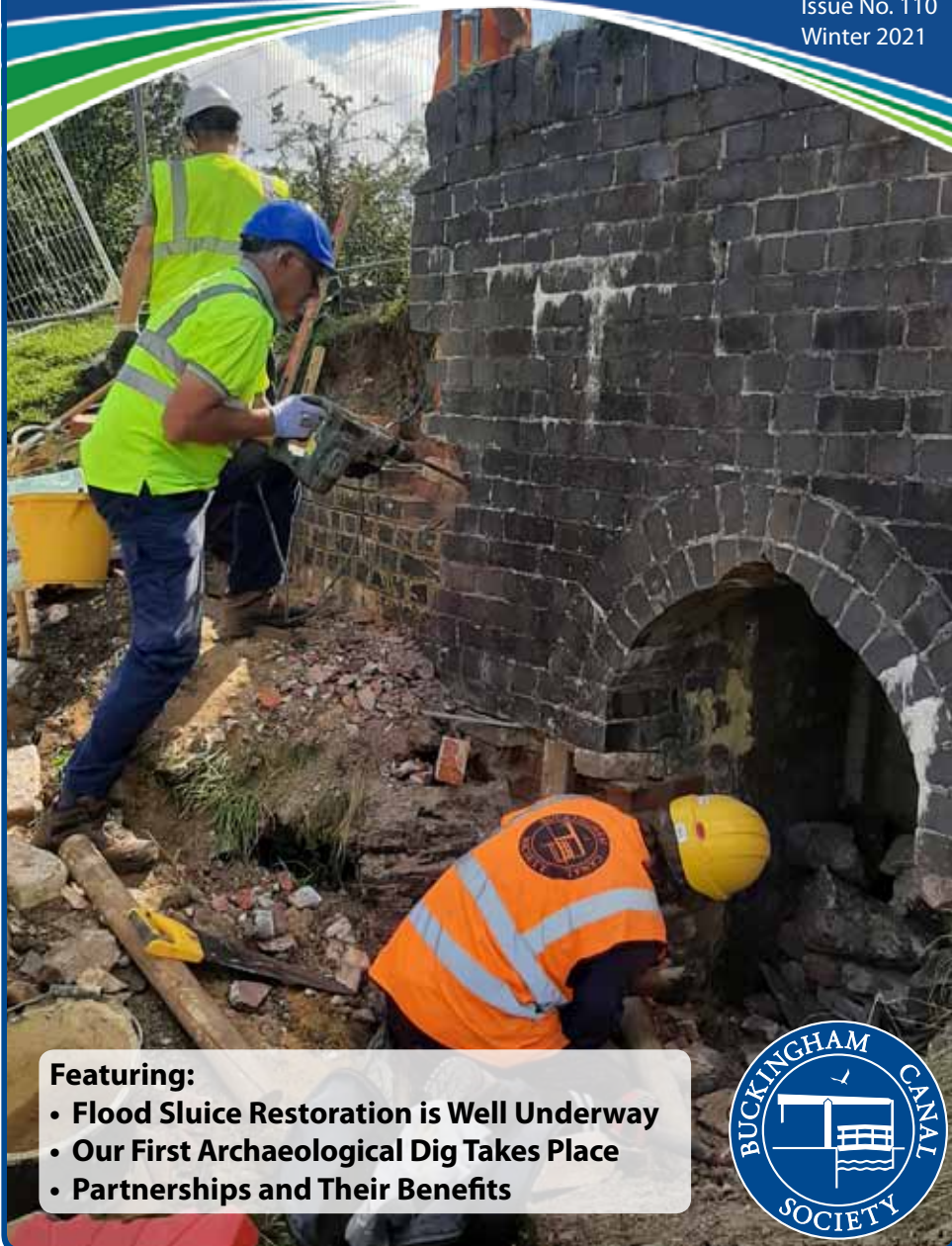


THE BUCKINGHAM NAVIGATOR

The Newsletter of Buckingham Canal Society

Registered Charity No. 1156662

Issue No. 110
Winter 2021



Featuring:

- Flood Sluice Restoration is Well Underway
- Our First Archaeological Dig Takes Place
- Partnerships and Their Benefits



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Buckingham Canal Society's work to restore the waterway to Buckingham

Please re-use this publication which incorporates a variety of information about some of our activities, to promote the work of the Buckingham Canal Society to a friend / neighbour / colleague / relative or other interested people.

Editorial

Welcome to the Winter 2021 edition of The Buckingham Navigator!

Here we are at the end of yet another year of difficult circumstances and continued uncertainty, not knowing what's around the next corner. Needless to say, the Society and our volunteers have soldiered on, making the best of the cards we've been dealt.

Much progress is being made, both on the ground and 'on paper'. Pieces of the puzzle are slowly coming together to enable us to progress further toward the A5. We have now had our first exploratory archaeological digs along the route, and work will commence on uncovering the remains of Bridge No.2. It's still a long way off, but the end result seems just that much more tangible indeed!

Thank you to all the contributors. Cover photo: Volunteers working on the flood sluice near to Bridge No.2 © Alan Mynard. See page 6 for an illustrated account of the progress being made. **Why not drop me an email about what you enjoyed in this issue, and furthermore, why not contribute ideas or articles for future editions (see page 29). In addition to our website, we now have a wide social media presence:**

Please visit our website at: www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Follow/Like us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/buckinghamcanalsociety

Reach us on Twitter at: www.twitter.com/bcsocietyuk

Find us on Instagram at: www.instagram.com/buckinghamcanalsociety

Watch us on YouTube at: www.youtube.com/buckinghamcanalsociety

Finally, and on behalf of us all here at Buckingham Canal Society, I would like to wish you a very Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year. Thank you.



Ian Matson
Editor

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Restoration Site Update



© Alan Mynard

Looking toward Bridge No.1 and Cosgrove, this pair of swans appear to have taken up residence on the re-watered Section 1 at Cosgrove. We are eagerly waiting to see if they start nest building next spring.





