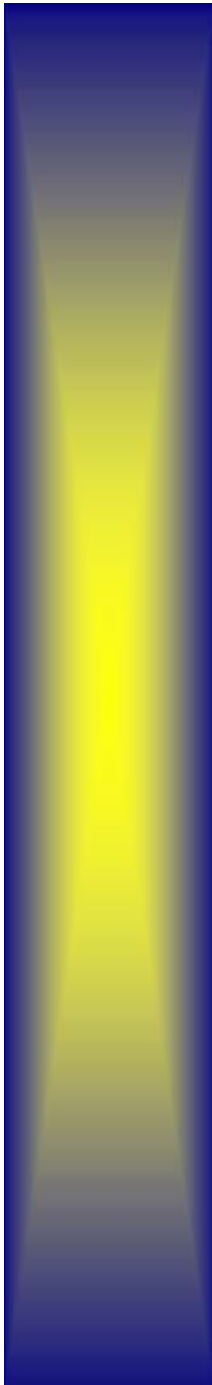




Registered Charity  
No. 299595



# Annual Report 2010-2011



# Mission Statement

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Restoring in partnership the Wilts & Berks Canal through Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire.

## Charitable Aims

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To protect, conserve and improve the route of the Wilts & Berks and North Wilts Canals, and branches, for the benefit of the community and environment, with the ultimate goal of restoring a continuous navigable waterway linking the Kennet & Avon Canal near Melksham, Wiltshire, the River Thames near Abingdon, Oxfordshire and the Thames and Severn Canal near Cricklade, Wiltshire.

## Objectives

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1. Convince local authorities, government departments and local organisations of the benefits and feasibility of the proposed restoration.
2. Convince landowners, local commerce and the general public of the merits of restoration.
3. Secure the route of the waterway and adequate water supplies.
4. Establish the Trust as a key member of a partnership with local authorities and other bodies that will facilitate restoration of the canal.
5. Implement an agreed programme for full restoration of the canal.

## Legal Structure

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The Trust is a Registered Charity, No. 299595, and a Non-Profit-Distributing Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered in England and Wales No. 2267719. Its Registered Office Address is: Island House, Moor Road, Chesham, HP5 1WA

## Patron

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HRH The Duchess of Cornwall

## President

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Dr David Fletcher CBE

## Vice-Presidents

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Neil Rumbol (Founder)  
Roger Crapper

## Trustees during the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011

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Chairman

Vice Chairman

Vice Chairman

Vice Chairman

Secretary

Treasurer

Directors

John Laverick

Alan Norris

Luke Walker

Kathleen Hatton

Christopher Coyle

Peter Kinsman

Raymond Aldridge

Matthew Allard

Rachael Banyard

Richard Bellamy

Martin Buckland

David Cook

George Eycott

Colin Fletcher

John Gantlett

Douglas Harris

Robert Jones

Michael Lang

Mike Lee

Melanie Parker

Tim Pyatt

Brian Roberts

Douglas Small

David Stirling

Brian Stovold

Jennifer Stratton

Edward Thomas

# President's Foreword

As financial year 2010 – 2011 drew to a close it was encouraging to reflect on just how much the Trust had achieved during one of the early years of a period of austerity to be faced by us all.

The 200 years of the history of the Wilts & Berks Canal were celebrated in style as the Trust's Patron HRH The Duchess of Cornwall so generously spent part of her day with us at Semington. Naming our new trip boat "Dragonfly" and cutting the first sod of the Melksham Link Waterway were actions so clearly ushering in the next one hundred years in the story of this waterway.

It is now up to every one of us to capitalise on the success of this event and the equally successful event at Wichelstowe where collaboration between the Trust and Swindon Borough Council attracted 2,000 people to the waterside. Nearby the first houses of Britain's newest canal side village had been completed and construction of a new length of the Wilts & Berks Canal including road bridges, foot bridges and an aqueduct and a lock was well underway.



