekend, we again had loan of a sizable excavator from Chasetown Civil Engineering and also plant on loan from Wacker Neuson. The task was to excavate the canal bed above Lock 18 all the way to Fosseway Lane.

All hands to the deck and huge volumes of infill were removed and deposited elsewhere adjacent to the work area. The canal bridge foundation under Fossey Lane was found but later back filled for safety reasons. All these excavations revealed the original brick walling above and below Lock 18, and also that below the Fossey Road Bridge. A good site for the enthusiastic brick laying students from Walsall and Chase Colleges to practise their skills on rebuilding or repairing these walls. The towpath itself on this section has been well defined and topped with hardcore and compacted. To date there is still much work required to the embankment adjacent to the canal cottage to make a permanent finished job of it.

Elsewhere along the canal route, work has started by Gallows Wharf to find the original towpath, and to find the original canal towpath wall. Huge amounts of canal in-fill need to be removed. What has been found so far is that the canal wall will need lots of repair. Preceding the work here, and due to the muddy nature of the site we established a good walkable path away from our working area to keep the residents and dog walkers happy.

Coming back now to the present day, I am pleased to relate that the strip of land running alongside Falkland Road has at last become available for us to work on. This strip of land is on the route of our canal from 'Fossey turn' to the Birmingham Road and further on to the Cross City railway line. As I explained in an earlier Blog, solely about this stretch of land, it requires a lot of work to get the levels right.

(I hope and assume you have all read it) Too high here and too low there. A lot of spoil to be relocated elsewhere. From the "Oss" the canal retaining bank has been built up with sandbags initially and later a concrete block/ concrete sandwich wall will be built to contain the canal. On the road-side, the grassy bank has been extended upwards to the height of the future towpath and is being re-turfed to blend in with the original.



That's about it this time. One problem we seem to have is lack of volunteers, particularly on Sundays. So if you can spare some time please give it a thought.

Many thanks to all the volunteers without whom not much would get done.

You, our volunteers are the life blood of this restoration.

Hugh Millington, Work Parties (Lichfield)

This may well have been the warmest winter so far for many years, but it has been persistently wet! It has affected particularly the Queen's Croft volunteers, as not only are they with us for just over two hours, they also have to walk to and from their school close to the town centre. While the rest of us have decent wet weather gear these youngsters don't, and so we've had to cancel more sessions this academic year to date than in the whole of the previous three years.

The hedge cutting on all sites which I reported in the last edition has continued and must be completed very soon before the birds are nesting. It's also been important to get the Gallows Reach and Tamworth Road to Cricket Lane trees and hedging trimmed back before the "heavy brigade" gets in with diggers and corporate groups continue laying the Heritage Towpath Trail.

We are sure that the "crew cuts" will enable much healthier and thicker regrowth, as has happened at Summerhill.

Other than hacking hedges and trees there's a lot of clearing up to do; the new petrol trimmer has come into good use, and more habitat piles are being made with the chunkier pieces.

The new bund along Gallows Reach will shortly be a "host of golden daffodils", and we transplanted the snowdrops which were growing where the towpath will shortly be made to that bund, too.

We have been transplanting turf too from where the canal channel will be along Falkland Road.





The amount of work done has been possible due to the record number of volunteers now involved with Grounds/Green work. In the last 6 months the regular turnout of adults on Saturdays has doubled from an average of 5 or 6 to 10 or 12; the Queen's Croft contingent this year is a record 17 students; we have a record 14, and still growing number of Duke of Edinburgh volunteers.

Foresters Scout Group from Yoxall are now in its 4th year of occasional, but valuable sessions.

We're embarking on a new Scout Group partnership, though perhaps I should say we're building it up: 7th Lichfield Scout Group have in the last couple of years done a few sessions of bulb planting, litter picking, general tidying with us, but right now it's produced small plaques acknowledging the 1500 or so saplings we've had for free (once we've quickly applied for them before they're all committed!) over the last few years from The Woodland Trust and which now grace Tamworth Road, Fosseway, Summerhill.

When the lighter evenings come both Scout Groups will spend a number of their sessions working for us.

