

# *Sleaford Navigation Trust*



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**Winter 2021/2022**

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## The Sleaford Navigation Trust: -

... is a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales (No. 3294818)

...has a Registered Office at Island House, Moor Road, Chesham. HP5 1WA.

...is registered as a Charity (No. 1060234)

...has a website: [www.sleafordnavigation.co.uk](http://www.sleafordnavigation.co.uk)

...is on facebook: Sleaford Navigation Trust

...is on Twitter: @SleafordNavigationTrust

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## Aims & Objectives

The Trust aims to stimulate public interest and appreciation of the history, structure and beauty of the waterway known as the Slea, or the Sleaford Navigation. It aims to restore, improve, maintain and conserve the waterway in order to make it fully navigable. Furthermore it means to restore associated buildings and structures and to promote the use of the Sleaford Navigation by all appropriate kinds of waterborne traffic. In addition it wishes to promote the use of towpaths and adjoining footpaths for recreational activities.

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## Newsletters

To request an email version contact:

*secretary@sleafordnavigation.co.uk*

## Articles

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Articles and opinions in this newsletter are those of the authors concerned and do not necessarily reflect SNT policy or the opinion of the editor

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Our thanks to Westgate Print of Sleaford for their help with printing

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## Editorial

As is often the case, we bring a mixture of commemorations, sad news, celebrations and things to look forward to with this edition of the newsletter.

With only about 3 months to go, a major event in Sleaford is being planned for next March - if you'd like to be involved please get in touch especially if you have, or know anyone who has, a boat that could be launched in the top pound between Cogglesford and Carre Street - the slipway awaits you!

In the meantime, best wishes to you and your families, we hope your Christmas is wonderful.

By the way, if you're still looking for Christmas or New Year presents, don't forget that brass plaques supporting SNT are available via our website and other SNT merchandise can be bought from Navigation House.

Any contributions for the next newsletter would be most welcome, please send to the Editor by 1st April 2022

*Debbie Scott, Editor*

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## Cogglesford Watermill

The Watermill reopened on Friday 19 November after almost a year of being closed to the public.

Behind the scenes though, lots of exciting things have been happening...

The wheel at Cogglesford Watermill can now be powered by the River Slea once more following £30,500 of repair works, which have been funded by North Kesteven District Council.

Up until the site closed for repairs at the end of 2020 the site's stones ground their own flour using an electric motor after issues with the wheel were identified and the decision was taken to cease use.

The works have seen the waterwheel carefully repaired and restored by local firm RH Displays and Exhibitions, safeguarding it for future generations to see and enjoy as part of the site's authentic milling experience.

Meanwhile a further £20,500 from the Council has funded an



improved experience for visitors to Cogglesford Watermill, including new information boards and other improvements to protect and explain other features where appropriate.

To keep the waterwheel in



tip-top shape, the millers at Cogglesford will be turning the wheel weekly, keeping moisture in the wood and preventing further

damage; the weekly turning schedules will be posted on the Cogglesford website and social media channels.



RH Displays have also utilised the parts of the wheel they couldn't reuse, building some beautiful and unique furniture for the retail space. Cogglesford's shop will be the perfect place to drop in for gifts and local food items, including honey, preserves, plum bread and the mill's own stone-ground flour. Visitors are also welcome to





enjoy the lovely historic setting with a drink and snack alongside the relaxing babble of the River Slea.

With a fantastic new children's area on the first floor, a visit to

Cogglesford Watermill is an experience the whole family will enjoy.

There are some fantastic volunteer opportunities at Cogglesford Watermill – if you have time to learn a new skill (or share your existing ones) then please get in touch. In particular, we're on the



lookout for some gardening enthusiasts to keep the front of the mill looking beautiful and ensuring the area does the wonderful riverside walk justice.

Cogglesford Watermill is open Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday 12pm-4pm. Please be sure to check the website before you visit.