*The impressive section of restored canal at Wichelstowe (Doug Small)*

We know that times are going to be exceedingly hard over the coming years to raise funds for restoration. There is likely to be increased competition for volunteers and charitable funding as a result of the Government's intention to move British Waterways into the charitable sector but I firmly believe that the Trust and its Partners are in a uniquely strong position to face these challenges and to continue to succeed.

*Dr David Fletcher CBE*

# Chairman's Report

What a superbly memorable year the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Wilts & Berks Canal turned out to be. Two major celebrations, one at the west end of the waterway and one in the central area and in addition the opening of a new length of footpath towards the north. These events were attended by many hundreds of happy smiling people enjoying themselves alongside the waterway proving, if proof were needed, that canal restoration brings so much pleasure to persons of all ages. The lasting memento of 'Wilts & Berks 200' is the Trust's first purpose-built passenger-carrying steel narrow boat which will continue to operate at new locations throughout the length of the canal well into the next 100 years of the canal's history.

On Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2010 our Patron, HRH the Duchess of Cornwall, came to Semington to lead the 200th anniversary celebrations. The Duchess arrived at the helm of the Trust's brand new, and at that time unnamed, trip boat, having boarded the vessel some two miles back along the Kennet and Avon Canal. This short cruise was enjoyed by the Trust's VIP guests on board and afforded the opportunity for Mr Robin Clark, a long time financial supporter of the restoration of the canal, to be presented to Her Royal Highness. Robin's charity, the Underwood Trust, had so generously, in this anniversary year, funded the building of the trip boat. A brass plaque in the vessel's cabin was unveiled by the Duchess who also signed the fly-leaf of the boat's log book to commemorate the day.

To the strains of music provided by youngsters of the Calne-based North Wessex Corps of Drums, the vessel arrived at the site of the proposed new junction between the Kennet & Avon and the Wilts & Berks Canals where the Duchess formally named the new trip boat DRAGONFLY. This was achieved, as tradition would demand, by pouring a bottle of beer over the bow and then by removing covering strips revealing the vessel's name.

Assisted by all 65 children from the local St George's Church of England Primary School, and using a specially engraved shovel, the Duchess then went on to cut the first symbolic sod of the 'Melksham Link' waterway.

The even-handed public consultation process for the 'Melksham Link' continued throughout the year conducted by the Melksham Community Area Partnership. Results would seem to indicate widespread enthusiasm for the project. The principal question asked by the Melksham Chamber of Commerce at their own AGM was how soon could the Trust make 'The Link' happen as it would be of such benefit to the businesses and citizens of Melksham.

Later in September the Trust and Swindon Borough Council collaborated to organise a family fun day on and beside the canal at Wichelstowe where 2,000 people came along to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the canal. The star of the show was DRAGONFLY which had been moved by road from Semington. The festival was an opportunity for local residents to get active and try something new. Many children tried canoeing or kayaking for the first time and free angling taster sessions with qualified angling coaches were also on offer. Hundreds more cruised the waterway on one of the three Trust boats running throughout the day. A very successful event clearly demonstrating to local people the benefits of a waterway within their community.

Earlier in the year a new footpath was formally opened to the north of central Swindon which included the site of Moredon Locks. This new length of footpath now provides a continuous walk of some 3 kilometres.

I am sure that the builders of the Wilts & Berks Canal, slaving with pick axes and wheelbarrows as they did, would have been proud in the way that their handiwork was celebrated 200 years later. Of course none of this would have been possible without the unstinting efforts of our active volunteers giving freely of their time whether at the canal side, in the office or hidden away in individual houses up and down the line of the waterway and further afield.

Three new volunteer directors have this year been welcomed to Council as co-opted members. Kath Hatton agreed to take on the role of Fundraising Director, following which she has in addition agreed to accept the post of Vice Chair of the Trust. Kath has for some time successfully undertaken fundraising for MCC Branch, which she will continue to do. Melanie Parker has taken on the role of Membership Secretary and will be working hard to manage the growing membership list. Doug Small has taken on the role of Events Director ably assisted by John Minns as Events Co-ordinator and supported by Christine Hardisty who has agreed to provide focus on PR issues. The essential task of projecting the image of the Trust through the media and at events, shows and festivals up and down the land is now in very good hands.

