

## Editorial

Spring is here. Even though we are missing Reports from a couple of our hard-working groups this time, you will see there is plenty going on, and good numbers of volunteers turning out.

But our groups can always find work for more willing hands. So if you are reading this on the website, or if you have subscribed by email but not become part of a working party, please don't hesitate to contact the group leader whose work programme appeals most. We have everything, from light gardening-type work to full-blooded groundworks and construction. Not to mention countless behind-the-scenes tasks, but they are a bit beyond the scope of this newsletter.

I do know that one of the hardest parts of volunteering is taking that first step, and if you are met with too many obstacles along the way then potential new people are likely to get put off for good. So can leaders please check the directory and calendar sections and let me know if any of the information is not up to date?

I must acknowledge the valuable input by visiting groups, notably London WRG who fielded a large team to help out with work near Compasses Bridge on 7/8 February. There's still plenty left to do for our own groups of course.

A couple of events are coming up. On 19 April there is the River Arun small boat cruise, which is important to us because it helps maintain the right of navigation on the upper part of the river. And on the day before we have the WACT AGM in Cranleigh, with a chance before hand to visit a couple of interesting sites on the canal. Full details will appear in the upcoming *Wey-South*.

*Bill*

## The Mrs Bucket Group (keeping up appearances on Mondays)

On a bitterly cold, but sunny day in early February, working with the hedge laying group, 13 of us cut the hedge and cleared the towpath all the way from the Harsfold causeway north to the landowners' boundary, over a quarter of a mile. All the cuttings etc were disposed of.

The following Monday, working with Ian Burton, we continued with the planting at Tickner's for screening which we had started last November. The area was covered in clay which was heavy to dig and we mixed it with the soil we had brought with us to make a better

medium for growth. Our thanks to Dave Kersley who went off to obtain extra canes just when we needed them. More remains to be done so we may return in March.

For our third meeting in February we decamped to Lee Farm causeway and widened the overgrown towpath by cutting back the brambles and disposing of them. Unfortunately it rained heavily just as we were having a late lunch so we need to return to finish off the last 50 yards as far as the lock. A job for March?

We meet again on 2 March, 16 March and 30 March; if you would like to join us please contact John Empringham for the venue.

*Nick Wood*



*Mrs Bucket's Monday Group at work (picture by Martin Burgess) and on mid-morning break (picture by Roger Wilson)*

## Thursday and Sunday Group

The Thursday & Sunday Group - responsible for the heavier construction type work, mainly to the north of Loxwood - meets at 09:30. Because the TSG work has taken the group to a number of different sites, a work briefing form has recently been emailed out before the working day. Please email Eric Walker if you want to get on that circulation list.

*Eric Walker*

## Tickner's Heath Depot

February turned out to be quite a quiet month with little happening at the depot. We did however venture into one of the sheds where a trailer had been languishing for months, only to find that the brakes to one of the wheels had seized on. So Mick Jones and Richard Powell set to with a will to try and sort it out. They found that the cable had rusted solid to the wheel. Their efforts to free it proved fruitless, so while waiting for Dave Kersley to find a new cable they turned their not inconsiderable skills to the electrics of the beast. We're pleased to say that they were more successful and at least one part of the trailer is serviceable.

Dave Kersley then enlisted the help of David Robson to remove as much as possible of a pile of kindly donated hardcore. Luckily David is a bit of a man mountain and hopefully managed the task without too much effort.

We did manage to supply some equipment to the TSG with the help of Danilo; thank goodness for one useable trailer. The only trouble is he keeps coming back for more.

Whilst trying to find a 2in pump for the above we found that a Kubota we had earmarked refused to run properly so at least this proved to be a job in which the team could expend a bit of its energy and time. All that remains now is to manufacture a foam filter for the air intake and it will be useable again.

Well as I said not much this month; all the best  
*John Smith*

## Mid Week Working Party

We had excellent numbers each Wednesday in February, apart from a cancellation on the 4th. Even that day, some of the team went down to the Compasses - Farnhurst towpath and did a fine job clearing scrub and brambles.



**The Mid Week Working Party did have a break from Shalford for one Wednesday during the month, working on a length of canal at Birtley, removing fallen trees and overhanging branches from the canal, as the before and after pictures show. (Dave Verrall)**

## 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	Enquiries to David Daniels pending appointment of new leader
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
Tuesdays or Fridays	Work in Lording's area	Contact Tony Clear for details
Various Tuesdays	Hedge Laying	Contact Keith Nichols
Saturday 18 April, 2.30pm	WACT Annual General Meeting	Cranleigh Village Hall
Sunday 19 April 19 April	River Arun boat rally	<a href="http://www.weyandarun.co.uk/events2.php">www.weyandarun.co.uk/events2.php</a>

There has been more successful work at Hunt Park, clearing low growth and overhanging branches but much still remains to be done.