[www.cogglesfordwatermill.co.uk](http://www.cogglesfordwatermill.co.uk)

## Witham Slea Blue Green Corridor

After the business items at the AGM in September, those present were pleased to hear from Cllr Mervyn Head who gave an update on the Blue Green Corridor. Since then Cllr Head has kindly provided this statement for wider distribution:

We are truly fortunate in North Kesteven to live in a District packed full of natural wonder. There are nature parks and habitats, country walks under vast skies, pockets of woodland and wilderness and coursing through the landscape, the rivers Witham and Slea and



Photo: Andrew Crick

the life which occupies their riverbanks daily. It is all ready for you to enjoy, to step out and breathe the fresh air, hear the rush of water, feel the earth beneath your feet and ground yourself in such beauty. These places are vital for the survival of our native species, such as kingfishers, woodpeckers, fish and eels, otters and even water voles. Green spaces and river corridors have a

crucial role to play in theirs and the survival of many others. Increasingly also, as we seek refuge from the strain of the Coronavirus pandemic, nature is the lifeline humans cannot do without either.



Photo: Andrew Crick

Access to nature is the key to better physical and mental health. We know too, in our District of flourishing communities, that access to green space impacts positively on the economy and the health of our towns and villages as people seek out green areas in which to live. This is why we are excited to be working together as a partner in the Witham/Slea Blue-Green Corridor Project, a vision which rooted before the Coronavirus pandemic began. Together with South Kesteven District Council, the Environment Agency, vital support from the European Regional Development Fund, and co-operation with additional key partners, the Witham/Slea Blue-Green Corridor Project encompasses a number of improvements and investments.



In our District there are four projects which will be taking place along the River Slea in Sleaford, from Cogglesford Mill Bridge to the A15. These will improve the channel of the river, enhance and create new habitats while improving access for people through to Sleaford. The River Slea as it winds through the town supports much wildlife but is constrained by its brick-lined banks. This work will use bank softening techniques and in-channel enhancements to draw new life to its waters and increase the habitat for existing species.

Works will also include the enhancement of Lollycocks field in Sleaford, an open space near the town centre where greenery meets water and reeds bend in the breeze. Actions will include the creation and improvement of a wetland area there, along with the refurbishment of platforms to the fishing lake. The planting of native species such as Marsh Marigold will combat erosion along the pond. Other developments could include guides and signage to facilitate learning about the site's ecology. There will also be improvements to the current footpath to widen and stabilise it for easier access and use. The projects identified in our District are improvements for both nature and people, and we will welcome any opportunities for communities to take part as they occur.

With our residents and natural spaces in mind, our Council was the first local authority in Lincolnshire to announce a climate emergency, doing so in 2019. Since then, we have shaped a Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan and set a target for the District to become carbon neutral by 2030.

[Witham Slea Blue Green website](#)



Cllr Mervyn Head  
(Photo supplied)



## **South Kyme Friends Remembered**

Steve and Chris Hayes, together with Pat Taylor, were privileged to be invited to the dedication of a beautifully carved wooden statue of a swan on the riverbank in South Kyme on October 24<sup>th</sup>.

The swan was created in memory of John and Jean Morris, long-time residents of the village who did so much for the community and wildlife there. Over the years they rescued and cared for many injured swans so the memorial was particularly fitting.

Both were always supportive of the Sleaford Navigation Trust and their friendship with some Trust members goes back decades and provides many happy memories.



Additional carvings along the towpath depict local wildlife and add to the enjoyment of a walk through the village.



Photos: Steve Hayes

## **Another friend lost .... David James**

The Trust Directors were saddened to hear the news of the death of David James at the end of November. David was a founder member of the Sleaford Navigation Society in 1977 and maintained his interest and involvement throughout the ensuing years.

As a boater, he attended numerous local boat gatherings first with his cruiser Eslaforde and later with narrowboat Billabong. He was always ready to share his ideas and enthusiasm and was one of those people best described as a "true character". When I called them to pass on the sad news, as requested by his son Andy, every member of the committee had their own anecdote to reinforce that view, remembering David with affection and humour.

He will be missed. Our sympathy and condolences go to his wife Veronica and son Andy on their loss.