Because of the very real pressures of his day job Matt Allard had reluctantly tendered his resignation as Communications Director although he will continue as Web Master. For the same reasons John Gantlett resigned his post as Land Negotiations Director. Luke Walker, starting a new full time career in the Midlands, stood down as Project Manager (North) and Vice Chairman. Mike Lang stood down as Membership Director in order to spend more time assisting with the Trust's expanding boating operations for which he is eminently well qualified and at the same time taking on the temporary chairmanship of the Swindon Branch. Both Alan Norris and Martin Buckland retired from their posts to spend more time in retirement with their families.

My sincere thanks to those Directors who have left us for the amazing amount of volunteer time that over the years they have given to the Trust. To those taking on new roles, my thanks for agreeing to share the load of managing the affairs of this hugely worthwhile project.

Another very successful year for the Trust has resulted from the efforts of all of our active volunteers who have driven forward the Wilts & Berks Canal Project with such dedicated enthusiasm.

*John Laverick*

# Accounts

## Statement of Financial Activities for Year ending 31 March 2011

	<u>Unrestricted</u> <u>funds</u> <u>£</u>	<u>Designated</u> <u>funds</u> <u>£</u>	<u>Restricted</u> <u>funds</u> <u>£</u>	<u>Total this</u> <u>year</u> <u>£</u>	<u>Total last</u> <u>year</u> <u>£</u>
<b><u>Incoming resources</u></b>					
Donations	7,650		54,746	62,396	77,561
Investment income	795			795	1,293
Income from charitable trading	7,221	30		7,251	4,582
Membership Subscriptions	18,530			18,530	17,898
Grants	260		25,183	25,443	6,834
Landfill Tax Credits			32,697	32,697	3,122
Tax refunds	4,374		1,671	6,045	5,627
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>38,830</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>114,297</b>	<b>153,157</b>	<b>116,917</b>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>					
Restoration	13,887	12,086	82,345	108,318	58,602
Fund raising and publicity	18,607	7,265	113	25,985	15,819
Management & Administration	4,804	6,097	15,177	26,078	38,266
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>37,298</b>	<b>25,448</b>	<b>97,635</b>	<b>160,381</b>	<b>112,687</b>
<b><u>Transfer between funds</u></b>	<b>(9,339)</b>	<b>37,262</b>	<b>(27,923)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>(7,807)</b>	<b>11,844</b>	<b>(11,261)</b>	<b>(7,224)</b>	<b>4,230</b>
<b><u>Fund balances brought forward</u></b>	<b>39,010</b>	<b>52,060</b>	<b>129,626</b>	<b>220,696</b>	<b>216,466</b>
<b><u>Fund balances carried forward</u></b>	<b>31,203</b>	<b>63,904</b>	<b>118,365</b>	<b>213,472</b>	<b>220,696</b>

# Accounts (continued)

## Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2011

	<u>Total this</u> <u>year</u> <u>£</u>	<u>Total last</u> <u>year</u> <u>£</u>
<b>Total fixed assets</b>	48,611	25,373
<b><u>Current assets</u></b>		
Stocks and work in progress	2,985	3,482
Debtors	8,960	8,261
Short term investments and deposits	133,762	152,967
Cash at bank and in hand	41,130	45,591
<b>Total current assets</b>	<hr/> 186,837	<hr/> 210,301
Short term creditors	21,976	14,978
<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>	<hr/> 164,861	<hr/> 195,323
<b>Net assets</b>	<hr/> 213,472	<hr/> 220,696
Restricted income funds	118,365	129,626
Designated Funds	63,904	52,060
Unrestricted income funds	31,203	39,010
<b><u>Total funds</u></b>	<hr/> 213,472	<hr/> 220,696

# Notes to Accounts

1. These financial statements have been extracted from the set of accrual based accounts prepared for submission to the Charity Commission. An examination of those accounts has been carried out by our accountants, Morris Owen, in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. A full set of those accounts is available on request and for a small administration fee.

