

Visitor Centre update



Earlier in the summer, a planning application was submitted for the development of a new visitor centre in the Canal Basin to replace the existing portacabin. As the proposed site is located above the Grade II-listed limekilns, English Heritage were consulted for their views on the project. They requested further information including a requirement to undertake some initial archaeological work to establish the exact location and condition of the filled-in limekilns below the site.

Archaeology consultants were engaged to strip back the turf and soil and provide a report. This work has been completed and the report and additional information has been passed on to English Heritage. Their support for the project is essential, and it is hoped that by identifying the exact location of the limekilns they will be satisfied that any potential damage to the limekilns - which could be caused by the pilings required to support the building - can be avoided. The site has now been refilled and grassed over, whilst we await the planning decision.

An update on the outcome of the planning application will be provided in the winter edition of Ranger's Rag.

Oral history project setback

Plans to record and preserve local people's memories of the Canal and the old branch railway lines have suffered a setback. The Heritage Lottery Fund has decided not to fund a partnership project involving the Canal Ranger Service, Tiverton Museum and volunteers from the Halberton History Group. The project was to involve training the volunteers to undertake oral history interviewing, and then using the recordings and transcripts to create two new audio-visual displays giving members of the public access to these reminiscences – one located in the Tiverton Museum and one located in the proposed new Canal Visitor Centre. The museum would also have housed a new oral history archive and would have lent audio recording equipment provided through the project to community groups wishing to undertake their own oral history research.

In declining to fund the project, HLF cited the current high demand for its funding and the uncertainty over the potential development of the new Canal Visitor Centre – given that planning permission has not yet been granted. As and when planning permission is granted, the partnership may consider reapplying with an improved proposal.

Well done Jo!



Congratulations to Canal Ranger Joanne Roberts and her husband Geoff on the birth of their first child.

Max was born on October 12th, weighing 9lb, 4oz. Jo will be on maternity leave until next summer and we send them all our best wishes!

