

## 2019 Work News Archive (Spring)

### January.

The first week back into the new year with a delivery of road scalping to ) make good the cleared muddy (1)



1.Road scalpings

sections between Virworthy Wharf and the Lower Tamar Lake. On this first occasion, wheel barrows were the transport of the day (2, 3)



2. Wheelbarrow transport



3.Tow path

Moving on after lunch to Vealand where burning of the brash started (4).



4.Brash burning at Vealand

**February.**

A series of photos were taken of the far hedge tree and larger bush where cutting had taken place and the new stronger mesh that had been placed on the new section of boardwalk (5).



5.Boardwalk

The following week we were once again short of volunteers but Denis kindly offered to walk the length from Vealand to note trees that had been damaged and required dealing with. Back to full strength in the third week and some of the damaged trees between Vealand and Dunsdon Nature Reserve (6) were dealt with before returning to burn more brash at Vealand (7).



6.Dunsdon Nature Reserve



7.Start of 3rd

**March.**

Once again there were insufficient volunteers to organise a work day for the first week and although still one down the following week and despite a damp start bonfires to clear brash between Puckland and Broomhill Bridge filled our time (8, 9).





8.Brash to clear



9.Where there's smoke there's fire

With a shortage of volunteers again occurring in the third week an individual survey was carried out on places where drainage water was entering the canal, where it was discharging and the effect on silt levels being left behind. Some photos were taken for our records along with the condition of the old wooden gates, accommodation bridges and damage to a wall adjacent to Puckland Bridge (10). The last two weeks concentrated on the Puckland section burning the remaining brash from last year's cutting (11) with a blaze of spring colour. (Marsh marigolds) (12).



10.Puckland bridge damage



11.Plenty to burn



12. A welcome blaze of spring colour

## 2019 Work News Archive (Summer)

### April.

With the first of our 200<sup>th</sup> celebratory walks later this month, two weeks of work was spent clearing round the various historical and archaeological points of interest along our section including the modernised accommodation bridges. (1, 2, 3)



1. Puckland part cut



2. Broomhill North side cut



3. Lana North side cut

On the 6<sup>th</sup> an opportunity arose to visit the Launceston branch with a guided walk provided by Bude Canal and Harbour Society.

A welcome break at Moreton Bridge picnic table on our Aqueduct spring conducted walk (4) Back to maintaining the canal bank at Vealand (5) and regular mowing (6).



4. Moreton Bridge – Alan, Steve, Chris, Barbara and Rosy



5. Vealand Bank cut



6. Vealand Bridge looking south

Moving on another week to Aldercott area to burn more brash (7) and note the dilapidated condition of the long since obsolete bridge (8).





7. Clearing and burning at Aldercott



8. Aldercott Bridge

**May.**

The discovery of a collapsed farm entry road requiring immediate attention led to a substantial reinforcement of the stoned culvert and rebuilding of the entry – exit ends (9, 10, 11).



9. Collapsed culvert



10. End repairs



11. Cement gap filler

Mowing the canal and bank cutting followed on during the month with Brendon Bridge to Lana Bridge section taking the priority (12) with the mowing continuing right through. This was followed up with bank cutting from Brendon to Dunsdon NR at the end of the month (13).



12. Brendon Bridge north side



13. Cut tidy and flowers left



## June,

Heading along the footpath at Vealand to the Filter Bed for a trial run with our new mower (14) there were lots of Red Campion in the hedges both sides of the canal (15) and the Beech tree was festooned with nuts (16).



14.New mower



15.Abundance of Red Campion



16.Beech nuts

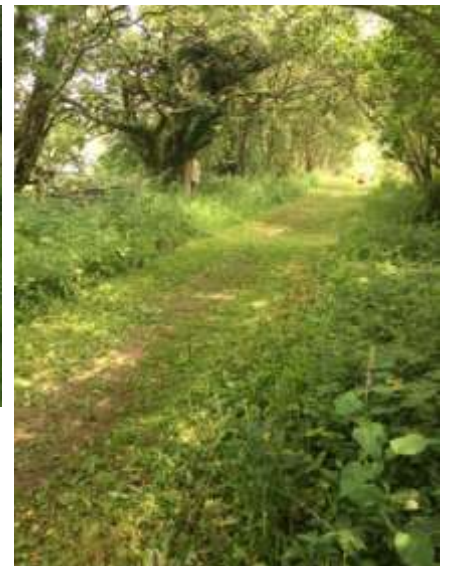
The grassed area of the Filter Beds tends to be very hilly but the mower with its front end flail coped extremely well, also mulching the new growth of Blackthorn saplings, clearing access paths into the large areas that were cleared. (18) The following week was again dogged by bad weather and unfortunately there were insufficient volunteers to arrange work for the week after. The last week of the month, with improved weather and the full complement of four volunteers, the fence line round the filter beds (17) and canal top back to Vealand Bridge were strimmed whilst the Incline Plane was cleared with our smaller mower (19).



18 Clearing fence line



17.Filter beds



19.Incline plane from bottom to top





## 2019 Work News Archive (Autumn)

### July.

Lots of new growth and leaning tree branches were identified during a general survey, with plans arranged to deal with as much as possible during the following weeks. Week two started at Puckland, tackling trees and branches of varying sizes (1, 2) with the vast majority being dealt with.



