

# GRAND TRUNK



*Workboat Todmorden sits on the bottom  
of the Trent & Mersey Canal  
In the middle of the Middlewich Three*

*Photo Margaret English*



**March/April 2019**

[www.trentandmerseycanalsociety.org.uk](http://www.trentandmerseycanalsociety.org.uk)

## CHAIRMAN'S BIT

Hopefully everybody managed to get out during the February “heatwave” and enjoy our canal, whether it be by boating, walking, nature-watching, fishing, or some other means. We did some towpath walking, watched the cherry-blossom come out, and started preparing our boat for our Spring cruise soon. Also, this year, we watched the Middlewich Branch come back to life after the breach. The arrival of our boat at the bottom of the garden after the canal was refilled, certainly reminded us never to take things for granted just because they have been there for years!



Currently we are busy planning for our society’s AGM in May. Gillian has, yet again, found us a very interesting venue that we will have totally to ourselves that day. If you are thinking of coming along, please make sure that you tell Margaret as the venue needs to work out how many guides they will need for our guided tour. Also, Margaret needs to know what food you will want so that it can be pre-ordered.

At the AGM, as well as discussing the accounts and electing officers, this year we plan to adopt a new Constitution. See page 10 for an explanation of how our society got itself into “a bit of a mess” back in 2009-11, and what we are planning to do to sort it out. Adopting a new Constitution will, hopefully, be a big step on the way to resolving the problem.

Finally, a reminder that (unless you are a life member) it is time to renew your membership. The relevant form should be enclosed for all members who pay by cheque/cash. Those who pay by Standing Order will NOT have a form, as they don’t need to do anything (unless they have changed to a new bank account and didn’t transfer their old standing orders – in which case, please contact us).

## Editorial

Hello everybody! Spring seems to be approaching, and I can't wait to go cruising again. In the meantime, I heard complaints from Middlewich residents about the closure of 'the white bridge across the stream (sic) to Big Lock pub'. The result of my investigation is shown on page 13.

As we were about to go to press I received a reply to my enquiry from CRT. They state that the bridge had been found to be unsafe and had therefore been closed. There are no plans to repair it immediately. The biggest problem at present seems to be some usage of the bridge even though it is closed off.

I have asked CRT to publish a stoppage notice to alert boaters to the problem at Big Lock, as it is now much more difficult to access the offside of the only wide lock on this end of our canal– *and they have done it!*

On a cheerier note, it would seem that the erstwhile Middlewich Narrow-boats dry dock may become operational again, and neighbourhood planning for the town includes recognition of the importance of the canal network and rejuvenation of the through-town area.

*Watch this space!*

*Hope to see lots of you at the AGM.*



Please send contributions for the next issue to me, Margaret English, by e-mail to [margaretetlm@hotmail.com](mailto:margaretetlm@hotmail.com), by post, or by hand. Remember, this is *your* magazine. Contributions from the South especially welcome!  
Last date for inclusion in the June/July edition is **01/06/2019!**

## A visit to historic Pontivy

With the weather last September continuing to be hot and sunny we decided to stay in the Brittany region and walk beside more canals. Our next canal-side campsite was in the town of Pontivy where the Canal de Nantes à Brest joins the canalised River Blavet. The canal itself continues for 13½ miles to Guerlédan although this stretch is probably only navigable by canoes nowadays. A dam was built at Guerlédan thus stopping navigation on the canal through to Brest. The dam at Guerlédan took 7 years to build and measures 147ft high by 675ft long.



We walked along the towpath to the centre of Pontivy and visited the Tourist Office which, since 2010, has been aboard the peniche “Duchesse Anne” on the River Blavet. The vessel dates from 1927 and was originally built to transport goods

but in the 1980s was converted into an hotel boat. In the past the Blavet provided an indispensable source of water for Pontivy and allowed the development of fisheries, tanneries and mills along its bank.

Built on a hill and overlooking the Blavet is a 15th century castle which is currently being restored. Pontivy also has an attractive old town with narrow streets and half-timbered houses.



In the main square of the town there was a display of colourful umbrellas “hanging in mid-air”.

In 1802 Napoléon Bonaparte began turning the small town

of Pontivy into a large town bearing his name. During parts of the 19th century Pontivy was called “Napoléonville”. Napoléon built barracks, wide roads, a town hall, courts and schools. Next to the River Blavet we could see what was once the old provision store where straw and hay for the garrison horses were kept – it was built at some distance from the soldiers barracks and the main part of town in order to reduce the risk of fire.