© Terry Cavender

© Alan Mynard

By October, restoration of the flood sluice (main picture) and its culvert discharge headwall (inset) at the base of the embankment near Bridge No.2 was well underway, and clearly demonstrates the excellent skills of all those involved.

All Change at Cosgrove

Well, here we are hurtling towards the end of 2021. So, what have we achieved and what's next?

The Bigger Picture

Change is as inevitable as the seasons, and the recent change of land ownership and the associated planning application for warehousing development is indeed a huge change for Cosgrove. Whilst we as Buckingham Canal Society have no control over our neighbours or the use of their land, we have been approached by the new owners who are very supportive of our restoration activities. For clarity, the current plans as published at snc.planning-register.co.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=112384 for the warehousing don't block the restoration route. So, I'm hopeful we'll see even more progress as a result.

Bridge No.2

We have now formally exchanged a land access licence (i.e. the permission to cross the field) and are finalising a lease and the CDM 2015 (Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015) paperwork with Canal & River Trust, so the final pieces of the paperwork jigsaw are in place to enable the excavation of Bridge No.2.



The flood sluice near Bridge No.2 has kept our team busy re-building and pointing both the main structure (above) and its discharge headwall (below) that is situated below.



I Much Prefer Leeks to Leaks!

We have also received puddle clay (below, left) for attending to the leaks on the re-watered arm. This has been provided by Canal & River Trust and has come a long way from a place near Wrexham. This is because the clay has to be of a certain specification for puddling in slit trenches (below). The good news is the 'fix' seems to be working on the first leaks we actioned, and as I write, plans are afoot to have hopefully progressed this further by November this year.



Growing leeks has always been a passion of my neighbour who has won the award for winning the annual village show the most times ever. And very nice those leeks are too. Apart from the leaks in the canal which are being worked on, our 'new' second-hand bright orange Hitachi 16t has been having a few goes at sprouting its own leaks of hydraulic fluid. Our thanks to Alan Mynard who has done some sterling work to identify the latest one which was fixed with a spanner whilst being somewhat of a contortionist. Hopefully this has much reduced the old girl's drinking habit, because those drums of hydraulic oil were very heavy to carry over to her!

Terry Cavender
Trustee and Executive Officer

Bourton Meadow

At Bourton Meadow, our volunteers (right) have been hard at work as Buckingham Town Council had an upcoming Otter trail (using sculptures, not real ones). This ran from the town centre through Bourton Park with a series of ten different Otter sculptures set in place to make a walking trail known as the Buckingham Otter Trail. We had our own Otter (again, not a real one) at Bourton Meadow from 23rd July until 31st August which had meant the site was visited by many extra visitors.



Our volunteers had worked hard getting this site into shape for this trail, removing several tons of reeds which were blocking the canal bed. This work was achieved using our new reed cutting machine alongside volunteers donning waders to remove reeds manually, which proved very popular in the summer months. We were helped in completing these tasks by volunteers from the external organisations Network Rail and Hallam Land Management Ltd.

Keeping Up Appearances

With volunteers spending most of the summer months at Bourton Meadow, our Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve site at Hyde Lane had become rather overgrown. With plenty of Stinging Nettles covering the seating areas and towpath, plenty of strimming was needed. Volunteers were back there from Sunday 12th September clearing the nettles from the seating areas and strimming the towpath and canal bank. Again we had extra help on Thursday 14th October, this time with a group from RS Components (right, top) who are based in Corby, Northampton. This was a new venture for them as their company had just given each staff member two volunteering days per year, and we were the first charity or group they had chosen, so it was quite a responsibility for us but I think they enjoyed themselves.

Our own volunteers are continuing the practical tasks at Hyde Lane on alternate Thursdays with there still being plenty of work to do which includes clearing the remaining parts that have become rather overgrown, clearing the lock area (right, bottom) and painting the lock gates. Before the year is over, we plan to plant wildflower beds at this site along the non towpath side.

Because of the work now being carried out by our volunteers, we seem to be attracting more and more wildlife. On Thursday 28th October a Grey Wagtail and Great-spotted Woodpecker were seen in the reserve at Hyde Lane.

Finally, plans are also in place to install a wooden bridge over the stream at this site, and volunteers have been clearing the non towpath side so that footings for the bridge can be put in place and the bridge installed at a later date.



Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

Do You Dig Canals?...We Do!



Work parties are now held every Tuesday, Thursday and the second & last Sunday of each month and are always friendly, welcoming and very rewarding. Most Tuesdays and Thursdays, as well as the second and last Sunday of each month will take place at Cosgrove. Some of the other dates will be at Bourton Meadow or Hyde Lane.

Further information can be found on page 28, and more detailed information about these and extra curricular dates can be found by visiting our work parties web page at:

www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/events-and-news/work-parties/

If you would like to become involved, please contact either myself or Terry using our contact details on page 30.

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

Health & Safety Refresher

Buckingham Canal Society has a duty of care to its members, volunteers and the public to comply with the Health & Safety legislations in place.

BCS operates work parties under terms of Insurance provided through the Inland Waterways Association. As a part of this, we work within many of the principles and methods of Waterway Recovery Group.

You will always be given a Health and Safety briefing for any work party. All work parties involving construction machinery, often referred to as plant, will require that you confirm you have watched the Waterway Recovery Group's Health & Safety video (via the link below) within the past twelve months.

The video contains important Health & Safety information that all new volunteers need to know. All volunteers are required to watch this video before they go on site in order to find out about Waterway Recovery Group's on site Health & Safety.

This video is only an introduction to site safety, and does not remove the need for a volunteer to have a full briefing about a specific site/project.

For full details of the Waterway Recovery Group's Health & Safety policy and additional documentation and videos, please visit:

www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk/wrg-health-safety-video/

For more information about Waterway Recovery Group, please visit:

www.waterways.org.uk/wrg

Buckingham Canal Society News

We're Back on the Festival Circuit...and Our Stall Needs You!

