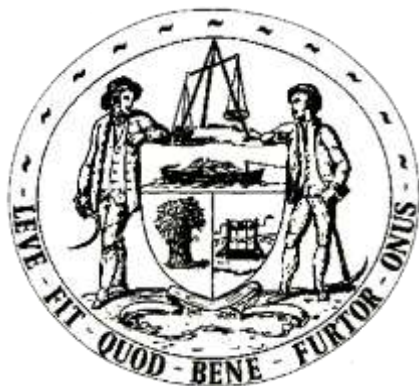


Sleaford Navigation Trust



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Autumn 2024

The Sleaford Navigation Trust: -

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

...has a Registered Office c/o The Inland Waterways Association, Unit 16B, Chiltern Court, Asheridge Road, Chesham HP5 2PX.

...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 Sleas, 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

To request an email version or contribute articles or photographs please contact:

editor@sleafordnavigation.co.uk

9 Forum Way,

Sleaford NG34 7FF



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!

I mentioned 'exciting times' in the last edition and we are delighted to report that a truly exciting event happened on 13th August - the new trip boat arrived! The transfers from lorry to water to mooring were mostly majestic with occasional bouts of indignity, but we got there in the end and in its current position, moored up by the slipway on Eastgate Green, it is certainly attracting enormous interest - for more details of the boat see pages 7 onwards

Debbie Scott, Editor

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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 to more information. Contact editor@sleafordnavigation.co.uk

SLEAFORD NAVIGATION TRUST AGM 2024

The AGM was held at Sleaford Town Hall, Navigation Yard, Sleaford, on Tuesday 21st May 2024.

Thank you to everyone who turned out, it was great to see so many people interested in what is happening.

During the meeting Steve Hayes and Sue Sowerby were re-elected as Directors. Becky Franks stood down and was thanked for her work.

Following the business of the meeting, there was a presentation by Garry Titmus about Sleaford Castle. Garry managed to convey wonderfully the sheer joy of discovering so much about the castle site during the archaeological research and explained that the experts are reasonably sure that there is now enough information to be able to imagine the size and shape of the castle in its heyday.

Artists' impressions of what it was likely to have looked like, along with some of the artefacts found during last year's work and an enormous amount of information, are currently on show at Navigation House, please drop in and have a look. For younger historians, skilled at scissor-work, there is a 'build your own' card version of Sleaford Castle Keep; this is also available at Navigation House. For more about the Sleaford Castle project see the [Civic Trust website](#).

We are delighted to welcome New Members:

Mark Sharpe

Simon Burrows

Chris Gilham

John Berry

Nicola Berry

Sheila Napier

RIVERLIGHT FESTIVAL JUNE 2024

This year the weather was glorious and the number of people out and about in Sleaford was amazing. Magnet Fishing proved popular with visitors to the SNT Stand in this year's [RiverLight EcoVillage](#), with (top) Cllr David Suiter, Mayor of Sleaford, under the keen eye of David Pullen, SNT's Honorary Engineer, NKDC Councillor Mervyn Head (bottom right) as well as Frank (bottom left) among the people having a go.



Photos: Debbie Scott

Dates for your diary:

SNT Meet us on the Green - Eastgate Green Wednesday 25th September 3.00 to 5.00 The Town Council has kindly agreed to let us have our gazebo on the Green during the afternoon so that we can talk to people who have already expressed an interest in helping and start to work out who can do what. We will be contacting members and other people whose emails we have collected over the last few months and asking them to come along for a chat, now that we have a better idea of the tasks involved. Even if we have not contacted you directly please do come along if you would like to help.

Sleaford Library [Green Libraries Week](#) SNT will be in the Library on Monday 9th October 10.30 to 12.30 and happy to talk.

HECKINGTON SHOW JULY 2024

Photos by Steve Hayes



**Mel, Sue and David
chatting to visitors**

BENJAMIN HANDLEY

We were beyond thrilled to see the boat craned in to the water just near Sleaford Leisure Centre early one August morning, after what seems like years of ambition.