Napoléon chose Pontivy because of its central location between Brest and Nantes and because it was on the River Blavet which could be canalised as far as Lorient on the south Brittany coast and linked to the future Nantes to Brest canal. These waterways offered a route between the major ports in Brittany and eliminated the risks of possible sea blockades by the British fleet.

The town hasn’t turned its back on the canal and river and all the locks and bridges were decorated with masses of flowers making for a very pretty scene and we spent a very enjoyable couple of days walking along the towpath.

*Annette & Terry*  
NB *Emily* and Steamboat *Sidney*  
Kennet & Avon Canal

*I didn't have room for this snippet last time.....Ed*

**A pub worker has told how she hauled terrified passengers out of a taxi that was sinking into the Trent and Mersey Canal.**

Michelle Joyce was first on the scene after she saw Charles Payne's vehicle plunge into the water at Fradley Junction, taking six passengers with him. As the family screamed with terror, Mrs Joyce managed to haul each of them out and then ring 999.

Burton Live previously reported that Payne drove into the canal minutes after picking up his fare from the Swan pub car park opposite the canal.

Now Mrs Joyce has told how she had been drinking with the taxi family before the incident and was walking out of the pub as the drama unfolded.

She said: "I went out of the front door to go home and they went out of the back door to catch their taxi.

"The taxi came out of the car park and I thought they aren't going to turn. I just dropped everything I had when I saw what happened.

"The car door was already open and I was then pulling them up on the side of the canal.

"There were iPads and handbags going everywhere. It was a bit like Coronation Street.

"I got them all out and they huddled together.

***This is how Derbyshire Live first covered the Charles Payne court case***



"The taxi driver was in shock, he was panicking.

"I knew a bit of first aid from when I worked at a nursery, and I was trying to calm him down because his heart was racing. He was fine."

She said the whole front of the cab was submerged and

she could hear the crackling radio.

Mrs Joyce said: "I think there were six passengers in the taxi, the youngest being 11 or 12 years old. He went to hospital as he was sick from the shock.

"His mum was quite shaken up. It was so unreal. You just don't expect it.

"It was just chaotic. I think the whole thing lasted about 10 to 15 minutes.

*From Derbyshire Live October 2018*

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## **TRENT AND MERSEY CANAL SOCIETY**

### **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Members of the Trent and Mersey Canal Society are hereby given notice that the 2019 Annual General Meeting will be held at:

**ETRURIA INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM  
ETRURIA VALE ROAD  
ETRURIA  
ST1 4RB**

**On Saturday 11th May 2017 at 10.30 am  
(Room open from 10.15 for welcome tea/coffee)**

*A picnic/sandwich meal will be provided after the meeting.*

**The visitor's car park will be available for attendees.**

**The AGM will take place in the warehouse, followed by lunch in the visitors' centre. A small shop is situated here.**

The Etruria Industrial Museum is the home of Jesse Shirley's Bone and Flint Mill (Etruscan Mills) which was an important supplier to the pottery and agricultural industries from the early 1800s to 2011. It is located at the junction of the Trent and Mersey and Caldon Canals which since their opening in the 1770s has provided an ideal location for various industries due to its excellent transport links. Etruria Wharf, located on the site of the present car park, was very important in the conveyance of goods to and from the various factories in Etruria, Shelton and Hanley. A horse drawn wagon tramway ran across what is now Etruria Vale Road, between the houses on the opposite side of the road and up the hill to Hanley. A statue of James Brindley (1716 – 1772, the most famous canal engineer of the era, is located opposite to the visitors centre.

Following lunch, there will be an **optional** talk on the history of the site, and a video of the bone mill in steam, followed by a guided tour of the site. No payment is required for lunch, but donations to help with the cost of the tour will be very welcome. Please note that the site lacks disabled access.



Existing committee members who retire by rotation do not need to be nominated for re-election. Nomination of any other member for the committee must be in writing and must be proposed and seconded by paid up and voting members of the society. The nomination paper must contain the signed consent of the nominated person.

No motion can be dealt with at the AGM unless such a motion has been included in the formal notice of the meeting. Nominations of persons to the committee and details of any motions to be considered by the AGM must be received by the secretary at her home address by Thursday 11th April 2019, otherwise any motion or nomination cannot be accepted.