A landowner gave us permission to do some clearance work on his stretch at Rushetts, two multi-stemmed trees were removed by hand and logged. Sadly, once the frozen ground had defrosted a couple of volunteers cars had to be rescued! Two new volunteers joined us that week.

I'll be looking to move the team down to the operational stretch for tidying work over the next few weeks.

*David Daniels*

## Hedgelaying Team

'Allo, 'Allo All. February has seen the continuation of laying, bramble removal and general tidying up at Brewhurst Lock with four days worked. All the work on the towpath side has now been completed. The staking and binding has been advanced at the western end of the offside to the field boundary with just an hour or two of laying and binding at that end left to do.

The beginning of March will see us back in the coppice for coppicing for more stakes and binders plus a final clear up there, plus the last finishing touches at Brewhurst Lock. We will then move on to pastures new.

One final comment on what we have done at Brewhurst Lock is that on each day we have cleared up and burnt dog poo in that area, be it just on the ground or exquisitely packed in a plastic bag and left decorating, a la Christmas decorations, hanging in the hedge. A lovely job which shows the care and attention that some dog walkers have for their fellow man. One was even found hanging on the 'poo fairy' sign. Would you 'Adam & Eve' it?

With that lovely picture in your mind, this is René, signing off until April.

Future gatherings of the clan will remain on Tuesdays for the time being.

*Keith Nichols*

## Loxwood Canal Centre

The Canal Centre will be open from 11am until 4pm every Saturday, Sunday and Public Holiday until the end of December and it is also open from 1pm until 5pm every Tuesday and Thursday.

To make room for new stock, we have a spring sale of clothing, including rain jackets that are waterproof and breathable, gifts and souvenirs.

Over the winter months we have managed to gather together a number of second-hand copies of *London's Lost Route to the Sea* and other canal books.

*Lyn Nash*

## Loxwood Link Maintenance Unit

We have completed the stoppage on Brewhurst Lock in record time on 28 February. With a 09:30 start, we had stop-planks in, blockage of culvert cleared, stop-planks back out and everything cleared away in under an hour and a half!

So that then left us plenty of time to travel down to Drungewick Lock and deal with what we believed to be a fallen bush below the lock. Wrong - it was in fact two substantial trees of which three quarters were submerged. Thanks to some sterling work from my team we cleared the lot and even logged the trees. On the return we stopped just short of Drungewick Lane and again had a tree to deal with. Short work was made of it and with these things done we have completed the essential work ready for the coming season with three weeks to spare.

These jobs, along with maintenance of all the lock gates/paddles completed the previous weekend, gives us a few weeks to do some non-essential trimming on the offside banks over the next couple of weeks. I'm pleased to say the canal looks the best it has for a long time.

A big thank you to our visiting and regular groups for all the hard work they have done over the winter.

*Kev Baker*

Name	Group/Project	Tel	e-mail
Julian Cheek	Maintenance coordination	01483 505566	<a href="mailto:julian_cheek@weyandarun.co.uk">julian_cheek@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
David Daniels / Northern Office	Visiting working parties, MWWP etc	01483 505566 Mon-Thurs 8.30-12.30pm	<a href="mailto:support@weyandarun.co.uk">support@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Vacant	Health & Safety Officer		Volunteer required please
Eric Walker	Loxwood Projects	07717 855340	<a href="mailto:tsg@weyandarun.co.uk">tsg@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Vacant	MidWeek Working Party		Contact David Daniels (above)
John Empringham	Monday Group	01483 562657	<a href="mailto:mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk">mondaygroup@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Kev Baker	Loxwood Link	02380 861074	<a href="mailto:loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk">loxwoodlink@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
John Smith	Tickner's Depot	01903 235790	<a href="mailto:depot@weyandarun.co.uk">depot@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Tony Clear	Winston Group (Lordings)	01903 774 301	<a href="mailto:winstonsgroup@weyandarun.co.uk">winstonsgroup@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Keith Nichols	Hedge laying	01403 753882	<a href="mailto:hedging@weyandarun.co.uk">hedging@weyandarun.co.uk</a>
Bill Nicholson	Northern working parties	01844 343 369	<a href="mailto:bill@nwpg.org.uk">bill@nwpg.org.uk</a>
Bill Thomson	Working Party News	01903 744767	<a href="mailto:bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk">bill_thomson@weyandarun.co.uk</a>