2. The definitions of the categories of funds are as follows:-

*Unrestricted* - Those funds that the Trustees should spend on any of the charity's purposes.

*Restricted* - Those funds that the Trustees are obliged to spend on only particular purposes.

*Designated* - Those funds which the Trustees have earmarked for particular purposes.

3. Landfill Tax credits of £5,529 have been received from Crapper & Sons and £27,300 transferred from Community First.

4. The total of Designated Funds has risen from £52,060 to £63,904 due mainly to the purchase of Fixed Assets of £37,262 less depreciation charges of £12,558 and charges to the Land Purchase and Administration Funds of £12,860.

5. The Fixed Assets of £48,611 are made up of Land at cost of £8,062, Plant and Machinery at a depreciated value of £15,941, Boats at a depreciated value of £23,876 and office furniture and equipment at a depreciated value of £730. The major asset purchased this year was the trip boat "Dragonfly" at a total cost of £29,845.

6. Debtors at the end of this year consist of Gift Aid Tax refund of £4,324, VAT refund of £3,582 (both from HMRC) and sundry prepayments of £1,054.

7. The charity had one part-time paid employee at the end of this year.

8. There has been no remuneration or other benefits paid by the charity to the charity's Trustees, or people connected with them.

9. There have been no transactions undertaken by (or on behalf of) the charity in which a Trustee or connected person has a material interest.

*Peter Kinsman*

# Grants & Donations

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Once again, the Trust would like to register its thanks to all those who have contributed to funding projects; some of the major funding sources are listed below. This list in no way ignores all of the smaller organisations, individuals and trusts who have contributed to the restoration of the Canal.

M. Allard  
N. Barber  
Braunston Marina Ltd.  
Bruce Wake Charitable Trust  
M. Buckland  
Community First  
Crapper & Sons Landfill Ltd.  
C. Fletcher  
D. H. Garratt  
Greenford Ltd.  
J. Green  
A. J. Hatton in memory  
IWA Charity  
Medlock Charitable Trust  
A. Miller  
Pewsey Zixex Club  
Southern Canals  
Swindon Borough Corporation  
Swindon Branch Talks  
The Underwood Trust  
Waitrose Charity Green Scheme  
Wantage & Grove Lions  
Waylands Estates  
I. & E. Williamson  
Wiltshire Council  
Wootton Bassett Town Rotary Club

# Restoration Progress

The Trust has organised its work into four areas broadly in line with the relevant Local Authority districts. Each area has a Director responsible for managing the projects.

## West (Colin Fletcher)

*Melksham Link Waterway.* On the 8<sup>th</sup> September a ceremony to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Wilts & Berks Canal was held at Semington. Present at this event was Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cornwall. Using an engraved shovel the Duchess cut the first sod of the Melksham Link and then passed the shovel to Indiana, from Year 6 at St George's school who also cut a sod of earth. On only his second day at school one of the reception class students, Xavier, presented a posy of flowers to the Duchess. Later, the shiny shovel was passed from child to child as each of the 65 children had a chance to make their place in history by digging some earth at the start of the Link.



*HRH The Duchess of Cornwall cuts the first sod of the Melksham Link*

*Forest Farm and Queenfield Farm.* About half a mile of canal on these two farms continues to be managed on a care and maintenance basis with volunteers keeping the towpath clear.

*Calne Lock and rewatered section.* This widely-used length of canal in the heart of the town is maintained by our volunteers and kept in a good state of repair. Further clearing and maintenance has now recovered the route of the original towpath. In March 2011 the long established wharf was completely rebuilt and the adjacent area was drained and resurfaced.

*Naish Hill to Pewsham Locks.* Between July and October 1,050 metres of canal were dredged and rewatered using professional digger drivers and volunteer dumper drivers. During the same period 300 metres of canal bank were raised by between one and two metres in height and the cyclepath replaced. Branch volunteers also restored a unique horseshoe shaped spillweir to its original design and two culverts were substantially rebuilt.