### **There will be a special resolution to adopt a new constitution**

Everyone is welcome, but we do need an idea of numbers for catering purposes. We also need to know your choice of sandwich (the alternatives are **meat, fish, cheese, egg or no preference**) and whether salad should be included. Any special dietary requirements also need to be mentioned. Please therefore let Roger and Margaret know before 27th April (by phone or email) if you will be attending the AGM, would like to go on the tour, and your lunch requirements.

*Margaret English*



## **The Need for a New Constitution!**

Recent changes to the Charity Commission website have made us realise that there was a serious oversight by our committee in the period 2009-11. To be specific, the Charity Commission website is now insisting that I supply them with our company number, which I am unable to do as we haven't been a company since 2010.

I have therefore searched back through our records, and also checked Companies House documentation to try and find out what happened. Unfortunately our then Treasurer (Geoff Williamson) has since died. Our then Chairman (Malcolm Turner) has moved away, but was most helpful in searching his memory when I phoned him. Here is what I found out :-

***Our committee decided in 2009 that we could save around £800 a year by ceasing to be a company, as we would no longer need to employ professional auditors, and our Annual Report and AGM could be simplified. The only additional action which they seem to have considered is that we needed to change our bank account from being a company account to being a charity account. At no time was there any thought that they should discuss the proposed change with the Charity Commission, nor that our "governing documents" might need to be amended/replaced.***

I contacted the Charity Commission on 4th December 2018, explaining the situation, and asking for their advice. They aim to reply with 30 working days, but so far (after 2 months) have not done so. Whilst waiting to hear their detailed advice we have decided that we need to start moving forward anyway by adopting a new "Constitution" (which is the correct type of governing document for our current status) to replace the "Memorandum and Articles of Association" we used as a limited company. We intend to do this at our forthcoming AGM (provided that those members present at the AGM agree, of course)

Having reviewed the various model constitutions available from the Charity Commission website, we selected the "Model constitution for an unincorporated charity" as being the most suitable. (available as a download at [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/586359/GD3.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/586359/GD3.pdf)). This model can be used as our Constitution by simply inserting 3 pieces of information about us :-

A) Our name : “Trent and Mersey Canal Society”.

B) Our aims :- [These have been taken from our aims as a limited company, but updated to comply with current legal and charitable recommendations by the Charity Commission]

To promote for the public benefit the use, maintenance and development of the inland waterways of England & Wales, in particular but not exclusively, the TRENT AND MERSEY CANAL.

To promote for the public benefit the restoration to good order and condition, and the maintenance in good condition of these waterways.

To promote for the public benefit the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of these waterways.

C) Our Quorum for an AGM : “10 people” (or 10% of membership whichever is greater).

### ***Background Information :-***

Our society was founded in 1974 as “Trent and Mersey Canal Society” which was registered as charity 504079 on 11/4/75. We then changed to become “Trent and Mersey Canal Society Limited” (a company limited by guarantee), which was registered as charity 326498 on 24/1/84. In late 2010 we changed again to become “Trent and Mersey Canal Society” [which is unincorporated] but have never told the Charity Commission (even though the company was dissolved [via voluntary strike-off] on 22/11/11).



## Trent and Mersey Canal Society - Annual Accounts

<u>Income</u>	<b>2018 Accounts</b>	versus	<b>2017 Accounts</b>
Bank Interest	Nil		Nil
(Note 2) Gift Aid	£238.13		£335.18
Grand Trunk Advertising	£160.00		£160.00
Membership Subscriptions	£1,520.00		£1,510.00
(Note 3) Donations	£80.80		£254.36
(Note 4) Fund Raising	£53.00		Nil
(Note 5) Sale of Goods	£255.40		£767.28
Members Meetings etc	Nil		Nil
	=====> <b>£2,307.33</b>		=====> <b>£3,026.82</b>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>			
Accountancy	Nil		Nil
AGM & Annual Report	£90.00		£87.50
(Note 6) Grand Trunk	£766.60		£1,430.38
(Note 7) Insurance	Nil		£303.52
Meetings	£100.50		£110.00
Prizes and Engraving	Nil		Nil
(Note 8) Publicity & Recruitment	£67.70	(Note 0)	£235.71
(Note 5) Sales (Stock, Postage)	£108.66		£527.36
Subscriptions to other organisations	£71.50		£71.50
Sundry Expenses	Nil		Nil
	=====> <b>£1,204.96</b>		=====> <b>£2,765.97</b>
	<b>Surplus in 2018 (before Campaigns &amp; Donations)</b> <b>£1,102.37</b>		<b>Surplus in 2017 (before Campaigns &amp; Donations)</b> <b>£260.85</b>
<b><u>Campaigns and Donations</u></b>			
(Note 9) Burslem Port Trust	£500.00		£1,000.00
(Note 9) Canal & River Trust	£500.00		Nil
Cheshire Locks Campaign	Nil		Nil
Etruria Boat Group	Nil		Nil
IWA Chester	Nil		Nil
	=====> <b>£1,000.00</b>		=====> <b>£1,000.00</b>
	<b>Final Surplus in 2018</b> <b>£102.37</b>		<b>Final Loss in 2017</b> <b>-£739.15</b>

