

STAFFORD RIVERWAY LINK

(A Community Interest Company)

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Patron:- The Lord Stafford, DL, FRAGS

Objective: To promote the restoration of the historic river and canal waterway linking the county town of Stafford to the national waterways network for the benefit of the community and all interested groups.

Website: www.stafford-riverway-link.co.uk

Newsletter No 31

November 2019

Hello to all our newsletter readers!

It's a while since we've sent out a full newsletter, though we did send a mini one earlier in the year but minus a few words from our chairman. As such, it is good to start this time with some observations from Ivor. **'From the chair'** :- Brickwork is progressing well to such an extent that the Towpath wall is now completed as far as possible until the Bridge design is devised and completed. On our open days, many people attended including several Borough and County Councillors. We are progressing with our partnership with River Canal Rescue and I have re-opened talks with The Environment Agency. (We await a site visit from them.) Richard Parry Joined us on the Saturday and gave a very positive slant on our achievements and assured us of full support as we progress. The main object of the open weekend was to accept the very important document from the landowners (The Lease 100 years) We are getting a lot of support from the landowners which should help us progress when Funds become available. We have now got a fund-raising site which is starting to show promise and further grant applications are now in the pipeline. Once we have the plans for the bridge we will start the process of applying for Lottery Funding. The same will apply to the Lock, in due course.

The summer months have seen excellent progress with an increase in volunteer numbers who have been working like Trojans. A small group of these new folk seemed to gel and with the skills they possess they formed an amazing 'working team' happy to carry on with brick-laying and basin work even when our 'site co-ordinator' was away boating! Regular work parties have been planned and publicised when everyone is welcomed and there are assorted jobs to do as well as the 'construction' parts. If you fancy joining a work party but feel daunted at the thought of digging out the basin or bricklaying, we often need people to mow the lawn of the lock house, trim the hedges, weed the borders etc. If you want to be involved with the basin work, there are reclaimed bricks that we clean up for future use, which is not a very taxing job and if a few are involved some enjoyable 'chat time' can be had whilst scraping old mortar off bricks! Very recently more surveys have been done, meetings have taken place at which we have had engineers to advise on future work, including bridge construction. We have several lots of plans drawn up which can be viewed at the site.

Our greatest need is, as ever, more funding. We have had a cheque from the Lichfield Branch of the Inland Waterways Association – already spent, as it was specifically to 'keep our volunteer workers' in materials! We have a dedicated guy who is expertly looking at areas of funding and doing an amazing job. It looks as if we may have been successful with our application to 'The Community Foundation for Staffordshire' for the SBC small grants fund. Watch this space. Supplementing our funds are the wonderful donations of services and materials from a variety of folk. Some of our sponsors have their businesses displayed on our container by way of a 'thank you'. To all the others who have helped in any way we offer enormous amounts of thanks! Our evening socials, held in the winter months, include a raffle which keeps up the supply of tea and coffee for 'the workers'. The next event is on **Wednesday 20th November at the Stafford Boat Club** and the talk is on sailing round **Cape Horn** on a tall ship. Admission is free though the boat club would appreciate attendees supporting the bar! In December we

will be back at 'The Sun' pub in Stafford and will have a **festive evening** to include mince pies. 'Andy' from 'FunFolk' has offered a return visit so hopefully, will include some seasonal singing. The date for this is **Tuesday 10th December**. Both events are from 7.30p.m.

Our next work party is a 2-day event, **Friday 8th and Saturday 9th November**. However, we have benefitted from a group of volunteers from The Prince's Trust helping us last week and who will be with us again for the 3 days prior to our 'official work party' so as there will definitely be people on site, please do come along and swell the numbers any day next week, except Monday 4th!

Wishing all our supporters much fun with volunteering, socialising or just promoting our project we look forward to meeting even more of you in the coming weeks.

Best wishes from us all, 'Vee'



The basin from the air



The surveyor in action with some of our team



Our volunteers at work – why not join them?



Are we now in water! The recent floods.



Corporate member

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