It may well be of interest if I include the hard, quantitative data on Grounds/Green work at end of 2019:

- Recreating lowland heathland at Fosseway: Staffordshire has lost 80% of its lowland heathland in the last 100 years; its Biodiversity Action Plan wants "stepping stones" of lowland heathland
- Creating wetlands at Fosseway: Staffordshire Wildlife Trust's Wetlands expert is very excited about our plan
- Hard data!:-
- Now have 14 young people doing their D of E volunteering with us – a record for any one time – and totalling 300hrs for 2019
- Grounds/Green adult volunteers hours on conservation in 2019: 800
- Engagement of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities (i.e. Queen's Croft 16-19 year olds) in 2019: 455hours

Even so, I will be putting out a call for extra help in early march, as again we are due to receive a donation of 420 hedging saplings from The Woodland Trust. Come and join us and experience the fun and satisfaction!

Christine Bull (Grounds / Green Team)



All Photographs by Margaret Beardsmore and Paul Marshall.



In November we formally received The Queen's Award for Vol

The Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Ian Dudson, presented a certificate, signed by Her

The citation praised us for 'restoring a derelict canal to improve the envi



Voluntary Service at a ceremony in the city's historic Guildhall.

Her Majesty The Queen, to our President, Eric Wood and a glass award to Hugh Millington. 'for his services to the environment and for the benefit of the local community, wildlife and tourism'.

"Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now." — Alan Lakein, author.

Some years ago, our former Chair, David Dixon, introduced me to the assembled members at an AGM as the guy who does what must surely be the most boring job in the LHCRT. Christine H has challenged me to write a piece for CBW (thank you for that thought....) which I must try to make interesting to read. Now that's a challenge....



Some of you will know that I now live in Evesham, but some years ago lived in Clayhanger, which is how I became familiar with the area where our two finished canals are planned to be. One part of my job for LHCRT is receiving the lists, each week, from Cannock Chase District Council Planning Department, giving details of all the planning applications they have received. I check the locations of each application, as any which might encroach onto the land where we plan for the canal to be restored must be responded to. Happily there aren't many applications like that, but we have to check before the planning consent is granted.

You may well wonder why it's only in the Cannock Chase area... the answer is that the other local authorities have adopted local plans which include policies and maps which show where our routes are, and those routes are protected by words in the plan indicating that any application for permission to develop in that corridor of land without leaving space for the canal will be refused. Local plans are revised every few years, and generally go through several rounds of consultation over the period of years from when work starts on a new plan through to when it is adopted as legally binding. At each stage, for all four of the local districts, we get notified of the period of the consultation, and the location on the council's website where the documents are available to download. Reading all those documents, making notes of points which are positive to our cause and points where they could be more positive is the very boring task. By the time the consultation period ends, I need to have written, in polite and unambiguous business English, our responses to each of those points – and sent those responses to the relevant email address. There is usually a point at which I can check that all our thoughts have been read and understood, and (hopefully) incorporated in the next edition of the plan.

The other part of my role is the planning applications we submit for the work we are doing to build or restore structures, to dig a new section of ditch (canal channel), to form or re-form sections of footpath (towpath).

This involves working with Peter and Derek our trusty engineering trustees – to ensure we submit drawings that show what we propose to do. I generally also need information from our external Ecology person (David) who will check what wildlife of interest has been seen in an area extending to 2000m from the site we're proposing to work on. David completes a spreadsheet for each application to demonstrate that the impact of our proposed work will be positive for bio-diversity. We have to take care when we decide what to include in each application so any 'negatives' like tarmac surfacing are offset by greater 'positives' like wetland habitat and properly-maintained hedgerows.

Two applications I can remember submitting in the last few years were the one to enable a through footpath from the Boat Inn at Summerhill to Barracks Lane, Brownhills – using the M6 toll aqueduct as a footbridge – and the one for a tunnel through a railway embankment alongside the Lichfield Southern Bypass. Both those applications were granted.

Another time I'll write about how route protection is achieved, and how vital it is. I had to explain about this to an officer of the Charity Commission in a phone call some time ago. Having explained it verbally he then challenged me to write it down so he could run it past a colleague.

The Planning Officer role does include some interesting challenges, though I would rather be bricklaying. Roll-on March when the weather should be warm and dry enough for that – though I must confess I'll be working on the Cotswold Canals as that's closer to my home.

Luke Walker, (IWA Nominated Trustee and Planning Officer)

The Lichfield branch of the Inland Waterways Association has donated £500 to Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust and specified that the money should go towards the 'marvellous work party volunteers' for materials or machinery expenses.