In a normal year I would be out and about attending many of the local festivals with the Buckingham Canal Society stall. This would not only get us publicity and a chance to meet up with people who may not have heard of our Society, but also provide a much needed income for our restoration efforts. In a normal year the stall would raise something like £2,000, and as all the items we sell are donated, all of those funds go directly to our cause.



This year most of the early festivals which we would have attended were cancelled, but in late summer two local festivals went ahead. My partner Jonathan Brown and I took the stall along to the Great Linford Manor Park Celebration Event (above). This was run by The Parks Trust - Milton Keynes, and took place on 18th September. Our second opportunity took us to The Riverside Fair at Stony Stratford on 25th September, which was organised by Stony Stratford Riverside Parks Group.

Both events proved to be a success and we are hoping to continue attending festivals again next year. **If any members are interested and would like to be involved, this would be much appreciated. Please get in touch using my contact details on page 30.**

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser

We Finally Have a Memorable YouTube Channel Name!

Woo-Hoo! STOP PRESS! We now have more than one hundred subscribers to our YouTube channel! Why is this important I hear you ask? Well...this means I have been able to give us a proper channel name rather than the unmemorable list of random characters you will have used previously. **From now on, our YouTube channel is: www.youtube.com/buckinghamcanalsociety.** Why stop now...the more the merrier!

Alan Mynard

Website Administrator and Archivist

When Is a Duck Not a Duck?

Our partners in the form of Canal & River Trust have now been able to provide a tug which will reside with our Society on a long term loan. Named Shoveler, it is has been moored alongside the hopper and our workboat Louise, ready for working with our dredging plan. Over the run up to Christmas, the team are taking the tug to London and bringing workboat Perseverance (aka Percy) from where she has been moored at Southall in the Canal & River Trust dock.

Oh, and by the way, Shoveler IS the correct spelling. It is named after a species of native and very colourful dabbling duck, sometimes known as the Northern Shoveler! For clarity, here are a couple of piccies of the little tug and its even smaller namesake...



We Have a New Community Engagement Worker

Welcome to Becky Hall who has been appointed as our new Community Engagement Worker. Aimee Tidman has left us to take up a full-time job with The Parks Trust, and we thank her for her work with us and her good humour. I am sure she will thrive in her new role. Becky will introduce herself in the next edition of this newsletter.

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

The Autumn Statement

As you may have noticed, my presence was absent in the last edition, for which I can only apologise for, unless it was a relief, for which I apologise for being back.

Now is the time we reflect on the passing year. We have, despite the vagaries of COVID-19, continued to progress the Society's aims. We have built on our fleet of boats and now have two workboats, an inflatable, a hopper, and a tug (on near permanent loan), and as such we have had to promote Commodore Cavender to Vice Admiral.

Athina has engaged with our corporate volunteers, and it was good to have them back on site. We have a new Community Engagement Worker - Becky Hall, who will build on the sterling groundwork of Aimee Tidman who has gone on to work full time for The Parks Trust. Our archaeology volunteers have been on site for ten days and discovered a Bronze Age barrow ditch. They are due to return later next year.

Work has started on rebuilding 'cow corner' by the lock. The first section of restored canal at Cosgrove has increased in depth along with an increase in leakage which, thanks to help from Waterways Recovery Group, we have ameliorated. For the observant amongst you, you will have noticed that the compound by Bridge No.1 is looking somewhat smaller at present and a new compound has appeared by Bridge No.2. This is to help with the development of the fourth section down to the A5 as well as the descent challenge and access road. The second section is now looking more like a canal and even the third section leading to Bridge No.2 has some water in it. All very positive indeed.

We have also done some work for Canal & River Trust including towpath work, repairing the leaking horse tunnel at Cosgrove, and replacing old (or in some cases placing new) signage.

Lots of work has gone into strengthening our relationships with not just local landowners, but also new councillors and old, with the formation of the unitary authority bringing new challenges and opportunities.

We attended the IWA Festival of Water in Worcester, and for those who tried the link, we live streamed events so that you could be there in your armchair. It was a fantastic weekend with some money raised, and perhaps more importantly lots of engagement and education. Plans are already taking place for next year's event at which we hope to see everyone.

Our very own Cosgrove Canal Festival & Craft Fair will hopefully be back next year. As well as our boat traders, we will have a limited number of towpath traders and hopefully our craft fair in Cosgrove village hall. **If you would like to volunteer to assist with the setup, clear up or assist on the day with operating the lock or any of the other myriad of activities, then please drop me a line and let me know using my contact details on page 30.**

All that remains is to wish you Splendiferous Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Rob Morris
Trustee and Chairman

The Autumn Wildlife Report

The Songbirds Fade Away on the Summer Breeze as Autumn Rolls In

As autumn draws to a close and winter beckons, I begin to compile the reports covering August to October from local walkers Michael & Diane Hunt at Bourton Meadow. This time, reports have also been sent from Athina Beckett at Hyde Lane and Alan Mynard at Cosgrove. It seems to have been an uncharacteristically quieter period at Bourton Meadow, although this may be reflective of less frequent visits through this autumn. Birds, Reptiles, Amphibians and Insects are represented.

It would appear on the surface that breeding successes may be down on last year, with only Whitethroats and Reed Warblers having been reported as successful. Worryingly, there have been no visual or vocal reports of Sedge Warblers at all this year.

The Dragonflies (order Odonata, which contains the sub-orders Zygoptera (Damselflies) and Anisoptera (Dragonflies)) are represented too, in seasonally smaller numbers, with some being quite late into the autumn, as I have personally experienced myself. A single Butterfly was also noted.



Kingfisher-male © Ian Matson

BIRDS: What turned out to be a rather successful and prolific summer for all forms of wildlife at Bourton Meadow, has now given way to the somewhat quieter months of autumn. The first report dated 11th August illustrates a very quiet morning indeed. The highlight of the morning was a stunning **Kingfisher**. Not uncommon in these parts, it is probably more often heard than seen, and if the latter, then as a quick azure - cobalt blue flash along the river. Another bird more often heard 'laughing' than seen was a **Green Woodpecker**. Finally, representing the Warblers was a single **Blackcap**. Males have the black cap, whilst females' are brown. Unfortunately it wasn't stated which.