Chris Hayes



## Work Party Updates

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, five strimmers were used at Taylors Lock and the work completed in record time. Strimming of the banks in Sleaford took place later on that day and again in November. Thanks again to Sleaford REP Community Power Fund for the funding to acquire the additional equipment to make this possible.



Photo: Mel Sowerby



## Getting the word out

Following a gap of a couple of years caused by Covid-19, I have started giving talks again on the heritage and importance of the navigation.

It was third time lucky for a visit to Leasingham WI on November 18th. Unfortunately, it wasn't entirely lucky though! In preparation for the talk, I re-activated the laptop which had been dormant for quite a while. The version of Windows needed to be updated and this took some time to be achieved. The presentation too was out of date and new information and photos needed to be incorporated. All sorted, I arrived at Leasingham, set up the equipment etc. but the presentation failed to load no matter what I did!

Fortunately, I knew the material pretty well and the ladies of the WI were an understanding audience. I gave the talk and explained that, under normal circumstances, I would show some pretty pictures to illustrate the points I made. They expressed appreciation at the end of the talk, it may have been pity but thanks anyway!

A short time later I visited William Alvey School in Sleaford together with Gail Talton from the Lincolnshire Rivers Trust. I had made absolutely sure the technology was all fully functioning this time!

We were giving a presentation to 120 Year 6 pupils and I was concentrating on the history of the navigation and its importance to Sleaford. Gail was looking at the way the river was fed by the aquifer together with the ecological issues involved.

The pupils were very attentive and asked some pertinent questions. Apparently this section of the curriculum will be repeated next year and we were asked if we could contribute again then. In discussion with the member of staff after the presentation, the idea of additional co-operation with the school was raised and this idea will be taken further next year.

Steve Hayes



Supporting

*Sleaford  
Navigation  
Trust*



# WE'VE LAUNCHED OUR LOTTERY PAGE

**Buy your tickets from our page - we get 50%**

- We now have a North Kesteven Lottery page!
- Support local causes and win prizes of up to £25,000!
- 50% of all tickets sold from our page go to us!
- PLUS 10% goes to other local good causes!
- Tickets only cost £1 per week!
- Support us and win prizes - WIN WIN!

To start supporting, visit:  
[www.nklottery.co.uk](http://www.nklottery.co.uk)  
and search for:  
**Navigation Trust**



Supporters must be 16 years of age or older

## **Sleaford Festival (provisional name) Spring 2022**

At the end of November the Hub and artsNK put on an open evening to get ideas for a fairly short-notice event to be held in town next Spring.

It's to be funded as part of the post-Covid recovery grant awarded by the Government to NKDC and as such it has to be spent and accounted for by 31<sup>st</sup> March - we do love a challenge!

Because it's essentially funding from the EU moneypot, there are restrictions as well as the deadline, such as not being able to be used for capital expenditure nor as grants to individuals or individual businesses. It does lend itself though to an event including things like performances, lights, heritage and arts activities, which should encourage residents and visitors into the town, whilst bringing the community together, possibly with pre-event workshops to prepare for the main event.

Over 50 people attended the first meeting and, looking round the room, the cumulative years of experience in organising events in Sleaford over the last 30 years was immense and ideas flowed thick and fast.

Anyway, to cut a long story short at this stage, SNT was represented and we are pleased to say that the river featured quite highly on the list of suitable locations through the town and there was lots of talk of how it could be used, say for trail boats (looking for offers, anyone out there with a suitable boat?), canoes, environmental workshops, etc., which will all be good for raising the profile of the river and our ambitions.

Further meetings and working groups are being planned to develop the ideas within the relatively short timescales and by the time of our next newsletter we will be able to report on how it all went.

The provisional date for the event is around the weekend of 19<sup>th</sup> March 2022 but it's not yet been decided whether it will be an

afternoon, a day, an evening, a weekend or a week.

Nor has the name of the event been decided; Sleaford Festival is just a working title.

Social Media will be key to finding out more and the marketing teams of Lincs Inspire Ltd (parent company of the Hub and artsNK), and NKDC will be at full action stations between now and the event, so look out for updates on websites, twitter, instagram, tiktok, etc.