### Notes

0) Correction to 2017 Annual Accounts - "Publicity & Recruitment" corrected from £235.17 to £235.71

1) Ring-fenced for Anderton Boat Lift (ex-Trust) 2017 **£1,601.28**

2) Gift Aid was lower in 2018 because we had less donations with Gift Aid declared and no Life Members with Gift aid

3) Donations were lower in 2018, mainly because we had few donations at the events we attended

4) Fund Raising was higher in 2018 as we no longer use the raffle to pay for Room Hire (which is free at Red Bull)

5) Sales were down in 2018 by around £500. Costs were also down by £400 as we had little need to replace stock  
No calendars for sale this year. Also very few clothing items were sold, so we are holding lower stock levels.

Total Nominal Value of stock at end of 2018 2017 **£699.00**

6) Grand Trunk Expenses were lower in 2018 as we didn't buy any stamps or envelopes.  
In 2017 we bought 1,500 stamps (enough for 7 issues) and 2,000 envelopes (enough for 9-10 issues)

7) Insurance is shown as zero in 2018, as the invoice failed to arrive before year-end.  
Renewal will actually be £230.72 (saving £70 on 2017) after we complained about our initial quote of £342.72

8) Publicity and Recruitment costs were £170 less in 2018. We didn't need to reprint the membership forms (£70),  
and we took the sales stand to 1 rally instead of 3

9) Campaigns and Donations - Donations to Burslem Port were towards a research study  
Donation to CRT was towards repair of Middlewich Breach

Bank Balance at the end of year 2017 **£13,713.34**

## Emergency Closure of Big Lock tail bridge



Local residents were horrified when the tail bridge over Big Lock on the Trent & Mersey Canal in Middlewich was barricaded off. Big Lock is the only wide lock on the Northern section of the canal. It allowed barges from the Weaver to transport goods as far as Town Wharf for transhipment to narrowboats. The bridge services new estates beyond the canal as well as facilitating lock use. It is alleged that a crack was noticed in the bridge structure and a picture was posted on social media. CRT felt they had no alternative but to close the bridge.



The society will be keeping a close eye on developments!

*Margaret English*

## *Change of Venue for 2018/2019 season Talks*

For the coming season , all events will be held in the upstairs room at:

**Red Bull Public House  
Congleton Road South,  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST7 3AJ**



*Talks are 7.30 for 8.00pm  
(Get a drink and come on  
upstairs!)*

*For further information  
contact: Gillian Watson  
01606 835 606*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
15/03/2019	The Wooden Canal Boat Society Story	Chris Leah

Plans for the next social season are well underway. By popular request, meetings will continue to be held at Red Bull Public House and full details will be in the magazine just as soon as they are finalised.

Please do come along, support the Society and have a great evening. The usual raffle will take place, society goods will be available, and all talks are absolutely free!

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the [Trent and Mersey Canal Society](#). They are, however, published as being of interest to our members and readers

## Society Merchandise

Don't forget we still have the following exciting items for sale:



- Sweatshirts, price £15.00
- Polo-shirts, price £12.00
- Lady-fit (to clear), price £9.00
- Fleeces, price £25.00
- Baseball caps, £8.50

All these items are in dark blue with an embroidered society logo.

We also have canvas bags at £2.50.

All these items are on the sales stand and travel to meetings at Red Bull-*or*-Contact Roger or Margaret if you need items posted.

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## **THE Canal and River Trust is looking for more volunteers to ‘Join the Daves’ and become lock keepers of Cheshire canals.**

The campaign got its name because ‘Dave’ is the most common name of the trust’s volunteers.

Jason Watts, volunteer development coordinator at Canal & River Trust, said: “The nation’s canal and rivers go through such a diversity of cities, towns and villages and this is reflected in our volunteers.

“We’ve people from an amazing array of communities and backgrounds, so it was quite interesting to see such an abundance of ‘Dave’s’ volunteering with us.