John Bryan, commercial director for LHCRT, received a cheque from Pete Gurney, IWA Lichfield branch treasurer at its November meeting. (Picture: Phil Sharpe)

The latest donation brings to £1,600 the branch's support for 'this transformational local restoration project' in 2019.

Tom Reid, (Publicity Officer)

The views expressed in Cut Both Ways do not necessarily represent those of the Trust or the Editor. They are however published as being of interest to our readership.

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR VOLUNTEERS WITH DAY JOBS

We have a wide range of wonderful volunteers working with us and we're so grateful to each and everyone of them, but did you know that they are not all retired. We thought we'd give you an insight into some of our volunteers who have day jobs and how they find the time to volunteer.

Steve Webster

Day job: Field Service Technician

Volunteer role: Plant maintenance and operations

Working with the canal trust and holding a full time job is sometimes tiring as I put in hours on a Saturday and a Sunday, and some evenings though the summer. However the rewards do outweigh the tiring times. It gives you time to clear your head from the stress and strains of work and everyday life and it can take you to a place where you can do as much or as little as you want to your own capabilities. The trust can offer various tasks, some demanding, some more carefree, but it's all done within a friendly and caring atmosphere.



Christine Howles

Day job: communications manager

Volunteer role: Marketing, events, social media, volunteer recruitment

I work full-time Mondays to Fridays (and also have young kids), but I can always find some time to volunteer. The best time for me is at the weekends, but as part of my role is social media, I can always do a bit here and there during the day. My busiest time is when we have big events like Huddlesford Heritage Gathering, that will take up a whole weekend, but that is my choice—I like to help out so pitch in when I can.



Sarah Morley

Day job: graphic designer

Volunteer role: Work Party

I work full-time as a graphic designer from my home in Lichfield. My job makes working hours flexible and so I can usually make time to volunteer for LHCRT on a Wednesday morning. After being in front of a computer screen for hours, I always look forward to my time outside on site at Fosseyway working with a great bunch of people.



Luke Walker

Day job: project Co-ordinator

Volunteer role: Planning

My role in the LHCRT is around planning applications so is done remotely, wherever I happen to be, and mostly centres around my laptop. An early start to my day job beats the traffic and I can do my waterways work when I arrive at my desk, before the usual start time for the day job. It's not exciting but it is necessary and means I can be helping restore the canals at times that suit me. (The Inland Waterways Association has confirmed that Luke Walker will continue with us as its nominated trustee for a further three years. Luke originally joined the Trust's board in 2016.



Shaun Greatrix

Day job: design engineer

Volunteer role: design engineer

I fit my volunteering into my evenings or a free weekend day where I might spend an hour or two doing some design work. I enjoy CAD work so I can easily get wrapped up in hours of detailing. Getting to site is a bit difficult around family and work life, but an evening en-route for the food shop for a quick visit or dropping by on a free evening is an option!



Want to join us?

Even if you can only spare a couple of hours a month, visit www.lhcrt.org.uk/volunteers.html and fill in the application form or call Christine on 07852 190855 (evenings are best).

Stephen Booth's latest book, 'Drowned Lives' is a departure from the previous eighteen murders in the Peak District investigated by Ben Cooper and Diane Fry. Those stories mix real and fictitious locations in the Derbyshire hills and dales making the books especially inviting to those who love the area. This latest book has a new location which the dust cover hints at with a picture of boats on a canal. A tale of family history and rivalry from the building of a canal to the millennium. Again real and imaginary locations but canal enthusiasts will soon recognise the thinly disguised Ogle and Huddlesford Canal. A new slant mixing events of the past with recent times I recommend this book to those who like a murder mystery, residents of Lichfield, and boaters. Don't just take my word for it "Suspenseful and supremely engaging. Booth does a wonderful job"—Los Angeles Times". But past readers may wonder what Cooper and Fry are up to.

Ken Brockway

CASH BOOSTS FOR CANAL TRUST

Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust's will receive a cheque for £560 as a result of its participation in Waitrose's Community Matters scheme.

During the whole of December, shoppers at Waitrose & Partners Lichfield store were invited to place tokens in one of three boxes representing three local good causes.



The charities were awarded a proportion of £1,000, decided on the number of tokens placed in each box, and LHCRT proved to be the most popular choice.

Waitrose customers were told that the Lichfield Canal, gradually being brought back to life from its closure 60 years ago, provides a natural corridor for public recreation and wildlife habitats. The Trust, led by unpaid volunteers raising its own funds, has restored some sections in water along the south of Lichfield, and more are presently in progress.