1&2. Collapsing tree at Puckland



Moving down to the opposite end of the canal the following week with the mower and strimmers we tackled the section beyond the Aqueduct Bridge over the Tamar (3) through to the gate into the next open field, at least, until the mower found it too hard to cope with (4)



3. Strimmed section of Aqueduct Bridge



4. Mower ran out of steam

Having lashed together a really temporary repair to the fence at the end of the footpath earlier in the year (5) and with the arrival of materials to make a longer lasting repair, this was completed (6)



5. Broken fence



6. Repaired fence at the Tamar

Two of the team carried on beyond Burmsdon Bridge having removed the branch overhanging the boardwalk (7) to use strimmers to clear the last few yards up to the field gate. A decision was made to leave the fallen branches on the very last section (8) until the Autumn.





7.Boardwalk branch



8.Last section of Autumn work to do

Work in the last week concentrated on the Vealand section, predominately clearing vegetation round the bridges (9) the mooring wall at the Holsworthy junction, (10) and Brendon Bridge (11).



9.North side strimmed



10.Collapsing end



11.Brendon Bridge south side

**August.**

Similar clearance work to that at the end of last month continued between Brendon Bridge and Dunsdon Nature Reserve during this first week before reports came in of a fallen tree south of Dexbeer Bridge. The path was strimmed of all the new growth (12) before tackling the tree which had already been partially cut back (13).





12.Dexbeer south

13.Partially cleared

Vegetation clearance round the bridge had to be left for another time. Chilsworthy walking group did a repeat visit to the canal on the 7<sup>th</sup> and wrote a [complimentary letter of appreciation](#).

With the second celebratory conducted walk arranged for next month further clearance of new growth round points of interest were organised for the sections of Dexbeer, (15) Moreton (16)



15.Dexbeer Bridge cleared



16.Moreton Bridge semi-cleared

Puckland Orchid (17) and Broomhill (18)



17. Broad-leaved Helleborine – Puckland

18.Broomhil Bridge cleared

Wooda Bridge (19) and pipes (20) Gadlock Bridge (21) along with general mowing and hedge cutting.





19.Strimmed	20.Tree root removed from wall	21.Yet another tree down at Cape Horn
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**September.**

We started off the month by returning to Virworthy Wharf to tidy up around the bridge (22) and the bank of the unloading wharf (23) and branches to cut down on the north side of the wharf (24).



22.Strimmed south side of Vealand Bridge



23.Strimming edge of unloading wharf pond



24.Tree to come down

Despite never having found traces of a wall on the unloading side of the wharf and various other places along the canal where mooring up of tub boats took place (Holsworthy junction) and on the inside curve of bends indicate strengthening with stone or built walls were used so, having been donated a load of assorted sized stones we decided to build a short section of wall at this location.



25.End of the first day's work

Unfortunately somebody decided to unlawfully secure the two gates at Dexbeer Bridge and after seeking advice they were opened and we placed notices on the gates (26). On the 14<sup>th</sup>, a beautiful sunny day we had the 2<sup>nd</sup> guided walk to celebrate the bi-centenary of the canal's start date. The group once again enjoyed the walk and discussions on route with a break at the halfway picnic table at Morton Bridge (27)





26.Gate notice



27.Halfway lunch break

With the hot weather holding good progress was made on the following week (28). The last week of the month and the last week of wall building, all shattered and feeling like we had climbed and dismantled Mount Everest (29)



28.Top layer to make good



29.Felt like it anyway



## 2019 Work News Archive (Winter)

### October and November.

The whole of the next two months were spent at Vealand tidying up after the far hedge was reduced by the adjacent land owners. This had exposed some trees open to wind damage, new growth as a result of coppicing and finishing the tidying up of branches left in the canal profile. On the good side, although time consuming, it provided an opportunity to clear vegetation on the far side of the canal. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)



1 First attempt to cut back branches



2. Typical result of coppicing original hedge



3. Getting stuck while removing undergrowth



4. Start of week six





5.Last section to the filter beds



6.Piles of brash accumulating

At the end of week 8 we had reached the site of an old weir and the filter beds (7). With the start of what turned out to be a long and very wet winter several trees were already starting to sag across the footpath (8).



7.Start of last section



8.Trees sagging across the footpath

Continuous heavy rain highlighted potential flooding issues that are affecting the canal and two of the committee members were invited to a "Tamar Catchment Area" meeting to raise these and potential roll on effect with the River Tamar. Silt laden water entering the canal (9) and being filtered into sediment level, so reducing a long and valuable catchment opportunity (10). The month continued with more fallen tree clearance (11).





9.Stream from Sutcombe



10.Vegetation filtering silt to sediment



11.Another leaning tree removed

## December.

Just the first week before the Christmas break was spent clearing the canal bank top between Cape Horn (12) and Virworthy Mill (13).



12.Looking back at completed clearance



13.End of section at Virworthy Mill

**Wishing all our website visitors a merry Christmas and looking forward to next year.**