Mid autumn and Michael notes that on the morning of September 20th, a single example of another, or perhaps the same **Blackcap** was noted. With several regularly noted in my own area through the winter months, is this a fairly late migrator or a potentially overwintering bird? There have been so many late records of birds which would normally have migrated by now, especially the Hirundines such as the **Swallow**, which as I write is often reported along the southern or coastal areas of Hampshire. A noisy **Jay** was noted nearby, and a lovely russet tinged **Reed Bunting** too. It is unknown if the latter bred along the canal this year.

The next report, although undated, is presumed to be mid October or later. A master fisherman in the shape of a **Grey Heron** was observed along the canal bank. A first amongst these pages for this site, three diminutive **Meadow Pipits** were seen. These must be regular here as the habitat in the local area is ideal. Two **Pied Wagtails**, close relatives of the Pipits, were also seen in the area.

Finally, in a report dated 28th October at the Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve at Hyde Lane, Athina Beckett reported seeing a **Great-spotted Woodpecker** and perhaps more excitingly, a beautiful **Grey Wagtail**, another first for the seasonal reports, although I did photograph one at Bourton Meadow all the way back on 10th November 2013!

REPTILES: A single **Grass Snake** was recorded by Alan Mynard on 7th September swimming the canal at the western end of the wood at Cosgrove, and was reckoned to be over a metre long. Another example, described by Michael Hunt as “splendid” was seen sunning itself at Bourton Meadow on 20th September.

AMPHIBIANS: A **Common Frog** was observed hurriedly crossing the towpath to reach the water on 20th September.

INSECTS: August 11th was very quiet, and revealed only one **Blue-tailed Damselfly**. Butterflies were represented by three **Gatekeepers**. Finally, around mid to late October, Michael also reported that six **Common Darters** and two **Migrant Hawkers** were seen.



Migrant Hawker - male © Airwolfhound is licensed under Creative Commons CC BY-SA 2.0

An Introduction to the Charming Meadow Pipits and Grey Wagtails

How great indeed it was to hear that Meadow Pipits have been seen at Bourton Meadow, and a Grey Wagtail at Hyde Lane! Both species belong to the family *Motacillidae*. At only 14cm, the Meadow Pipit is the smallest of our six breeding species of Pipits and Wagtails, whilst the Grey Wagtail is our largest, averaging around 18-19cm.

The scientific (or latin) name for the Meadow Pipit is *Anthus pratensis*, and as you will read, could easily describe its size and a preferred habitat quite nicely. The generic name (genus) *Anthus* however, is a little clouded in mystery. According to some sources, this latin word means ‘small bird that inhabited grasslands’ as described by Roman naturalist and natural philosopher Gaius Plinius Secundus aka ‘Pliny the Elder’ (23/24 - 79 AD). The word *Anthus* also appears in Greek mythology as the name of someone metamorphosed into a bird by Zeus and Apollo after being devoured by his father’s hungry Horses. This he brought unto himself through a foolish act of his own doing. Make of that what you will! The specific name (species) *pratensis* is more straight forward and literally means ‘found



Grey Wagtail - female with insect © Ian Matson

in the meadows', itself taken from the latin word *prati*, meaning 'a meadow'.

The Grey Wagtail's scientific name *Motacilla cinerea* has a little ambiguity in its origins too. The generic name *Motacilla* is, according to some, derived from

the Greek *muttex*, a word described by the Greek grammarian Hesychius of Alexandria (5th century AD) to indicate 'small birds linked to aquatic life'. Perhaps this reflects the fact that the species is commonly seen foraging along the edges of fast flowing streams, rivers and even canals it would seem. Other sources suggest that it is a derivation of the latin *motare* meaning 'to move about or shake', but some also note that from medieval writers, a linguistic invention or misunderstanding of *cilla* to mistakenly mean 'tail' came about. So, in essence, this led to 'little shaker or wagger', hence 'Wagtail'. Like the Meadow Pipit, its specific name *cinerea* is a little more literal and is derived from the latin *cinereus*, and when translated means 'ash-coloured', which itself is taken from the latin *cinis*, meaning 'ashes'.

Plainly marked with a fairly heavily streaked chest and flanks, orangeish legs and a thin bill, Meadow Pipits are often given away when flushed from ground cover by making an alarm call, or when flying over, a high pitch mono-syllabic 'ist-ist-ist' call. Their springtime song is so much more beautiful to hear though, whilst ascending from and descending back to the ground somewhat in the manner of a Skylark.

Generally a bird of upland moors, Meadow Pipits tend to move further south to more lowland areas of moorland, heathland and farmland in the winter months, often joining more southerly residents and congregating in small flocks, therefor becoming more common in the south of the UK in these long cold months. Migrants will of course head further afield, as far as north Africa. A ground nesting and primarily insectivorous bird, much of a Meadow Pipit's downtime is spent on the ground and out of sight amongst grasses and vegetation foraging for insects and spiders. Perhaps surprisingly, in winter a variety of seeds are also consumed. I would certainly recommend listening to the song online in readiness for next spring if you are not already familiar with it.

Grey Wagtails are one of our most beautiful and colourful small birds and absolutely full of character. With blueish grey upperparts and lemon yellow underparts from the chest to the undertail coverts, the species is sexually dimorphic too. Broadly speaking the males possess a dark slate grey throat whilst females display a variable amount of white underparts across the flanks and belly, and also the throat. Often given up when disturbed almost seemingly underfoot, they will rise and relocate with a series of three to four excitedly high pitch notes, often returning once any perceived danger has passed.

Often found by fast flowing streams and lakes, Grey Wagtails tend to be more sedentary, although they are often seen in a wider variety of habitats through winter than they are

in summer, such as farmland, lowland streams and suburban areas, including gardens, to which I can testify! Being entirely insectivorous, these highly mobile birds are usually found foraging along the banks of the aforementioned streams looking for, amongst other things, aquatic insects, crustaceans and flying bugs upon which to feast. It is hereabouts that they nest near to, amongst stones and vegetation.