Chris Hayes, SNT Chairman, writes:

‘The camera does sometimes lie

You may have seen coverage on Look North of the trip boat being lowered into the Slea and moved up to the landing stage near the Hub.

I was interviewed near the lift bridge and explained about the project, the funding and the Trust’s hopes for the future. There was also an article in the NKDC news with a link to a [YouTube](#) video of the launch and journey through the lift bridge to the mooring.



There were interviews with Richard Wright, Leader of the Council, and again with me, this time with Benjamin Handley in situ as a background. The coverage was brilliant, the messages came over well and the boat looked fantastic. What a smooth operation it all appeared to be.

Chris and Cllr Richard Wright, Leader of North Kesteven District Council



I did allude to the need for dredging and the reality of the exercise certainly bore that out. Suffice it to say that, above the lift bridge, several members of the Trust team ended up giving a helping hand to the boat in a way they hadn't all

anticipated! Rob Saul had waders on so was somewhat prepared but Becky Franks together with Gavin and Debbie Scott joined him in the water dressed as they were, to help identify a deeper channel for the boat. Debbie certainly found deep water, unexpectedly, as she went from knee-deep to chest-deep in the space of a moment...* Becky finally got back on board and steered the boat to the landing stage, much to everyone's relief.



En route to the bridge - with Steve at the helm



Sincere thanks are due to all of them for their commitment. Amazingly, they all said they had enjoyed it! Thanks are due too to the members of the public who joined in and helped pull the boat for the last stretch.

On the videos the journey takes a few minutes, the reality was a lot longer!

*Editor's note - the experience is now established in the family as 'Mum's Vicar of Dibley moment'

So now the work starts!

The boat had been a long time in the planning and members of the team had visited the boat-builder, Howard Day, on several occasions to see the progress of the shell as the lines of the boat became defined.



Week 1

Week 2



Prior to that, there had been visits to see and assess a similar boat on the Chesterfield Canal and, of course, the submission of the application for a grant to North Kesteven District Council utilising the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund.



submission of the application for a grant to North Kesteven District Council utilising the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Waiting for a lift!

Week 4

Now the boat was a reality it was time for detailed analysis of the tasks involved in fitting out the interior ready for boat trips to commence in the Spring of next year.





The boat has been insulated with spray foam and wooden battens are in place but the walls need to be lined out with wooden panels. There is no floor although there are supports, with spaces in-between, for the floor boards.

At present, the boat rides high in the water and needs to be weighted with ballast to bring it to the proper depth for stability and effective propulsion by the engine.

A quartet of young gongoozlers* supervising Gavin and Rob's efforts



And finally Benjamin Handley arrives at the mooring, with Becky at the helm, under the watchful eyes of Howard Day, the boat builder, and Rob.

This will be achieved by fitting the appropriate number of bricks in the spaces between the floor supports to add a weight of one ton. That task will be achieved through a human chain of volunteers passing the bricks hand-to hand! Heating will be by a diesel warm-air system located in the engine room. This, and the internal lighting, will require installation by a more skilled work force!

There will be seats down the sides for the twelve passengers. These will be recycled bus seats which have been sourced from a firm in Barnsley. The space occupied by these seats along the side of the boat will determine the length of the internal cabin, another instance of where details have to be agreed in the correct sequence.

Sometimes, an additional unexpected problem will present itself. There are metal covers which go over the windows as protection when the boat is left moored up. When fitting these initially, the Trust team realised there was a slight difference between the frame sizes and that the covers were specific not general. A simple expedient was arrived at. The inside of the covers on the left hand side were marked, LB, LM, LF. Left back. Left middle, etc. with, surprisingly enough, RB, RM, RF, on the other side. No doubt there will be other little quirks along the way.

Steve Hayes, Rob Saul and Dave Pullen had a first meeting at the boat on August 20th and started the detailed measurement and planning.'

**gongoozlers* are of course people who enjoy watching boats and activities on canals.

Editor's note - the photographs of the build of the boat and its arrival in Sleaford have been variously provided by NKDC, Steve Hayes, Howard Day and Debbie Scott. We are particularly grateful to Jason and Hannah from the NKDC Comms Team for their help on the day and their coordination of the local media including BBC Radio Lincolnshire, Look North, the Sleaford Standard and the Sleaford Target and all of their online coverage.

