



Shrewsbury Support Group Newsletter

11 JANUARY 2019

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 4

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Next SSG meeting is on Tuesday 15th January 2019. All are welcome – see "dates ahead" for venue and time.

WRG camp at Berwick in February. Come and help the experts! – see "dates ahead" for details.

Mid-week work parties

These are now an established feature – every Thursday (see work party timetable below). All are welcome – jobs for everyone!

Welcome to the fourth issue of your newsletter

Happy New Year to all our members!

As you know, the last SSG Newsletter was sent to a much larger circulation list than was its predecessor. I received several positive responses and only one or two 'not interested' replies. I shall assume that the large number that offered 'no response' means that you'll be happy to receive this newsletter! So, just to reiterate the two points I mentioned last time:

1. If you have not received copies of the first two newsletters, but would like to, please email me and I can send them to you. This also applies to the minutes – let me know if you'd like to be kept informed of those too.
2. If you **don't** want to receive any further newsletters, please also email me and I shall remove you from the circulation list.

Our weekly work parties did not take place over the Christmas – New Year period, but they started again on the 3rd of January, despite the freezing temperature that day. Work parties will become increasingly attractive as Spring approaches – do come and join us! Please see the work party timetable later in this newsletter.

The national Waterways Recovery Group (WRG) volunteers will be helping us at least twice in 2019 (there may be more dates to come) – once in February and again in August – see "dates ahead" for details.

Our feature writers have had a bit of a break over the holiday period, so this newsletter will be shorter than usual.

We were saddened to hear of the death of one of our most enthusiastic and dependable members. **Derek Taylor** passed away on New Year's Eve, after a difficult battle with cancer. Derek was a stalwart member of our work parties, and a tireless organiser of our presences at various fetes, fun-days and festivals. One of his lasting legacies will be the Oral History interviews he conducted for the SNCT, encouraging local residents who knew the canal when it was still in water to talk about their memories. The recordings are now in the Local Archives in Shrewsbury.

We shall miss him greatly. We send his family our sympathies.

Derek's funeral will be at Emstrey crematorium at **1.15 pm on Monday 21st January 2019**

This newsletter is complementary to the Trust's magazine, the S&N News. It is intended only to keep local members informed about what is happening and how to get further involved.

Please let us know your views.... Peter Cann (peter.f.cann@gmail.com)

What's been happening?

Work Parties

One of the problems of clearing a totally overgrown canal is that the new access it affords can attract folk that we would rather have stayed away! One of our members, taking a walk in November along the now-cleared towpath from Widows Bridge to the SE portal of the tunnel, noticed that the grills in the wall protecting access to the tunnel had been ripped off and thrown into the canal.



This is how we found it – no grills, and ready access to a dangerous water-filled tunnel.

Alistair and Andy were soon on the scene, spending a day there with a portable generator, drill and new bolts. All is now more secure than ever (we hope!)



Andy Dady busy replacing the bolts on the side grill.



Mostly completed – only the padlock to fit.

(photos by Alistair Price)

Work parties have continued to clear trees from the off side at the NW end of the tunnel. There is now a pretty clear view from the tunnel all the way along to the A5 crossing.

We were amused by Andy's method of keeping warm on cold winter afternoons.

The main purpose of this contraption was evidently to boil water for a cup of tea, which it did... eventually. But it was an attractive piece of East European kit which raised everyone's eyebrows somewhat more speedily than it raised the temperature of the water!



How can you help?

There are still volunteer vacancies in several areas: Do think about lending a hand – you'll enjoy it!

- Those liking a few hours of outdoor activity are most welcome to join our work parties. There are always jobs available for those who cannot, or do not want to, exert themselves too much, but there are also jobs that would allow you to develop your muscle power! No expertise required. Necessary safety equipment provided.
- For members wishing to help in a more sedentary way, we need help with the administration of grant applications and liaisons with councils. Again, no particular expertise is needed – help and advice will be given.

Please contact Alistair (alistairprice1@gmail.com) or Peter (peter.f.cann@gmail.com) if you can offer even a few hours per month for these projects.

Dates ahead

SSG meeting

The next meeting of the Shrewsbury Support Group will be held at 7.30 pm at the **Meole Brace Bowling Club, Shrewsbury on Tuesday 15th January 2019. All members are welcome.**

Future Work Parties

Here is the timetable for future work parties, so that you can put the dates in your diary.

We are concentrating our activities on the northwest Berwick site, where our compound is situated. The work we will be carrying out at this site can be covered by the following headings:

- clearing towpaths of vegetation
- clearing the canal bed of debris and self-sown trees
- rebuilding towpath walls
- constructing a composting toilet
- continuing with the logging project

Saturday work parties

These are held on the last Saturday of the month, and start with a safety briefing at 9.30 am.
Work party leader is **Andy Dady**.

<i>Date</i>
26 January 2019
23 February 2019

The WRG weekend

We are hosting the London section of the **Waterways Recovery Group** (a national collection of experienced and skilled volunteers organised under the auspices of the **Inland Waterways Association**) at our Berwick site over the weekend of **8th – 10th February 2019**. SNCT volunteers are most welcome to join them – come and see how the experts do it!

Contact *Alistair* or *Peter* if you'd like to join us.

Thursday work parties

These are held each week on Thursdays, and start with a safety briefing at 9.30 am.
Work party leader is **Dave Peters**.

<i>Date</i>
10 Jan 2019
17 Jan 2019
24 Jan 2019
31 Jan 2019
7 Feb 2019
14 Feb 2019

Ted Williams (edwardwilliams21@talktalk.net) is coordinating names of work party volunteers and keeping them informed of tasks, venues etc.. Please contact Ted and/or Alistair (alistairprice1@gmail.com) if you'd like to join any of these Saturday or Thursday work parties.

You have been sent this newsletter either because you are on the list of SNCT members who live in the Shrewsbury area, or you are one of our new volunteers. If you would like to be deleted from our newsletter circulation list, please send an email with the message "SSG newsletter - no thanks" to peter.f.cann@gmail.com. On the other hand, if you know of someone who has not received this newsletter, but would like to, please let me know so that I can send them one.