

Sleaford Navigation Trust



63

Autumn 2023

The Sleaford Navigation Trust: -

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

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

...has a website: www.sleafordnavigation.co.uk

...is on facebook: Sleaford Navigation Trust

...is on Twitter: @SleafordNavigationTrust

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.

Newsletters

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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

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

Editorial

Welcome to our Autumn newsletter!

The recent heavy rains have caused havoc across the country but fortunately the Slea seems so far to have escaped much of the chaos, despite 3 inches of rain over 2 days earlier in October.

Our sympathies go to those residents elsewhere, such as Horncastle, where flooding of homes has been an issue despite recent flood prevention measures put in place by the authorities.

The [Environment Agency's River Slea Flood Resilience Project](#) makes interesting reading. EA representatives attended the RiverLight Festival and would love to hear your comments.

Debbie Scott, Editor

Contents	Page
Pat Taylor	4
AGM Roundup, IWA Protect our Waterways	6
Volunteer Training	10
Good Deeds	12
Tales from the Inland Waterways Network	14
Heckington Show 2023	16
New Members and Future Projects	18
Fundraising NK Lottery and Easyfundraising	19
Sleaford Neighbourhood Plan, Sleaford Heritage Day, Woodhall	
Spa Country Show, Witham/Slea Blue Green Project	20
RiverLight Festival , High Waters in Sleaford	21

Urgent notice: We are currently looking at different ways of sharing our news. We already use Facebook and Twitter but are wondering if perhaps a smaller more frequent newsletter, shared on the internet and by email, would be more effective than the current format. To let us know what you think, either email the editor on editor@sleafordnavigation.co.uk or give us a call on 07973 330765. we look forward to hearing from you.

Pat Taylor, the smiling face of SNT.

It is with extreme sadness that I have to report the death, on 25th September, of Pat Taylor. For decades Pat has been an integral part of the Sleaford Navigation Society and the later Sleaford Navigation Trust. As a committee member with special responsibility for sales she has indeed been the smiling face of the Trust behind the sales stand at events both national and local.

Pat's late husband Derek was an early driving force in the move to restore Bottom Lock to navigation and their boat, Wigford, was the first to pass through the lock at the official opening. Later renamed Taylors Lock, this has always been a special place full of memories for the family and so it remains. Who could forget the work parties there where Pat weeded the garden and often turned her attention to tending a bonfire to burn the trimmed tree branches. On one occasion she complained all day that the fire just refused to burn properly only for us all to see it spring into life just as Wigford was leaving at the end of the day! A hasty winding and return ensured all was safe! There were picnics and birthday celebrations there with rope swings over the river to be enjoyed by grand-children and others. A special place indeed.

Pat will be remembered for her enduring enthusiasm for boating and for the restoration of the Sleaford Navigation but there is so much more. An integral part of the December committee meeting was the celebration with a glass of wine and one, or maybe more, of Pat's amazing mince-pies. Bric-a-brac on the sales stall had to be arranged, and adjusted, as Pat wanted it to be. Anyone who had the temerity to move stock themselves would be given a glance which would make sure they didn't do that again. Things had to be done properly.

For so many, my children included, she was Grandma Pat and she will be remembered fondly and missed. I know that many members of SNT, IWA and beyond will join with me in sending condolences to her daughter Sue, son-in-law Mel and grandchildren Tom, Ellie and Ed. We have lost a good friend, a lovely lady.

Chris Hayes



Round up from the Annual General Meeting 2023

The AGM went ahead on Monday 22nd May 2023, as planned. The Directors report was received and the legalities of appointing Amanda Jay as the Company's Auditor and re-electing Penny Carnell and Debbie Scott as Directors, were completed.



The business was followed by a fascinating talk by Dr Simon Pawley, always an entertaining and informative speaker, on the history of Carre Street, which of course was crucial part of the operation of the Sleaford Navigation. The story of Carre Street is set out in fabulous detail in Simon's new book 'Mr Fawcett's Potato Patch', which can be purchased through [Quasar Publications](#).

