



Shrewsbury Support Group Newsletter

11 MARCH 2019

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Next SSG meeting is on Tuesday 12th

March 2019. All are welcome – see "dates ahead" for venue and time.

WRG camp at Berwick in February. See the report by Alistair below.

March work party date rearranged

Due to a clash with IWA's Annual Restoration Conference, to which several of us are going, we have rearranged Saturday's work party to the **23rd March.**

Our fifth Newsletter

The unseasonal warm weather at the end of February has had an effect on the natural world on the banks of the canal. At a recent Berwick work party we saw several yellow brimstone butterflies looking for their first nectar meal of the season, and at the same place a small bed of bluebells on the bank, recently cleared of overgrowing ground ivy, seemed already to be in bud.

As the weather continues to improve, the towpaths will begin to dry out and become less muddy, making canal restoration what it should be – a pleasant, not-too-energetic, sociable and worth-while open air activity!

Although this newsletter has been slightly delayed, and so will not give you much notice of our next SSG meeting (see the box to the left), do try to come along if you can. One of the items on the agenda will be the future role of these meetings.

We seem to be becoming one of the more popular venues with the various branches of the Waterways Recovery Group (WRG), which is good news for us. Alistair has written a report for this Newsletter on the most recent weekend, when we hosted the London Group in February, and they are aiming to join us again in June. The National WRG group will be spending a week with us in August, and would like to hold their 'bonfire bash' on our canal in November. We are also arranging a weekend for the North West WRG group, sometime in the autumn.

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

The Thursday Group have spent the last few weeks capitalising on the good work the WRGies did at the start of February, clearing the length of canal from Widow's Bridge southwards to the road. This section is now clear of overhanging vegetation. We have cleared a culvert under the towpath that is fed by a land drain, and have attempted to divert an adjacent land drain into this, but with only about 80% success so far.

The Saturday work party at the end of January saw the completion of the hole-digging for the composting toilet at Berwick NW, and the superstructure is beginning to look rather smart in its shiplap cladding.

WRG AND LOCAL MEMBERS' WORK PARTY, February 2019

Over the weekend of the 9th and 10th February 2019 our friends at London Waterway Recovery Group came to Berwick. Early plans to use our excavator at Berwick N/W and make a start on the towpath had to be delayed so the camp was moved to Berwick S/E. This proved to work out well allowing LWRG and local members to clear huge amounts of seventy years of uncontrolled growth. In particular the forestry group used a winch to pull some very heavy timbers out of the canal bed.



Either side of Widows Bridge is now clear, leaving smaller debris for our Thursday work parties to tidy and clear along with some large branches on the towpath.

We were pleased to welcome a visit from Chairman, Bernie Jones especially as he came bearing and serving cake cooked by his wife Ann. Despite everyone being full of cake work continued, especially to the east of Widows Bridge where we were able to thin the very thick undergrowth on the off-side bank. The canal on this side of the bridge is very silted and shallow but it is hoped to dredge some of this once we have some machinery on site.



We were very lucky to have dry and sunny weather to work in but as you would expect this early in the year a bonfire was a very welcome sight to go and stand by and have a warm.

It was very exciting at the end of the weekend to stand on Widows Bridge and be able to look in both directions and see water in a canal bed and to think back to less than twelve months ago, to a time when standing in the same position only foliage was visible.



Work parties through the rest of February and into March have built on this, continuing to tidy this section. Looking into the future we hope to install a gate and some information signs before moving back to the North West cutting where we plan to start on levelling the all ability path. Most problems which caused the delay in bringing the excavator on site have now been resolved enabling the speed of work to step up a level.

Anyone interested in visiting or helping at a work party can contact Alistair on 07980 123444 or alistair.price1@gmail.com.



The canal viewed from the Uffington/Berwick Wharf Road.

Alistair Price 10th March 2019

How can you help?

You may be surprised (!) to know that.....there are still volunteer vacancies in several areas. Think about lending us 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 just 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 11th March 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. Ted Williams will let you know before each work party whether we'll be working at Berwick NW or Berwick SE.

Saturday work parties

These are usually held on the last Saturday of the month (but note that the March date is the **THIRD Saturday, not the last Saturday**), and start with a safety briefing at 9.30 am.

Work party leader is **Andy Dady**.

<i>Date</i>
23 March 2019
27 April 2019

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>
14 March 2019
21 March 2019
28 March 2019
4 April 2019
11 April 2019
18 April 2019
25 April 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.