Both species are resident breeders and passage migrants in the UK, with Meadow Pipits being bolstered by migrant breeders (as well as passage migrants in spring and summer) and holding around 2,500,000 territories in total in 2016, mainly in the north and west. By comparison, Grey Wagtails held a mere 37,000 territories that year, mainly on higher ground throughout the UK.

Meadow Pipits are our most numerous upland songbird, although since the 1970s, numbers have been on the decline, with some localised increases in some southern regions and Scotland, resulting in the species being placed on the conservation Amber List. Grey Wagtails on



the other hand have had a rather checkered history, and since an initial high point in 1974, the species has suffered an overall steep decline, albeit in a rollercoaster fashion which has seen it move from the conservation Green List, through the Amber and onto the Red List. Broadly speaking, this has been attributed to a high fledgeling failure rate, although the good news is, population numbers have been demonstrating a minor upward turn since 2012! So now I've introduced you to these enigmatic little birds, why not get out there along the canal, farmland and meadows and seek out these wonderful Pipits and Wagtails.

You Can Contribute to The Seasonal Wildlife Report Too!

Hopefully we will see more and more wildlife records for Bourton Meadow and our other sites in the coming months, and who knows, something rare or unexpected too! Do keep your eyes peeled, and not just at the sites in this report. As always, the Society wishes to thank Michael & Diane Hunt for their contributions, which were forwarded to Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust.

Please let us know of any wildlife sightings along any stretch of the entirety of the Buckingham Canal, be it restored or not. You can send your records to myself or any of the trustees using our contact details on pages 30 and 31. For further details about the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, please visit: www.bbowl.org.uk.

Ian Matson
Editor

The Archaeology Report

From September 18th through to September 27th, we had a team from Services Archaeology and Heritage Association join our own volunteers as well as Paul Rodgers (Inland Waterways Association Chairman), Amanda (Paul's wife) and lots of people from the community to do geophysics, field walking and archaeology. Nearly 1,500 hours of volunteering was done over the one week!



During that week a structure was discovered which was possibly a Bronze Age barrow ditch. This gave up no archaeological finds though. There were however a few finds made during the field walking that took place. These date the site to having been used in different ways from around the Bronze Age to the present day.



We are grateful to Services Archaeology and Heritage Association and everyone else who made this possible. We intend to do more of these archaeological weeks in the coming eighteen months or so.

This is being done as a part of the preparations to submit the planning application for the New Channel Route. This will mean that the canal can then bypass the areas where subsequent house building has destroyed the original path of the canal through Old Stratford and Deanshangar.





Amanda Robinson

Trustee, Heritage and Archaeology Lead

The Many Hats of Partnerships

In order to be able to leverage partnerships, you need to have relationships! Since becoming Executive Officer in 2015, I have actively looked to 'promote' Buckingham Canal Society and contribute to waterway restoration and operation in a range of ways to ensure that the Society is seen as a 'serious' restoration group. And I can categorically say I do see us as exactly that. So here are the key hats that I wear from time to time. Please read on for a few words regarding each.

Within Buckingham Canal Society I act as the Executive Officer as well as being a Trustee of the Society and a Director of our trading arm known as Buckingham Canal Ltd. When wearing the trustee hat, it's all about governance and strategy. When wearing the Executive Officer hat it's all about getting it done. Buckingham Canal Ltd is setup ready for trading and undertaking large value pieces of work as part of the restoration. It was also setup for trading income, such as our all new shop which is almost ready.

I attend the Buckinghamshire Council - Buckingham and Villages Community Board to represent Buckingham Canal Society, and as relevant I put forward views and grant applications on behalf of the Society. This also serves as a forum to keep the parish councils and county councillors aware of our Society and our progress.

As a member of the Inland Waterways Association High Level Panel for Waterway Restoration, we aim to share best practice and solve issues faced by restoration groups nationally. Several pieces of work have been done that help underpin the credibility of restoration, and these are often used to provide further detail of our activities when submitting planning applications to the local councils and sharing visions with landowners etc.

To enable us to safely operate the various pieces of equipment, our insurance is arranged by Inland Waterways Association and we follow the Waterways Recovery Group competency assessment schemes for which I am an instructor for several categories. A few other trustees and volunteers also hold instructor qualifications, and through this we are able to utilise the plant and such like for suitable new volunteers without having to await annual training weekends etc.

I am also currently serving a three year term as a member of the Canal & River Trust Regional Advisory Board. This is intended to help Phil Mulligan and his leadership team develop strategic and operational priorities for the East Midlands region. It gives great insight into some of the challenges operating a waterway brings and enables us as Buckingham Canal Society to start thinking about such challenges during the design of the restoration sections.

And last but not least, we have the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways which I attend as often as possible. Indeed, three restoration societies were asked to present their challenges at a meeting last year and Buckingham Canal Society was one of them. This group often will engage at a ministerial level with Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), Department for Transport or Ministry for Housing and Local Community to have adjustments considered for ensuring waterways restoration is viable at a national level. So...now to decide which hat I put on...as it is raining outside.



Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

Wearing the Canal & River Trust Hat

As many readers will be aware, Buckingham Canal Society works in close co-operation with Canal & River Trust at Cosgrove. Our Society has been formally designated as partner and approved contractor for working on the Canal & River Trust network. Our 'patch' at Cosgrove comprises the section of the Grand Union Canal from the Iron Trunk Aqueduct to the ornate stone bridge in Cosgrove village. It encompasses the whole of the Canal arm from the lock to the A5. This means that from time to time we are requested to assist with and/or undertake various tasks along these sections of canal. In return, Canal & River Trust often help us out in our restoration of the Buckingham Canal and specifically with the first section at Cosgrove. The Trust own the whole arm up to the A5 and ongoing negotiations for a lease to be assigned to our Society for the arm are reaching the final stages after stalling during the pandemic.