As SNT, we will also be sharing info through twitter (@SeafordNavigationTrust), facebook and our website so that the news will reach everyone possible.

We also hope that the event is able to bring the community together for an entertaining, inspiring, sustainable and safe event and, needless to say, we look forward to seeing you there.

If you'd like to be involved from a navigation point of view please contact the newsletter editor, or for more general ideas/offers the contact is Lucy Lumb, Visual Arts Development Coordinator at artsNK. Lucy's email is [events@hub-sleaford.org.uk](mailto:events@hub-sleaford.org.uk)



This was great fun in the old days, but it's probably not going to be a feature of the 2022 Event!

Photo from Sleaford Water Weekend Raft Race June 2003: Debbie Scott

## Useful websites:

Sleaford Navigation Trust	<a href="http://www.sleafordnavigation.co.uk">www.sleafordnavigation.co.uk</a>
Navigation House	<a href="http://www.navigationhouse.co.uk">www.navigationhouse.co.uk</a>
Cogglesford Watermill	<a href="http://www.cogglesfordwatermill.co.uk">www.cogglesfordwatermill.co.uk</a>
TourismNK	<a href="http://www.heartoflincs.com">www.heartoflincs.com</a>
Sleaford Town Council	<a href="http://www.sleaford.gov.uk">www.sleaford.gov.uk</a>
North Kesteven District Council	<a href="http://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk">www.n-kesteven.gov.uk</a>
Lincolnshire County Council	<a href="http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk">www.lincolnshire.gov.uk</a>
Inland Waterways Association	<a href="http://www.waterways.org.uk">www.waterways.org.uk</a>
Canal & River Trust	<a href="http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk">www.canalrivertrust.org.uk</a>
Environment Agency	<a href="http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk">www.environment-agency.gov.uk</a>
Blue Green Corridor	<a href="http://www.withamsleabluegreencorridor.co.uk">www.withamsleabluegreencorridor.co.uk</a>

Also follow us on facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/Sleaford-Navigation-Trust-632143133547859>

And Twitter

@SleafordNavigationTrust

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The River Sleas Clean Up volunteers have resumed their work parties - for more details of the events please see their facebook page [www.facebook.com/groups/river.slea/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/river.slea/)



## Membership Subscriptions - Action Required Please

A reminder please, that the subscriptions are now as follows.

**Individual (£10), Senior Citizen (£8), Under 18 (£8)  
Family (£15), Life (£120), Corporate (£20min)**

Please update your standing orders accordingly, if you haven't already done so. Many thanks to those who already have.

The membership application form with the latest information about subscriptions is also available on our website for potential members.

Signing up to receive this newsletter by email means that you would receive it in full colour and the photographs work much better that way. Active hyperlinks will also take you directly the more information .Contact [secretary@sleafordnavigation.co.uk](mailto:secretary@sleafordnavigation.co.uk)

### Places to Visit

Navigation House

Opening Times: Friday to Monday 10.00 am to 2.00 pm

Cogglesford Watermill

Opening Times: Friday to Monday 12.00 noon to 4.00 pm

See [www.heartoflincs.com](http://www.heartoflincs.com) for more details and up to date information on events , etc.

## Committee Contacts

Chairman	Chris Hayes 10 Chelmer Close , North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 8TH Tel: 01522 689460 chair@sleafordnavigation.co.uk
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Director / Work Party Organiser	Mel Sowerby Tel: 01522 856810
Director	Rob Saul

## Membership

Membership Secretary	Jenny Osborne, Bank House, Ruskington Fen, Billingham, Lincoln, LN4 4DS Tel: 01526 832256
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**SNT Work Parties** go on throughout the year, usually on the second Sunday of the month. Contact Mel Sowerby (01522 856810 or sowerbys@ntlworld.com) for details of upcoming dates

Sleaford Navigation Trust is a member of the Sleaford Sports Partnership (SSP)



All SNT members are automatically SSP members, and are welcome to join in any of the SSP events, which are all held at the David Williams Pavilion, Sleaford Rugby Club, Ruskington Road, Sleaford.