“Of course, we’d love to continue to welcome dedicated ‘Dave’s and brilliant ‘Barbara’s to our volunteering teams in Cheshire.

“But we would really like them to be joined by new names and faces so that we can do even more in 2019 to ensure the county’s canals are havens for people and wildlife.”

Key qualities sought in a volunteer are enthusiasm, a friendly manner, a hands-on approach and a willingness to learn. Training will take place in spring and volunteers will be in post from April to October.



Jason added: “We value each and every one of our volunteers and appreciate everything they do to help look after our historic waterways.

“In return we do all we can to ensure they have opportunities to learn new skills and meet new people in a friendly and supportive environment.

“We believe that anything you do to spend more time by water is good for your mental and physical wellbeing, so that’s an extra benefit for everyone.”

To apply for a volunteer lock keeper role in Cheshire or to find out more, visit: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/volunteer/opportunities](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/volunteer/opportunities)

*From middlewich and winsford guardian 16/01/19*



## IWA Lichfield events

**Wednesday 17th April 2019** – “The Blue Ribbon across Sweden: Our Barge on the Göta Canal”. An illustrated talk by Nicholas Bostock. 7.15 for 7.30 pm at Martin Heath Hall, Christchurch Lane (off Walsall Road), Lichfield, WS13 8AY.

**Saturday & Sunday 18-19th May 2019** – Brownhills Canal Festival. We will be taking a gazebo containing our Branch stand with sales items and information displays about IWA to support this local canal festival and boat rally. But we will need help from members on the stand, so if you can spare a few hours on either day, or on Friday afternoon for the set-up, please contact Helen Whitehouse at [helen.whitehouse@waterways.org.uk](mailto:helen.whitehouse@waterways.org.uk) or on 01543 491161 as soon as possible.

### **Welcome to new members**

**Ian Montgomery  
Thorngumbald  
East Yorkshire (life member)**

**Graham Jeffery  
Mercia Marine  
Derbyshire**

### **Welcome back to**

**Mr and Mrs Chalmers  
Of Carefree Cruising, Middlewich  
and  
Mr and Mrs Westwell of Barnton**



**We hope you enjoy being members of the society.**

## **From IWAs response to draft proposals of HS2 routes December 2018**

.....In particular, there has been a fundamental failure to acknowledge that waterway users are not just ‘transient’ but in many locations people live on boats for varying periods of time. Unlike buildings, however, boats cannot easily be retrofitted with double glazing.

### **TRENT & MERSEY CANAL**

The Trent & Mersey Canal will be affected by three crossings over a 2 mile section in the River Dane valley north of Middlewich, from south of canal bridge 177 to north of the Billinge Green Flashes at Whatcroft. The impact of the 2016 Preferred Route on the canal is much greater than the original 2013 alignment which involved just one crossing of the canal in the area of Whatcroft.

The Trent & Mersey Canal is a linear Conservation Area throughout its 93 miles, designated for its historic and architectural significance and now used extensively for recreation. All three crossings are in scenically attractive and currently tranquil rural settings.

Construction of the proposed route will have a permanent visual and environmental impact on the Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation Area due to the height and mass of the viaduct structures and embankments and the operational noise. The proposed track level will be between 13m and 16m above the canal water level at the three crossing, and there will be a dominating view of the viaducts and embankments, rising up to 26m above adjacent land and the River Dane flood plain. It is essential to incorporate parapet or noise fence barriers at all three crossings to significantly reduce the operational noise effects of the railway.

### **River Dane Viaduct**

The southernmost crossing of the Trent & Mersey Canal is approximately 150m east of canal bridge 177, at the northern end of the River Dane Viaduct and at a height of about 13m. The viaduct and adjacent embankment will have a major visual impact on the canal and its Conservation Area, and acoustic fencing is essential to minimise the noise impact on this currently tranquil section of the canal. The nearby bridge 177 illustrates early susceptibility of this area to subsidence due to natural brine solution and pumped extraction.

### **Puddinglake Brook Viaduct**

The middle of the three Trent & Mersey Canal crossings is between canal bridge 179 at Whatcroft Lodges and the railway bridge 180A, with the canal crossed by the Puddinglake Brook Viaduct at a height of about 13m. The viaduct and adjacent embankment will have a major visual impact on the canal and its Conservation Area.

### **Billinge Green Flashes**

The northernmost crossing of the canal near Whatcroft is by the Trent & Mersey Canal Underbridge at a height of about 16m. The Proposed Scheme plan shows the bridge with the toes of the two adjacent embankments intruding on both the offside of the canal and blocking the towpath

The Whatcroft Embankment also crosses part of the larger of the two canal-connected flashes at Billinge Green, where a spit of land separates the canal from the flash.