The Horse Tunnel

Earlier this year, a resident of one of the houses situated next to the horse tunnel that runs under the Grand Union in Cosgrove village reported to us that the canal was leaking water into the tunnel. This report was passed to Canal & River Trust, and upon inspection it turned out that a small section of the bank behind some piling had been washed away and that water was leaking through.



In June, the Trust requested the Society and our workboat Louise to assist with repairs. Buckets of lumps of puddling clay were loaded into the boat and taken up the Grand Union to the faulty bank (above), where, with expert guidance from Mike Dalzell from the Trust's Ops team, we dug out the section and packed it with clay. To everyone's relief this simple task has stopped the leak!

The Lock Gates

Over the years we have helped with the maintenance of the lock at Cosgrove, mainly by keeping the traditional black and white paintwork on the gates in good condition. Two years ago, Canal & River Trust performed some major repair work which involved, amongst other things, replacing the lock gates with brand new ones. Being new they were not painted. We expected to have to paint them fairly soon after, but were told that they should be left un-touched for at least a year in order to give the new wood time to breath and fully dry out. Due to unforeseen circumstances (a pandemic!) it turned out that it was to be two years before the painting took place. In the meantime, we had to try and explain to passers-by why the gates were bare!



In September this year we were finally able to start the work. The Trust provided the paint, and we provided the workforce in the form of two volunteer groups, one from Network Rail (who completed one pair of gates, left) and the other from the insurance company Marsh Ltd (who completed the other pair, below). The job had to be split over two sessions because of the need

to keep one pair of gates free for people to use to cross the canal without coming into contact with wet paint! Between them the groups completed the paintwork using black on the wooden beams and mechanical parts, and white on handrails and beams ends. And very smart it looks too!



The Canal Signage

Another long running task has been assisting Canal & River Trust with replacing its signage along the Grand Union. This involves removing the old British Waterways signage (the Trust's previous incarnation) and the Trust's more recent black-and-white signs and replacing them with the new blue ones incorporating the current Canal & River Trust logo.

During the summer of 2020, once we were released from lockdown, the Trust asked us to help survey the length of canal from the Iron Trunk all the way north up to Stoke

Bruerne, finding and recording all the signage along the way. We were given access to a mapping website and an app for our phones which we used to GPS locate, photograph, and describe all the signs we found. We did this over a few weeks, and it was welcome exercise, walking the length of the canal after having been locked indoors for a couple of months!



© Alan Mynard



© Alan Mynard

This summer the Trust delivered all the new signage (right) for the section of the canal through Cosgrove and up as far as Kingfisher Marina near Yardley Gobion. Since then, various teams have been out removing the old signs (above, left) and replacing with new (below). The new signs look a lot smarter than the old ones, some of which had faded so much you could hardly read them!



© Alan Mynard



© Alan Mynard



© Alan Mynard

As a part of this relationship, we are supported by Canal & River Trust through engineering advice, environmental guidance, licence fees being zeroed out, competency training and assessment, materials such as clay and paint, and much more. The most important one though is support from the Trust for the restoration we are undertaking. Behind the scenes, they are doing something for us every week and it's great to have their partnership as our Buckingham Canal Society moves forward

Alan Mynard
Website Administrator and Archivist

and

Terry Cavender
Trustee and Executive Officer

Choose Us as Your Co-op Local Cause

Please CO-OPERate and choose BCS as your fundraising cause when shopping at Co-op. We now receive 2% (previously 1%) of the total spent on shopping by Co-op members who choose us. So click away and please ask your family, neighbours and friends to do likewise.



In order to donate, you need to be a member of the co-op, so please visit their website at membership.coop.co.uk/causes/44221, or ask in your local store for details.

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

Win Big with Buckinghamshire Lottery

The Buckinghamshire Lottery is an exciting weekly lottery that raises money for good causes. Buckingham Canal Society has registered with the Buckinghamshire Lottery as a beneficiary.

Tickets are just £1 per week, and 50% of that will come directly to the Society, provided you nominate us as your preferred charity.

Each ticket has a 1 in 50 chance of winning a prize, with a top prize of £20,000. Every ticket consists of 6 numbers and each of those is between 1 and 9. There is a draw every Saturday night when a 6 digit winning combination is picked. Match all 6 and you can win the jackpot!

However, before you buy, please do not forget to select Buckingham Canal Society as your preferred charity, otherwise your money will be directed into a general charitable fund, which we do not benefit from. Good Luck!

To play and support BCS you will need to visit the Vale Lottery website to register and buy tickets at: www.buckinghamshirelottery.co.uk.

The Grants & Funding Report

We have had three successful grant applications during the last period. We have been granted £2,950 by Buckingham & Villages Community Board towards a wildlife camera project. This has enabled us to purchase a suitable camera and associated equipment which we will be erecting at Bourton Meadow. The aim of the project is to enable the canal section using a solar powered camera to live stream the wildlife for anyone to access on the internet via our website.



We also received £275 from the Moto in the Community Trust, and £300 from Waitrose & Partners, both of which will go towards our general costs

As previously advised, we were selected by the Co-op Local Community Fund for their latest annual round of funding. This has now finished, and during that period we raised £1,777.84! Thanks to everyone who took the time to enrol for membership and nominated us as their chosen charity.

As always, we are extremely grateful to all of our grant funders, without whom, the restoration would remain a dream instead of a reality.

A complete list of our most recent funders can be found on page 30.



Supported by
Co-op Members

Colin Levett

Trustee and Grants Officer

Shopping at



Supports BCS

Amazon Smile is a simple and automatic way for you to support our Society every time you shop, at no further cost to you. When you shop at www.smile.amazon.co.uk, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as at www.amazon.co.uk, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to Buckingham Canal Society, your selected charity. So smile at our restoration work and please choose to support us so that one day, we will finally have something greater to smile about...a fully restored Buckingham Canal for all to enjoy!