For example, the Fosseway Heath section off Falkland Road, close to the Waitrose store, is open to the public at all times to show what is being achieved in transforming natural landscapes while preserving the heritage of this local canal in the national inland waterway system.

Meanwhile, it has been revealed that LHCRT made a profit of £8,604.67 from last year's Huddlesford Heritage Gathering.

The Gathering, a biennial event organised jointly by the Trust and Lichfield Cruising Club, featured historic boats, floating traders, private boats and classic vehicles, with exhibitors and displays on the field. The figure was about £1,000 down on 2017's, mostly due to the very wet Sunday of the two-day event, but well up on the average for the last five events.

Recent rain provides a suggestion of what the Fosseway Heath section of the Lichfield Canal will look like on completion
Picture: Tony Cadwallader



Tom Reid, (Publicity Officer)

Lichfield's canal restoration volunteers can make progress on an important part of the project after a local company generously donated two lorry loads of building material.



Chasetown Civil Engineering delivered bricks and concrete blocks for the work being carried out by Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Restoration Trust at its Fossey Heath site.

The valuable donation will allow the Trust's volunteers and South Staffs College students, who are receiving on-site work experience supervised by their tutors, to extend the curved wall taking the canal from the Fossey Heath basin via a sharp turn into the

Falkland Road section, and to add to the towpath wall below Lock 18.

The Trust's engineering director Peter Buck expressed his gratitude to Chasetown Civil Engineering, saying: "Our thanks to our generous friends and volunteers who help the Trust in so many ways to create the Heritage Towpath Trail on the Lichfield Canal for the community."

The Falkland Road length leads to a roundabout on Birmingham Road under which a culvert was constructed by the Trust in 2006/7 and temporarily buried, and then to a proposed tunnel under the Cross-City railway line.

A railway bridge was installed here over Christmas to allow for the extension of the Lichfield Southern Bypass, but it was not possible to install the canal tunnel at the same time, as had been hoped, because the railway bridge work took up all the land available.

However, the Trust received some good news when Network Rail confirmed that the work on the tunnel will not need a closure of the railway services, but just a go-slow while working.

Enabling work for the tunnel is planned to start after the land used for the bypass work becomes available, but despite the temporary reprieve, the urgency is still there.

The tunnel will have to be completed before the new St John's housing development is completed, so the Trust's fundraising campaign, Tunnel Vision, must continue.

More than £500,000 of the £1million target has been raised, but the full costs have not been finalised.

Anyone who wishes to donate should visit the Trust's Tunnel Vision Appeal webpage.

Tom Reid, (Publicity Officer)

The autumn months are usually quite quiet in terms of events but not for our industrious team.

Grasmere Gardens Christmas Fayre

With Christmas on the horizon, a small team of Bob, Dennis and Chris Aston, made their way to Grasmere Garden Centre on a cold November Saturday to offer our wares at the Christmas fayre. Luckily they were under cover—but well done team for braving the elements.

Autumn Show

The following weekend was our autumn show at Whittington Village Hall with a fish and chip supper and entertainment by the Zouch Band. A multi-media presentation on the history of 'Coal & Canals' was mixed with traditional songs and comedic commentary. Special thanks to Bev Marshall for leading on the event and arranging the catering and Sue Williams for being our box office ticket agent.



Christmas Carols

Our final event of the year was our third annual Christmas carols evening.

This year we joined forces with Lichfield Waterworks Trust for a sing-song at Sandfields Pumping Station, followed by more singing at Fosseyway with mulled wine, mince pies and other treats, plus a couple of fires to keep us warm.



Unfortunately the weather was against us but we kept dry under the gazebo and still had a festive time. (You can watch the video on Facebook or YouTube). There are so many people to thank for this event, but a special thanks to Steve Webster and Peter Buck for making Fosseyway tidy for us and to Co-op in Fradley for some of the mulled wine and mince pies plus May Brown and Hunnypot Cottage for the other delicious treats. Finally—thanks to everyone who came along, despite the weather.

Events in 2020

We're now working on our events list for 2020 and we'll include it in the next edition of Cut Both Ways. Make sure you keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for details of events as they're booked. And if we have your email address and you've given consent to receive our email newsletters, you'll receive Towpath Times with reminders about events and much more.