The canal at Billinge Green Flash is an extremely popular mooring site for visiting boats and other canal users because of its tranquillity and the view of the large open expanse of water across the flash, which is rarely found elsewhere on the canals. The considerable alterations to this setting would permanently damage this experience and have a major environmental impact on the Trent & Mersey Canal Conservation Area corridor.

HS2 will also impact on the tranquillity of the occupiers of boats moored at Oakwood Marina, which is located within the smaller flash at Billinge Green, only 100m to the West of the proposed HS2 route.

There are further permanent boat moorings at Park Farm Marina which is within 400m of the proposed route.

The flashes connected to the canal at Billinge Green contain the remains of historic wooden narrowboats abandoned in the 1950s which are of archaeological interest. The area of the flash to be covered by the Whatcroft Embankment should be investigated and appropriately excavated prior to major engineering works.

### **Noise**

The Operational Noise Contour Map shows no noise fence barriers across any of the 3 Trent & Mersey Canal crossings, and predicted noise levels in the 'red' zone of 'significant impact'. It does indicate 'noise related engineering features' across the viaducts and bridge but it is not clear what this refers to or how effective it may be.



## **Join Us on a Canal Work Party**

### **Cheshire Locks, Trent & Mersey Canal Monthly work party on the third Thursday each month Jointly with IWA North Staffs & South Cheshire**

Why not join us for our monthly work parties, on the Cheshire Locks between Kidsgrove and Wheelock, carrying out vegetation management and other tasks in the fresh air and good company?

Work parties run from 10am to 3pm on the third Thursday each month (except December) and volunteers are welcome to come for a couple of hours or all day. The meeting place varies each month, so please contact us for details.

All tools and equipment will be provided. Volunteers are advised to wear old clothes, stout shoes and to bring waterproofs in case of rain and a packed lunch if staying all day.

**Contact: John Lawson**  
**07940 878923 [johnandsandra@uwclub.net](mailto:johnandsandra@uwclub.net)**

## Cheshire Locks Work Party, January 2019

On a bitterly cold (but bright) day, 8 volunteers set to work to complete the work on locks 55 and 56 (Pierpoint Locks) All painting was completed on **Lock 55** – metal paddle gear, top gate rail and metal front plate, gate cap and lock bridge rails. The lock ladder became a pristine white. The large encroaching hawthorn hedge alongside the lock was cut back (the workers wished they could have a bonfire to roast potatoes!). The brick quadrants were cleared of grass turf and weeds. **Lock 56** – The balance beam on the bottom gate was numbered and strapping posts painted. Finally, the area was cleared of litter.



**Future plans** new location – Church Lawton flight – Locks 49 – 52. These will be the first locks the team have returned to since the work parties began!

*Photos by John Lawson*

## The Wardle Canal



The Wardle Canal is the shortest canal in the UK at 154 feet (47 m). The canal lies in Middlewich, Cheshire, UK, and connects the Trent and Mersey Canal to the Middlewich Branch of the Shropshire Union

Canal, terminating with a single lock known as Wardle Lock. It was built in 1829 so that the navigation authority of the Trent and Mersey Canal could maintain control over the junction.

The Trent and Mersey Canal Act of 1831 (the society is lucky enough to hold a copy of this donated by Mr C.G. West) confirms the T &M's responsibilities concerning this stretch of water.....

“And be it further enacted, that the said company (Navigation Authority of the Trent and Mersey Canal) hereby established shall and they are hereby required for ever hereafter, at their own costs and expenses, to maintain, support and keep in good and perfect repair the said cut or canal of one hundred yards, and also the several locks, bridges, aqueducts, towing paths, culverts, works, matters, and things thereunto belonging, so as at all times to keep open and preserve the free and complete navigation of the same cut or canal to and with the other part of the branch cut or canal now in progress of making from Wardle Green to Middlewich by the United Company of proprietors the Ellesmere and Chester Canal, and to and with the said navigation from the Trent and Mersey.”

*Picture copyright Roger Kidd*

# TRENT AND MERSEY CANAL SOCIETY

Registered Charity No:326498.  
Registered Office: 10 Long Lane, Middlewich, CW10 0BL  
Telephone: 01606 834471

## OFFICERS

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*The Cheshire Locks Work Party has been busy!  
(see P.21)*