Only IWA – Protect Our Waterways

The Inland Waterways Association (IWA) is the only independent, national charity dedicated to supporting and regenerating Britain's navigable rivers and canals as places for leisure, living and business.

By Sarah Niblock, (former) CEO of Inland Waterways Association
IWA was formed to protect our inland waterways in 1946 at a time when they were under threat. As a result of IWA's work many navigations that would have closed remained open. Appreciation of the value of our waterways began to grow and restoration schemes got under way. We can now say proudly that since IWA was formed 500 miles of waterways have been restored and another 500 miles are under restoration.

But, gravely, the clock is starting to turn backwards. The government has announced it's cutting its grant to Canal and River Trust, putting the network's future in peril. IWA is very concerned that without adequate funding our waterways will again face closures and the millions of hours of volunteer time spent restoring

and protecting waterways will be lost.

We launched the “Protect Our Waterways” campaign in March 2023 and, by joining IWA, you will strengthen our voice.



Entrance to the Old Bedford River: photo supplied by IWA

Your society is doing a sterling job of restoring your stretch of the navigation and IWA is proud to support the work of societies across the country. Our support includes

- Educating politicians about the many and varied benefits of our waterways
- Access to expertise to guide your projects through the planning system
- Engineering and heritage expertise to call upon
- Practical Restoration Handbook - the ‘go to resource’ for all

volunteers involved in waterways restoration.

- Help with construction costing and planning
- Help with construction projects through WRG camps and weekends
- Sharing knowledge and ideas through the Restoration Hub
- Technical expertise – engineering, planning and heritage etc.
- Provision of cost-effective insurance for restoration projects



Dee Lock, the entrance to the Dee Branch of the Shropshire Union from the River Dee in Chester: photo supplied by IWA

Only IWA provides this range of support to the waterways family, but now we need every member of this society to help to reverse the damaging decision. Restoration projects will become

untenable. You know better than anyone that it is far more costly to repair and restore than to prevent decline in the first place.



Old Tram Bridge carrying the tramroad linking the two sections of the Lancaster Canal across the River Ribble in Preston: photo supplied by IWA

Here is how you can – and should – support our campaign:

- As well as being an individual society member, please join IWA. You will have access to all the benefits above and more. Your membership will help strengthen our voice to protect the network and ensure another 500 miles are restored.
- Make a one-off or regular donation to IWA towards our campaign costs.
- Sign up for our mailing list where you'll find links to our

petition and how to write to your MP.

- Spread the word – please use your communication channels to engage as many of your local waterways users as possible and direct them to our website.

It will only take you a few minutes via our website www.waterways.org.uk, but could put the waterways on the right path for years ahead.

Editor's note: The information above was supplied by IWA prior to the recent staff changes, including Sarah Niblock's resignation. We are sure that the general sentiments expressed continue to be valid and endorse IWA's requests for support for its national and local campaigns.



**INLAND
WATERWAYS
ASSOCIATION**

More Training for Volunteers

Steve and Mel attended more chainsaw training through IWA earlier this year, which sees them now both fully qualified in chainsaw and polesaw operations.

This will be extremely useful for future work parties and help them make full use of the equipment purchased with support from the Sleaford Renewable Energy Plant Community Fund in 2022.

Training Course: Photos by Steve Hayes



Good Deeds.

On 20th July the Trust received the following email:

“Lincolnshire County Council Highways Team have received a report of a tree growing from within the bank of the River Slea, a member of the public has reportedly walked into one of the lower branches and caused injury to their head. It is located near the footway link to the carpark adjacent East Banks.”

This is a popular route from Carre Street to Eastbanks Car Park, the Leisure Centre, St Giles estate and Cogglesford Watermill.

There was a photo attached of the overhanging branches and we quickly realised that something needed to be done as soon as possible.



Fresh from his chainsaw training Steve Hayes volunteered and, accompanied by Dave Pullen and Chris Hayes as banksmen, arrived on site the following day to attend to the problem.

Several passers-by expressed their thanks for the work, one man who was well over six feet tall was particularly appreciative!