Christine Howles, (Events and Communications)

Cut Both Ways magazine was first published in 1993 and has since delivered over 100 issues to our members. Every issue is now available in our online archive thanks to our editor Stefan who has diligently scanned every one of the older issues and our webmaster Paul for making them all available to download or view online. From Issue 50 onwards you can view as a virtual magazine where you can flip pages and zoom-in on the screen. Older issues are available to view or download in the pdf format only at present.

You can view the archive via our website or at www.lhcrt.org.uk/cbwarchive.html

Paul Marshall (Web Master)

Tunnel Vision—seeing it through

Anyone passing by Birmingham Road over Christmas can't have missed the work being carried out on the southern bypass railway bridge.

What about the canal tunnel I hear you ask?

Well, we haven't missed the boat. Firstly, it became evident that our Tunnel Vision would have to wait for the County Council contractors, AMEY, to complete the installation of their bridge as their work has taken up all of the land available. Secondly, we've recently had confirmation from Network Rail that the work on our tunnel will not need a closure of the railway services, but just a go-slow while we're working.

So what's next?

As a first stage, the enabling work for our canal tunnel is planned to start after the land used for the bypass work becomes available. We may have had a temporary reprieve but the urgency is still there. We will need to complete our tunnel before the new St John's housing estate is completed so our fundraising must continue.

We have raised £563,878 so far towards the £1 million target, but the full costs have not yet been finalised.

Please visit our Tunnel Vision web page, if you can spare the cost of a pint (or more).

Bob Williams, (Finance Director)

For the latest pictures, news and on-line ordering of sales items,
don't forget to take a look at the web site.

www.lhcrt.org.uk

If you have received this magazine and you are not a member please
consider joining the Trust. For more details contact the
Membership Secretary (details on Page 30)

Grand Prize Draw–2019

The response to our annual Prize Draw was again very encouraging with 3,927 tickets sold at £2 each, plus donations making a gross income of £8,158, less operational costs leaving a net gain of £6,938. The Draw was made by members of the audience at our Autumn Show at Whittington Village Hall on Saturday 30th November 2019.

The lucky winners were:-

1.	02253	£750 cheque, Mr M. Lince, Burton on Trent, Staffs.
2.	04359	£250 cheque, Mrs M. Brown, Burntwood, Staffs.
3.	03251	£50.00, sponsored by a Trust member, Mr C. Jackson, Arnold, Nottingham.
4.	08907	£40.00, Dr D Mounty, Gunnislake, Cornwall.
5.	00080	£35.00, Mr D. Mellor, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.
6.	00412	£30.00, Mr P. Gurney, Stafford.
7.	01204	£25.00, Mr T. Cryan, Aldridge, Walsall.
8.	10464	£20.00, Mr P. Marrs, Aintree, Liverpool.

We thank our members and the public who supported this valuable fund-raising activity, also our willing volunteers who raised the most funds ever at various events through the year.

Copy Date for the next issue is 1st April

GRAND PRIZE DRAW - 2020

Tickets are now on sale for a new Draw this year which we hope will raise more funds – and please some lucky winners – but think of the benefit you can bring to the Trust. Thank you for supporting our work in this way, with a chance to win more big prizes this year!

Please email sponsorship to bob.williams@lhcr.org.uk or phone 01543 671427.

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**We are in desperate need of volunteers in the following areas:
finance, engineering, legal work, planning work,
project management and H&S.**

Can you spare a few hours a week, we would love to hear from you.

**Please contact Christine Howles 07852 190855
or volunteering@lhcr.org.uk**

Our Vision

**To reinstate the historic Lichfield Canal and Hatherton Canal
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Principal Aims : To promote the restoration of the Wyrley and Essington Canal from Ogley Junction to Huddlesford Junction (the "Lichfield Canal"), and the Hatherton Branch of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, and also the construction of a navigable link between the Hatherton Branch and the Birmingham Canal Navigations.