*The horseshoe shaped spillweir at Pewsham (John Minns)*



*The dredged section at Pewsham (John Minns)*

*Foxham.* Following the successful sealing of a troublesome leak in the rewatered section of the canal at Foxham, the water level rose, and signs of seepage were evident on the 'dry' side of the embankment. The water level in the section was therefore lowered by removing some of the brickwork at the valve chamber. This enabled the level of the remaining leaks to be ascertained, and with the help of the Waterway Recovery Group excavator a suitable trench was formed in the embankment, suitable clay was quarried locally, and the leaks were sealed.

*Dauntsey.* The Trust's volunteers have continued to maintain the towpath on this section, and a further length of 300m of the towpath hedge has been laid during the year. In the light of experience with the increasing length of canal towpath, bank, and hedge to maintain in the locality, Foxham Branch volunteers sought funding for a suitable small tractor with the relevant attachments to keep the grass mown and the hedge trimmed. Towards the end of the year, a suitable machine was identified within the funding which had been raised from BIG Lottery and from the Inland Waterways Association.



*The tractor and hedge trimming attachment at the supplier's yard (Michael Knight)*

### **North (Luke Walker)**

*Lower Waite Farm.* During the year, work continued clearing the chamber of Lock 1 to avoid further damage to the remains of the structure. The towpath through this section has been maintained, and the connection across this farm and Bowds Farm – linking Sodom Lane with Bowds Lane – has continued to provide an attractive and popular walk.

*Bowds Farm.* The application for outline planning consent for the area including Lock 2 was submitted to Wiltshire Council, and approval was granted with conditions to be met within the context of the detailed planning approval. The technical solution includes construction of a bridge formed of pre-cast concrete sections, and a new section of embankment. The alignment of Bowds Lane will then be moved to pass over the canal to the west of the chamber of Lock 2. The scale model, built by a Trust volunteer resident in South Wales, has been invaluable in presenting the solution to the public and to relevant officers of Wiltshire Council. The Trust is indebted to officers of the Highways Department and Planning Department of Wiltshire Council for their constructive advice as this scheme has developed. The Honorary Consulting Engineer of the Inland Waterways Association, Roy Sutton, designed the new road alignment and has continued to make a significant contribution to the technical solution to meet the requirements of the relevant authorities.

*Seven Locks – Lock 4.* While the new offside lock chamber wall was being built, the landowner, Bowds Farm Partnership, helpfully allowed the use of a section of the adjacent field to achieve the necessary space for excavation plus storage of the excavated material. During the year, significant progress was made to clear this area of reclaimed bricks and rubble so that the area could be returned to pasture – and the fence restored to its original alignment.

*Templars Firs.* This section has remained in regular maintenance by the Wootton Bassett Branch volunteers, and continues to be enjoyed by local walkers.

*Chaddington.* The landscaping of this area, eastwards from the lock, continued during the year. The towpath from Bincknoll Lane leading westwards towards Wootton Bassett is regularly used as a footpath by the local public.



*The restored stretch of canal at Chaddington (Doug Small)*

*Studley Grange.* Over recent years, discussions have continued with the three landowners on this section of the canal, extending eastwards from Bincknoll Lane. A lease has been agreed with the first landowner, and initial tree-planting and vegetation clearance has been done on this section. At the eastern end of this section, alongside the Studley Grange Garden and Leisure Park, the canal will be routed close to a former landfill site. Exploratory drilling by the Trust's Engineering Director established the precise location of the clay bund alongside the landfilled area. A detailed design for the re-excitation of the canal channel – to meet the requirements of the Planning Department and Minerals and Wastes Department of Wiltshire Council – was prepared. The formal application was submitted shortly before the end of the year, a joint application including both the work on the canal and the landowner's proposed new use for the land to the north of the canal.

### **Central (Ray Aldridge)**

*West Leaze.* We have doubled the length of usable canal by the removal of the dam at Bevans Bridge. Prior to its removal we had to repair the bund at the southern end of the section used for fishing as it was leaking at a high rate. This allowed the section of water to be used for the festival that was held in the summer.