Funders

We are very grateful for the financial support from all of our funders. Listed below in chronological order, beginning with the latest, are our most recent funders:

- Waitrose & Partners
- Moto in the Community Trust
- Buckingham & Villages Community Board
- Arnold Clark Community Fund
- The National Lottery Awards for All England
- Co-op - Local Community Fund
- Heart of Bucks Community Foundation for Buckinghamshire - Bucks Coronavirus Stabilisation Fund
- HDH Wills Charitable Trust - Martin Wills
- Wildlife Maintenance Fund
- Buckinghamshire Council - Local Authority Discretionary Grant
- Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust - Thriving Communities Fund
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Rank Foundation
- The Radcliffe Trust
- The Foyle Foundation
- South Northamptonshire Council - Community Event Fund
- Milton Keynes Heritage Association

Patrons, Partners & Supporters

We are very grateful for the continued support of our patron:

- Lord Boswell of Aynho

We have formal partnerships with the following:

- Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust
- Buckinghamshire Council
- Buckingham Town Council
- Canal & River Trust
- Deanshanger Parish Council
- Environment Agency
- Inland Waterways Association - Corporate Member
- Northamptonshire County Council
- South Northamptonshire District Council

We are very grateful for the ongoing support of:

- Inland Waterways Association - Milton Keynes Branch
- Inland Waterways Association - Northampton Branch
- Waterway Recovery Group and their regional volunteers

We have been recognised by the following:

- Cosgrove Parish Council
- Foscote Parish Meeting
- Maids Moreton Parish Council
- Old Stratford Parish Council
- Thornborough Parish Council
- Thornton Parish Meeting

Corporate Members

Braunston Marina



Lionhearts Cruising Club



Taverners Boat Club



The Wyvern Shipping Co Ltd



Inland Waterways Association Northampton Branch

We Support:



Corporate & External Volunteer Groups

We are very grateful to all of the organisations that have ever assisted us with their volunteer groups. Listed below in chronological order, beginning with the latest, are our most recent attendees:

- RS Components
- Marsh LLC
- Hallam Land Management Ltd
- Network Rail
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - Northampton Stake
- Waterway Recovery Group - London
- Santander
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
- Kent & East Sussex Canal Restoration Group
- McAfee
- Eddyfi Technologies - TSC
- Vinci Technology Centre UK
- London Waterway Recovery Group
- Milton Keynes College
- Waterway Recovery Group -
- Bit in the Middle
- Computacentre
- Stowe House
- Stowe School
- Trees for Cities
- Argos
- Network Rail - Bletchley Maintenance
- Virgin Money UK
- Mayflex UK
- Community Payback - Buckingham
- Waitrose
- The MacIntyre Charity - Green Genies
- The Parks Trust Young Explorers
- NHBC
- G4S Secure Training Centre - Milton Keynes
- Tech Mahindra
- The Woburn Hotel

Work Party Dates 2022

January

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 9th
Sunday 30th

February

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 13th
Sunday 27th

March

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 13th
Sunday 27th

April

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 10th
Sunday 24th

May

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 8th
Sunday 29th

June

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 12th
Sunday 26th

July

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 10th
Sunday 31st

August

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 14th
Sunday 28th

September

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 11th
Sunday 25th

October

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 9th
Sunday 30th

November

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 13th
Sunday 27th

December

Every Tuesday
Every Thursday
Sunday 11th

COVID-19 and BCS Work Parties and Events: Update

Our volunteer work parties continue to align with government restrictions as and when these are implemented. All activities are run in accordance with Health & Safety Executive regulations, and are aligned with best practice in effect on the day. Please bring your own food and refreshments. The Buckingham Canal Society trustees and project teams have resumed working with some face to face meetings again, while still holding some electronic ones. Whilst we look forward to welcoming everyone back and seeing our previous volunteers alongside any new ones, please consider your own health, especially if you are in a vulnerable group, before joining these sessions. As per current guidelines as of 13th December 2021, we will require anyone attending indoor events to wear a mask unless exempt. For clarity this includes vehicles, vessels, and portacabins etc. We recognise that the COVID-19 situation has been and still remains a challenging time for everyone. If any of you need to chat, then you are welcome to call any of the trustees. Please stay safe and well. We look forward to seeing you now our work parties have resumed. Most Tuesdays and Thursdays, as well as the second and last Sunday of each month will take place at Cosgrove. Some of the other dates will be at Bourton Meadow or Hyde Lane. **For planning purposes, please confirm which date(s) you would like to attend by using my contact details on page 30. I can then verify the date(s) and the task schedule(s).**

Terry Cavender

Trustee and Executive Officer

Future Events

Tuesday 11th January 8pm

IWA Northampton

Talk: TBA

The Walnut Tree Inn, 21 Station Road,
Blisworth, Northants, NN7 3DS. Details:
www.waterways.org.uk/northampton

Thursday 20th January 7.45pm

IWA Milton Keynes

**Talk: The Panama Canal Canal -
Richard Thomas**

Bletchley Conservative Club,
105-111 Queensway, Bletchley,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK2 2DN. Details:
www.waterways.org.uk/miltonkeynes

Tuesday 8th February 8pm

IWA Northampton

Branch AGM & Talk: Wendover Arm

The Walnut Tree Inn, 21 Station Road,
Blisworth, Northants, NN7 3DS. Details:
www.waterways.org.uk/northampton

Thursday 17th February 7.45pm

IWA Milton Keynes

**Branch AGM & Talk: Wendover Arm
Update - Clive Johnson**

Bletchley Conservative Club,
105-111 Queensway, Bletchley,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK2 2DN. Details:
www.waterways.org.uk/miltonkeynes

Thursday 17th March 7.45pm

IWA Milton Keynes

**Talk: Navigable Thames Creeks -
Simon Judge**

Bletchley Conservative Club,
105-111 Queensway, Bletchley,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK2 2DN. Details:
www.waterways.org.uk/miltonkeynes

Friday 25th March 7.30pm

BCS AGM & Social Evening

Buckingham Community Centre,
Cornwalls Meadow, Buckingham, Bucks,
MK18 8AX. Details:
www.buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Next Navigator

So we are nearing the end of another issue of the Navigator and I am sure many of you are eager for more. You can be part of what appears in the next issue. There are regular items from the committee but there is space assigned to YOU, our valued members, for your submissions. I am also always very interested to hear what you think of the newsletter and comments are most welcome!