Coincidentally a message was also received from Rob, the Acting Deputy Clerk at Sleaford Town Council, saying they had received a complaint from a member of the public about the same branches. It was great to be

able to report back that the issue had already been resolved.

It's good to know that so many people are looking out for the River and the surrounding environment, thank you.



Before (above) and After (below) Photos by Steve Hayes



Tales from the Inland Waterways Network 2023

Our hire boat travels this year took us back to Norbury Junction, a favourite starting place, but this year, instead of aiming for Chester and the IWA Waterways Museum, we decided to head south on the Shropshire Union Canal to join the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal at Autherley Junction and then make our way to Stourport. At the end of July, the weather was not in our favour but NB Flora was well equipped and we were not deterred.

The first night, a heavy rainstorm led to disturbed sleep, including hearing what sounded like hooligans running along the boat roof, one of whom fell heavily at one stage. In daylight of course this proved to have been nothing worse than the rain itself and a small branch (large twig?) that had landed on the roof.

The route covers many miles of interesting features and varying locks, the Bratch of course always an exciting challenge. Just north of Wolverhampton, while helping another boat through a lock, we discovered a wooden baseball bat in the water. Not what you would normally expect to find, especially as it turned out to have been heavily modified, we assume for some nefarious purpose as we could not imagine any legitimate boating use for the selection of nails protruding from the end of the bat. Rather than leaving it lockside, we were very happy for the other boater to take it away and hand it over to the authorities!

The following day, we had a double surprise at Botterham Staircase Locks, where first of all we found a boat had become lodged in the bottom lock due to one of the gates failing to open. Assistance was offered but despite the best efforts of both crews the gate just wouldn't budge. Pondering on what else could be done before calling out CRT, somebody ended up climbing down on to the roof of the trapped boat to pass the boat hook to the crew on board. Success, after much prodding of the boat hook into the space behind the gate, the gate finally opened releasing the

trapped boat. The second part of the surprise was that as the boat emerged and revealed its beautifully paintwork, something looked familiar. The 'Langley Mill' detail prompted a question about involvement with the Chesterfield and a comment about how the Chesterfield and the Slea had worked together for many years. After lots of 2s and 2s were put together to make 4s, the boat's crew turned out to be Carole and Michael Golds, SNT members and great friends of Pat Taylor and her family. Carole and Michael had been involved in most of the early SNT projects and were still in touch with Pat, Sue and Mel. It was lovely to meet them and their boat NB Electra and we caught up with them again at the next waterpoint where they kindly posed for a photo for us.



NB Electra: Photo by Debbie Scott

The rest of our trip was quieter and we made good progress, but

we were not entirely surprised to fail to reach our destination, Stourport, after weather-related delays. We wended in Kidderminster and returned. Our final day was slightly marred by some inconsiderate behaviour by an own-boater a few miles south of Gnosall. We were in the middle of a convey of three or four boats, travelling at a good speed, when he decided to come powering past...

We were not surprised to read, in the next edition of *Waterways World*, complaints on the letters page about similar behaviour. Wonder if it was the same boat? Boat owners have often criticised hirers' behaviour but there seems to be a new breed of boat owners that has perhaps not benefited from instruction on waterways etiquette. It would be a shame to put people off the waterways, whether they are hirers or boat owners.

Debbie Scott

Heckington Show 2023

This year's Heckington Show was held in glorious weather and we were pleased to attend and show off our new Gazebo, funded by the Sleaford Renewable Energy Plant Community Fund. We were part of a row that included Old Sleaford Heritage Group, Sleaford Museum, Sleaford & District Civic Trust and the Sleaford Castle Project. We were able to hand out copies of our new leaflet to passers by and had lots of interesting conversations with people who wanted to find out more about our plans.

One of the main attractions at our stand was the chance to have a go at Magnet Fishing, a particular hobby of Dave Pullen's with his family. Dave had brought along a bin filled with suitable 'muddy' water into which he had dropped various catches from his family's magnet fishing exploits on different canals. People were able to borrow his magnet to see what they could find in the 'mud'



Heckington Show 2023: photos by Debbie Scott



New members

We are delighted to welcome

Kay Brown

Wilfred Rockell

Steve Green

And the Warwick family.