*Boats on the canal at the West Leaze Canal Festival in September 2010 (Doug Small)*

*Latton Basin.* Work parties have continued to conserve the structures on this heritage project.

We have had groups of volunteers from companies and I would like to express my thanks to them. They include Intel, Nationwide, National Power and British Telecom.

During the year I had a meeting with Community Payback and as a result they now carry out regular grass cutting and hedge trimming on all of the towpaths we have in Swindon. This saves the work parties a lot of time and my thanks go to this organisation for helping us.

### **East (Dave Cook)**

*Pocket Park.* Good progress has been made on clearance on the new leased area. A depth gauge has been installed on the slipway wall. Regular maintenance continues.

*Steppingstone Lane Bridge.* Work has now been essentially completed, with the exception of the coping stones. Donated kerbstones have been laid to both sides of the bridleway at the necessary gradient (i.e. 1:12). The haunching and maintenance-free surface finish between the kerb and parapet wall have been constructed. The area around the bridge as been cleared and made tidy in preparation for landscaping. The 'green lane' was adversely affected by the heavy rain, poor drainage and the movement by dumper of material and scaffolding so we carried out reinstatement of the bridleway. Following a site visit, the Rights of Way Officer is content that the bridleway can be reopened. Plans are being made to do the final work to re-route the bridleway over the bridge.



*Steppingstone Lane Bridge (John Minns)*

*Childrey Bridleway Bridge.* Planning permission was granted for the erection of the temporary bridge alongside the site of Childrey Bridleway bridge following the acceptance by the Environment Agency of a water vole survey. At the end of the reporting period we await assistance from the RAF for the moving of the bridge from its current storage. Design work for the permanent replacement bridge continues.

*Childrey Spill Weir.* The major work for 2010 by East Vale Branch was the construction and completion of the spill weir at the end of the Childrey New Road section. The team worked long and hard over the summer months to build this structure from the ground up. There was much praise from visitors at the October AGM who were able to see the entire section in water for the first time. The Branch Chairman is extremely proud of his team and the results achieved are testament to their hard work and determination.



*Childrey Spillweir (John Minns)*

*Thames Water's Proposed Reservoir.* All supporters of our canal restoration will be aware that there has been a proposal by Thames Water Utilities to build a very large reservoir across the historic line of the Wilts & Berks Canal at the eastern end close to the Thames. This has resulted in uncertainty for many local residents and the Trust suspending restoration on Drayton Lock and other nearby works. The process of obtaining approval for such a large project is long and complex. A hearing was held in the summer of 2010 before a Government Inspector into the company's Water Resources Management Plan (2010-2035), including the reservoir. On 1st March 2011, the Inspector's 400 page Report was published. Amongst many detailed recommendations were that alternative options, including a smaller reservoir on the same site, must be re-evaluated. This has further extended the period of uncertainty for the Trust and all other interested parties.

# Events

The team has continued to represent the Trust at numerous shows and rallies using our main marquee and display boards. John Minns and Doug Small have had a very busy twelve months visiting the Newport (South Wales) Trail Boat Festival, the Reading Waterside Festival, the Braunston Historic Boat Show, the Chesterfield Canal Festival, the Newbury Water Festival, the IWA National at Beale Park, Semington for the Boat naming and Melksham Link Launch, the West Leaze Canal Event, the Trust AGM, the Southern Canals Conference at Wootton Bassett, and the Local History Fair in Swindon.