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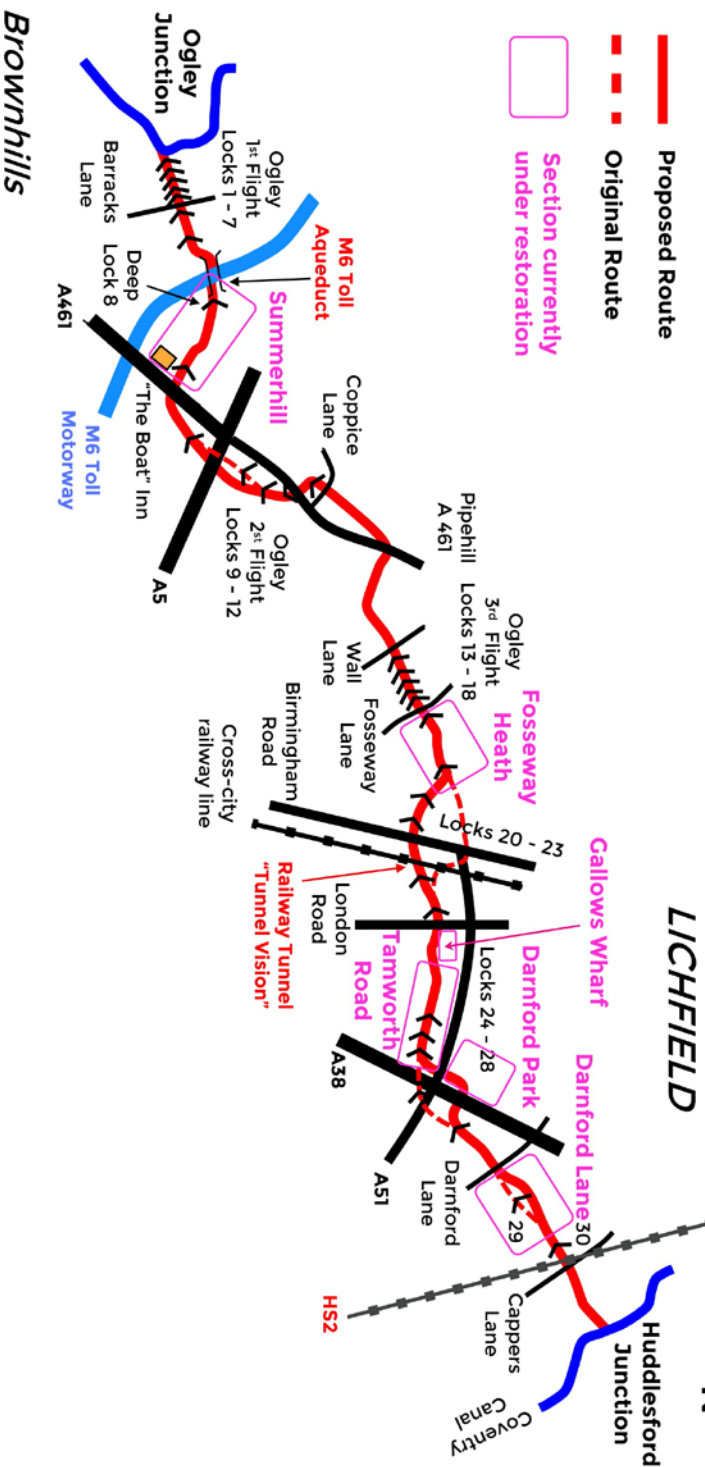
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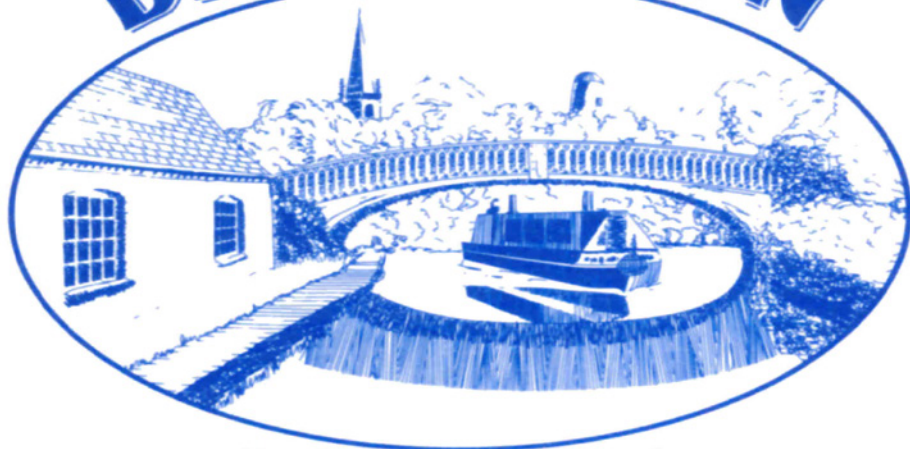
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THE LICHFIELD CANAL

Diagrammatic Plan Not to scale



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