From Pat's Albums...

Two topical clippings this time - the first showing Steve at the helm of a very different vessel on the same stretch of water - we're not sure which paper this appeared in but goodness, the crew look freezing!



And the second is taken from a special supplement published by the Sleaford Pride Partnership in the late 1990s to announce the plans to convert the Hubbard and Phillips seed warehouse into what is now the Hub. The slipway and Benjamin Handley's mooring now sit to the right of the photo.

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 Town Council's Sub-Committee is expecting to receive the Strategic Environmental Assessment Report from NKDC later this Autumn and will then be starting the Regulation 14 six week public consultation period. Please see

www.sleafordneighbourhoodplan.co.uk



The Handley Cup

As readers will be aware, we have recently been working on finding a more accessible location to display the Handley Cup.

We are hoping to make an announcement about its new home shortly.

As explained in earlier issues, the Cup was originally presented to Benjamin Handley on the opening of the Navigation in 1794, in recognition of his efforts in establishing the Sleaford Navigation Company.

Years later it surfaced in South Africa and the then owners kindly donated it to the Sleaford Navigation Society (which later became the Trust) in the expectation that it would be on show to the public.

Its new home will help us fulfil that aim once again.

THE BENJAMIN HANDLEY MUG



To celebrate the arrival of Benjamin Handley, the Trust has commissioned a new mug from Ruth Burrows of the Art Shop in Navigation Yard. Ruth has already designed and produced mugs commemorating Navigation House, Sleaford Castle and other local landmarks and the Boat mug will join the collection. We will have stocks for sale at events and they

will also be available at Navigation House, and other outlets, along with other mugs in the series.

See Ruth's website www.ruthburrows.com for more information.



Photo by Debbie Scott

Messing about on the river, collecting litter. Isn't that just what the school holidays are for?

WORK PARTIES

This year's vegetation growth on the river banks and in the river has been particularly energetic and the time had come for something to be done about it.



Earlier this summer a work party was convened to trim back some of the overhanging vegetation that was in danger of meeting across the water in places - that's nature's way, but unfortunately it would also start to obstruct the water flow as branches and leaves

fall into the water potentially leading to flooding as well as making it difficult for boats to pass by.

Strimming of overgrown grass on the banks has also helped tidy the area.

Photos, here and on opposite page, by Steve and Chris Hayes



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.withamsleablebluegreencorridor.co.uk
East Mercia Rivers Trust	www.eastmercia.org
Sleaford Museum	www.sleaformuseum.org.uk
Sleaford & District Civic Trust	www.sleafordcivictrust.co.uk

Also follow us on facebook

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

And Twitter

@SleafordNavigationTrust

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 (£20 min)

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

Places to Visit

Navigation House NG34 7TW

Opening Times: Friday to Monday 10.00 am to 2.00 pm.
Currently featuring the Sleaford Castle Exhibition

Cogglesford Watermill NG34 7EQ

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.

Sleaford Museum, Southgate NG34 7RQ

Monday 12.30 pm – 3.00 pm, Wednesday 10.00 am – 3.00 pm,
Friday 10.00 am – 12.30pm, Saturday 10.00 am – 3.00 pm.

Committee Contacts

Chairman	Chris Hayes 10 Chelmer Close , North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 8TH Tel: 01522 689460 chair@slefordnavigation.co.uk
Secretary	Steve Hayes— Contact as above and secretary@slefordnavigation.co.uk
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Director	Penny Carnell Tel: 01469 530138
Director / Lincs IWA Nominee	David Carnell Tel: 01469 530138
Director / Work Party Organiser	Mel Sowerby Tel: 01522 856810
Director	Rob Saul

Honorary Engineer	David Pullen 43 Howell Road, Heckington NG34 9RX Tel 07766 714650 / 01529 460547 engineer@slefordnavigation.co.uk
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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

Sleford Navigation Trust is a member of the Sleford 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, Sleford Rugby Club, Ruskington Road, Sleford.