*The publicity stand at the IWA National Waterways Festival (John Minns)*

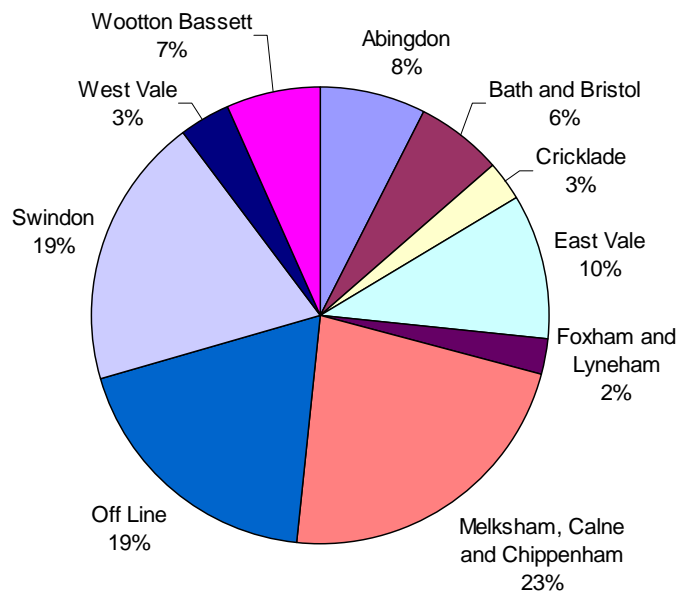
Other members of the team attended events such as the Abingdon Air & Country Show and the Uffington White Horse Show. We also supplied display materials for many local events organised by our various Branches. The newly designed posters used in the displays proved to be very popular and attracted a lot of interest and are certainly raising the public awareness of our project.

*Doug Small*

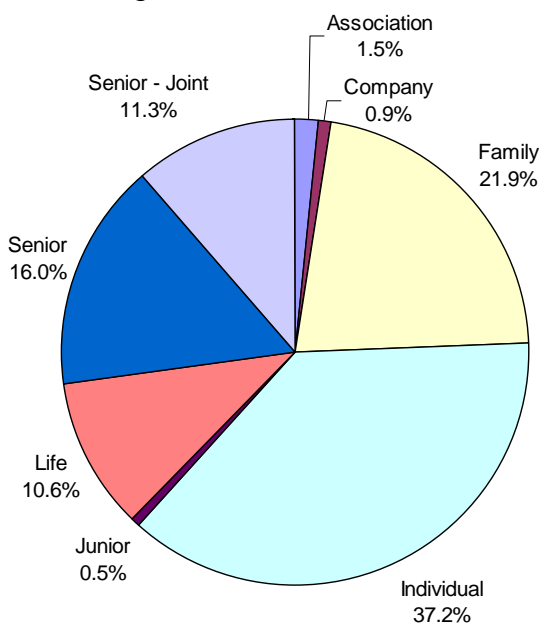
# Membership

This year saw 202 new members of the Trust bringing the total at the close of the year to 2,368 members.

The following chart shows the membership broken down by branch. Note that three of these branches (Abingdon, Bath & Bristol and Cricklade) are currently not active, however, existing members have been left allocated to them pending the re-activation of these branches unless they have requested otherwise.



The following chart shows the membership broken down by type. Note that for clarity, the various "Life" categories (Normal, Honorary, Senior, Joint, Senior Joint and Honorary Joint) have been merged.



Melanie Parker

# Trip Boats

Boat Trips have a number of important roles to play for the Trust:

- They provide local people with a great way of enjoying this historic canal and area from the waterway
- Without regular boat traffic the canal will quickly become overgrown, derelict and neglected
- The boat trips raise awareness of the restoration project and help to encourage new members
- They raise much needed funds for the Trust

At the beginning of 2010 the Trust was preparing plans for the purchase and running of a new bespoke trip boat. The speed of the project increased far beyond the original expectations when the Underwood Trust generously offered to fund the project in order that it could be launched in September that year and named by our Patron HRH The Duchess of Cornwall on her already planned visit.

After visiting other canal trusts, in partnership with Oxford Narrowboats, Tim Pyatt (the Trust's boat director) agreed a design, layout and project plan. With the now very tight timescales there were only two weeks' contingency in this plan and it is a testament to both the boat builders and the boat director (who was actually resident on site towards the end of construction) that the deadline was achieved with a week to spare.

