

Wendover Canal towpath upgrade

Report for HS2 Chiltern AONB Review Group March 2023

1. Funding

Wendover Canal towpath funding to-date				Distance @ £364/m		Award date
No.	Funder	Award	Cumulative	Metres	Cumulative	
1	Wendover Parish Council	£25,000	£25,000	69	69	06/04/2021
5	HS2 Chiltern AONB R/Group	£291,500	£316,500	802	870	01/07/2021
2	Lionel Abel-Smith Trust	£25,000	£341,500	69	939	04/08/2021
3	Halton Parish Council	£1,000	£342,500	3	942	17/11/2021
4	Wendover Comm Board	£25,000	£367,500	69	1,011	16/12/2021
6	HS2 Chiltern AONB R/Group	£380,000	£747,500	1,045	2,056	28/11/2022

Therefore a total of 2km of upgrade has now been funded, 93% of it by the Review Group; the above distances are based on CRT's latest cost per metre of £364.

2. Distance funded in relation to Wendover Canal milestones and 3km buffer zone

The above 2km / £747K that has been funded compares with:

	Total distance	Funding reqd	% funded
Wendover Parish: Wharf Road to Oliver's Bridge (former railway)	0.78km	£280,000	100%
Oliver's Bridge to parish boundary with Halton	1.10km	£400,000	100%
Parish boundary to the centre of Perch Bridge (SW of Halton)	1.66km	£610,000	100%
Road bridge SW of Halton to the point at which the footpath starts that leads to Weston Turville (i.e. the full Wendover Greenway)	1.90km	£690,000	100%
Start of Weston Turville footpath to centre of Halton	2.72km	£990,000	76%
Centre of Halton (roadside) to 3km HS2 buffer zone	3.18km	£1,160,000	64%

Wendover Canal Trust is the operating name of the Wendover Arm Trust.

3. Construction progress

It is more than disappointing that nearly two years after initial award, towpath upgrade has not yet started.

However vegetation clearance along the entire 2.72km between Wendover and Halton has taken place in January of this year. This £11K project needed to be completed by mid-February to ensure that bird nesting was avoided. It was carried out entirely by Wendover Canal Trust's volunteers, using guidance from CRT, and was funded by the Review Group.



The good news is that following discussion with CRT and Chilterns Conservation Board, the specification of the new Centrack towpath was altered during January / February to reduce the default width from 1.8m to 1.5m, whilst enabling an increase to 1.8m when funding is available. This has resulted in the cost being limited to £364/metre and a greater distance to be funded. 50% of the towpath will be raised to the necessary 119.5 A.O.D. with bank fill and Nicospan bank protection.

Plans are now finalised for the initial 1,650m of towpath, i.e. to Perch Bridge; and a further 375m (total 2,025m) is likely to be specified during April.

We can therefore now report with reasonable certainty that either 1,650m or 2,025m of towpath upgrade will be carried out by CRT / Kier between May-July 2023.

4. Next steps

Once the initial 2,024m has been upgraded this leaves just 690m to reach the centre of Halton - at a cost of £243K. This milestone is strategically important as it creates a continuous active travel path between Wendover and Halton. The funding required is ca £100K less than the £340K estimated at our last presentation to the Review Group in November, due to the reduction in cost per metre despite significant materials price inflation.

It is hoped that once Kier's plans for upgrade this summer are well advanced, the Review Group will consider funding of this final 690m in order that our initial goal of Wendover-Halton linkage can be achieved, with all the benefits that this will bring for the local communities. We would be delighted if Review Group members could visit the site once construction of the initial phase has been completed.

Peter Elwin
Partnerships Director
22nd March 2023

Wendover Canal Trust is the operating name of the Wendover Arm Trust.

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Registered Office Wendover Canal Trust, Island House, Moor Road, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 1WA.