Future projects

Trip Boat for the Top Pound.

Following updates from NKDC in connection with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund grants, we have a provisional boat build-slot booked for Spring 2024, so we will be looking for volunteers to help with fitting out and crewing soon. Please let us know if you would be interested. Suitable training will be provided, so availability and enthusiasm will be the main criteria! Within the funding there is provision for some reed clearance and de-silting of the top pound, which will be of benefit, not just visually but also ecologically and in terms of flood management.

Haverholme Lock.

Again a project very much in conjunction with NKDC, we await further news.

SNT meetings.

For many years the committee has met monthly and, since Covid, we have used Zoom quite successfully. The Committee has decided that its future meeting will have a more social element and so, in September we met at the 8 Sail Brewery at Heckington Windmill . We hope to continue to do so and the next meeting is planned for early November. Members will be very welcome. We will publish future dates on our website, facebook and by email and hope to see you there.

Fundraising

Do you know how simple and easy fundraising for the Sleaford Navigation Trust can be?

In 2022 alone we received over £500 from a combination of NKDC lottery players and Easy Fundraising contributions.



NKDC runs a community lottery where 60p from every £1 ticket goes to a local good cause or charity of your choice.

The lottery is run every week on a Saturday evening where the top prize is a fantastic £25,000!!

The link for joining up and being in with a chance of a prize whilst supporting the Trust is:

www.nklottery.co.uk/support/sleaford-navigation-trust



Easy fundraising is exactly that! When shopping on any and many online shopping sites an automatic % donation of your total spend will be made to your nominated charity or cause, at no additional cost to you. Purchases such as insurance, holidays and cars are all included along with entertainment, eating out and all the well known shopping sites.

Your usual internet browser can be easily set up to alert you that a donation is available when you are on any of the brands sites that are part of Easy fundraising.

If you load the app onto your mobile phone or tablet and go to the retailer's site via the app the donation is activated for you.

The link for Easy Fundraising is www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/sleafordnt/?from404=1 or search in your app store to upload to your phone.

Thank you and good luck!!

Sleaford Neighbourhood Plan

The working group has now been formally constituted as a Sub-Committee of the Town Council's Planning Committee. It is currently finalising the drafts of the Plan together with the Design Guide for approval by the Town Council prior to another formal consultation period under Regulation 14 and submission to NKDC. Please look out for information about the consultation, hopefully in early 2024, and respond with any comments.

The plan's website is www.sleafordneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

Sleaford Heritage Day August 2023

Chris and Steve were pleased to represent the Trust at this event, organised by the [Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology](#).

Alongside people from Cogglesford Watermill, Navigation House, Sleaford Castle and the Old Sleaford Heritage Group they were able to promote the heritage of the Navigation and our future projects.

Woodhall Spa Country Show May 2023

The Trust took a stand here and met up with lots of interested visitors

Witham/Slea Blue Green Corridor Project

The project culminated with a free community funday in June , to celebrate its biodiversity works in and around the river in Sleaford.

For more information, please see the project's website www.withamsleabluegreencorridor.co.uk

RiverLight Festival 2023

For a number of unfortunate reasons we were not able to take our stand to the festival this year, but did manage to catch up with some of the stands in the Eco-Village, a new feature held in Church Lane Primary School

Higher than usual Waters in Sleaford October 2023



*Photos
by
Debbie
Scott*

Useful websites:

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

Also follow us on facebook

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

And Twitter

@SleafordNavigationTrust

Dates for your diary:

Sleaford Christmas Market 3rd December 2023

Woodhall Spa Country Show May 2024

RiverLight 22nd June 2024 (with fringe events from 15th)

Heckington Show 27th and 28th July 2024

The River Slea Clean Up volunteers continue their work parties - for more details of the events please see their facebook page 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..

A selection of plaques is now available to order online through our website www.sleafordnavigation.co.uk

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

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
and regular Milling Days on the second Sunday of each month

See 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.