Wednesday 8th September 2010 was a big day for the Trust. Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cornwall came to Semington to lead the celebrations to mark the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Wilts & Berks Canal and this included the official naming of the Trust's new trip boat.

The boat ran from Hilperton Marina to Semington; the journey had a scheduled stop at Whaddon Lane Bridge to allow HRH the Duchess of Cornwall to board the trip boat en route from an engagement at Trowbridge Library. After meeting her fellow guests, the Duchess unveiled a brass plaque in the cabin of the trip boat to commemorate the day, and signed the fly-leaf of the boat's log book.



*HRH The Duchess of Cornwall steering the new trip boat*

Tradition is that a canal boat should be named with a bottle of beer, Wadworth K&A 200 Celebration Ale was brewed specially to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the opening of the local canal in 1810 and so it was appropriate that the Duchess poured the beer over the bow, unveiled the name and announced that the new trip boat was to be called, "Dragonfly." She went on to say she looked forward to a day when the boat would sail the length of the fully restored canal.



*The traditional naming of the boat with a bottle of beer (Matt Allard)*

*Dragonfly* is of traditional construction, having a steel hull and superstructure. She can carry up to 12 passengers and 2 crew, and has plenty of room inside. With heating and a table she is ideal for parties or meetings even if the weather is poor. When the weather is good there is plenty of room for passengers outside the cabin. She has a galley with hob, fridge and sinks and there is a toilet on board. The engine has sound reduction for a smooth, quiet experience. She conforms to the MCA and BSC regulations including safety equipment. The boat has been designed to allow disabled access, and, when funds permit, for a wheelchair lift.

The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust is fortunate to have this great new trip boat. It enables us to offer regular trips to the public and for pre-booked groups; a great way for people to see the restored sections of the unique Wilts & Berks Canal. As well as her primary use as a trip boat, we very much hope to be able to make her available to members as a day boat, for those special occasions or as a way of showing family and friends the good work and progress on the canal.

The Trust has two other smaller boats which are used for events. Both these boats can be trailed to other restored sections, where it would be difficult to crane in *Dragonfly*.

*Tim Pyatt*

## Land Ownership

The Trust is conscious that its restoration activities are usually carried out by kind permission of the landowners concerned. The Trust wishes to take this opportunity to thank those landowners who have assisted the Trust in its aims by giving such permission. The Trust also wishes to remind all members and workers of the need to respect the landowner's rights when allowed on to such land.

## The Wilts & Berks Canal Partnership

In difficult economic times it is very pleasing that the strength of working in partnership is continuing to enable significant restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal. I thank all the Partners for their continuing support. I am pleased to welcome Chippenham Vision to the Partnership and look forward to working with them to promote boating activity on the River Avon as well as the longer term aim to re-connect the town with a new branch of the canal.

The Partnership continues to have the support of Wiltshire Council's Canal Officer, Ken Oliver, whose main role is to enable work on the Wilts & Berks restoration but he also works to promote the Kennet & Avon Canal and the restoration of the Cotswold Canals.

Significant progress has been made on the Wilts & Berks with a 1km section of new canal in Wichelstowe Swindon and we look forward to its opening later in 2011.

We were pleased that HRH the Duchess of Cornwall was able to make a start to symbolically launch the Melksham Link project last September. Thanks to the co-operation of the landowners on the proposed route, planning work is continuing on this important link from the Kennet & Avon at Semington to the River Avon in Melksham.

Members of the Partnership at March 2011:

British Waterways

Canoe England

Chippenham Vision

Cooper Tires

Cotswold Canals Trust

Cricklade Town Council

Environment Agency

Inland Waterways Association

Kennet and Avon Canal Trust

Melksham Town Council

Melksham Trust

Melksham Without Parish Council

Nationwide Building Society

Oxfordshire County Council

Swindon Borough Council

Sustrans

Thames Water Utilities Ltd

Vale of White Horse District Council

Waterways Trust

Wilts & Berks Canal Trust

Wiltshire Council

Wootton Bassett Town Council

*Fleur de Rhé-Philippe  
Partnership Chairman*