Please submit all contributions for Issue 111 (Spring 2022) by the 1st February 2022 via email, CD, or typed/handwritten letter (in that order of preference) to:

editor@buckinghamcanal.org.uk or

Ian Matson, 63 Almers Road, Lyne, Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 0BH

Advertising with us

We welcome advertisements in the Navigator to assist funding. Rates are as below. Payment is required before copy date.

Cheques made payable to "Buckingham Canal Society". 33% reduction for 3 issues.

Whole Page: £16

Quarter Page: £6

Back Page: £22

Half Page: £10

Inserts: £7.50

Contact the Committee

Athina Beckett

Trustee, Volunteer Leader and Work Party Organiser
2 Staters Pound, Pennyland,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK15 8AX
01908 661217 / 07721 319404

athina.beckett@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

**Terry Cavender**

Trustee and Executive Officer
7 Buckingham Road, Akeley,
Bucks, MK18 5HL
01280 860316
07976 629440

terry.cavender@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

**Richard Dwight**

Trustee and Treasurer
34 Hazell Park,
Amersham,
Bucks, HP7 9AB
01494 728611

treasurer@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

**Colin Levett**

Trustee and Grants Officer
47 Bradwell Common Boulevard,
Bradwell Common,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK10 9DN
07950 997177

colin.levett@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

**Jo Lynch**

Trustee, Marketing and Publicity Lead
14 Edmonds Close, Buckingham,
Bucks, MK18 1YR
07469 888419

jo.lynnch@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

**Gerry Millard**

Trustee and Construction Manager
32 Campbell Close,
Linden Village, Buckingham,
Bucks, MK18 7HP

gerry.millard@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

**Rob Morris**

Trustee and Chairman
218 Bushbury Road,
Fallings Park, Wolverhampton,
Staffs, WV10 0NT
07818 035299

rob.morris@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

**Amanda Robinson**

Trustee, Heritage and Archaeology Lead
5 Burbage Close, Wolverhampton,
Staffs, WV10 9YG
07485 109966

amanda.robinson@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

**Paul Sayer**

Trustee and Construction Engineer
Sunnyside, 25 Moreton Drive,
Buckingham,
Bucks, MK18 1JG
07825 190867

paul.sayer@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

**Anthony Smith-Roberts**

Trustee and Health & Safety Officer
Glasdir Cottage, Pen-y-Ffordd,
Treffynon, Sir y Fflint, CH8 9HU
07801 506411

anthony.smith-roberts@buckinghamcanal.org.uk



Other Key Contacts

Registered Address/General Enquiries

Buckingham Canal Society
c/o 2 Staters Pound,
Pennyland, Milton Keynes,
Bucks, MK15 8AX
0300 323 1350
info@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Jean Beddard

Membership Secretary
5 Staters Pound, Pennyland,
Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK15 8AX
01908 674447
membership@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Becky Hall

Community Engagement Lead
07885 467024
becky.hall@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Robert Jones

Minutes Secretary
8 Manor Close, Aston,
Bampton, Oxon, OX18 2DD
01993 851663 / 07792 561514
robert.jones@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Ian Matson

Editor
63 Almnors Road, Lyne, Chertsey,
Surrey, KT16 0BH
07793 451958
ian.matson@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Alan Mynard

Website Administrator and Archivist
Milton Keynes, Bucks
alan.mynard@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Keith Rawlings

Structural Engineer
Dryden, Rock Lane,
Leighton Buzzard, Beds, LU7 2QQ
07415 461917
keith.rawlings@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Illustrated Talks & Presentations

talks@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

Cosgrove Festival Team

events@buckinghamcanal.org.uk

The cost to call 0300 numbers is the same as calling a normal local or national land line. If your tariff or call package offers free or inclusive calls to landlines, numbers starting with 03 will be included in the exact same way.

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Website: www.canalholidays.co.uk Email: wyvern@canalholidays.co.uk

Members of: IWA, APCO, BMF, B&MK Waterway Trust, Wendover Arm Trust,
Buckingham Canal Society, Aylesbury Canal Society.



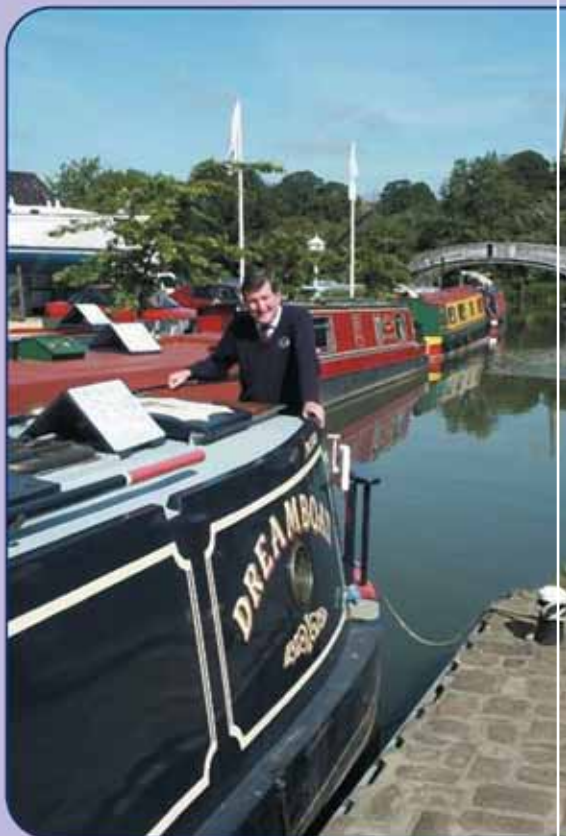
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