



## Heritage Report:

# Preservation of Twyford End Lock on the Itchen Navigation

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**Produced by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust  
on behalf of the Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project partnership**

Hampshire & Isle of Wight  
Wildlife Trust  
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## Introduction

The Itchen Navigation was completed in 1710 to carry barges loaded with coal and other goods from the seaport of Southampton to trading centre of Winchester. 15 locks and two half-locks on the 10.5 mile route helped float the barges up the Navigation. Most of the locks were 'turf sided'; there was only brickwork or stonework at the head and tail of the lock to hold the lock gates. Turf sided locks were a design used on navigations in the early 1700s. They required a large volume of water to fill due to their sloping sides. Nearly all locks on later canals had brick-lined chambers. The survival of several turf sided locks on the Itchen Navigation makes the waterway nationally important as very few others in the country survive in their near original state.

The Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project was led by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust from 2007 to 2012. The aim of the project was to conserve the Itchen Navigation and to repair some examples of the heritage features found along its length. The project received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund in October 2007. The project was also funded and supported by: Environment Agency, Winchester City Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Natural England, Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council and the Inland Waterways Association.

Wessex Archaeology produced a heritage report on the Itchen Navigation in April 2005<sup>1</sup>. This is available on the 'History' page of the Itchen Navigation project website: [www.itchennavigation.org.uk](http://www.itchennavigation.org.uk) Wessex Archaeology (2005) describes Twyford Lane End Lock as regionally significant and of the utmost importance as one of the original elements of the Itchen Navigation. Issues identified in the report are: interpretation, preservation of surviving historic remains and removal of vegetation.

Twyford End Lock is located at: SU 47930 26520



OS licence: 100015632

<sup>1</sup> Wessex Archaeology (2005). *Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Hampshire. Heritage Report for a Conservation Management Plan*. Salisbury: Wessex Archaeology.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The aims of the preservation work were to:

- remove vegetation that was obscuring the lock from view and causing damage to the structure
- stabilise and preserve original brickwork and stonework

## **Methods**

### ***Vegetation management***

When the lock was examined by Itchen Navigation project staff in 2009, very little of the structure was visible due to tree and scrub growth. Scrub and small trees were cleared from around the head of the lock by volunteer groups in February 2010. Efforts were focused on the head of the lock which was more accessible and more brickwork remained to preserve. The following winter larger trees which had roots growing into the brickwork were felled by contractors. Within the head of the lock are some modern additions: concrete walls to hold a sluice gate and a weir in the bed of the lock chamber.

### ***Brickwork repair***

In summer 2010, trained volunteers started to repoint and consolidate the brickwork at the head of the lock.

The following steps were taken to preserve the remains of the structure:

- moss and vegetation were scraped off from the front of the brickwork
- brickwork joints were raked out and re-pointed
- bricks damaged by frost were pieced in individually
- voids in the brickwork were deep pointed

Brickwork repairs were completed in the summer of 2011.

## Discussion

Whilst clearing away the vegetation from the head of the lock the date :1749~ was found engraved in the north gate pier of the head of the lock. Historic documentation states that construction of the Itchen Navigation was completed in 1710, which makes the significance of the 1749 date unclear. It could have been that Twyford End Lock was constructed at a later date to the rest of the Navigation or that repair work was carried out on the lock in 1749.



*Date engraved in brick at the head of the lock*

It is clear that the brickwork in the head of the lock has been repaired previously. Unfortunately traditional lime mortars were not used for some of the previous repairs.



## Photographic documentation

Before vegetation clearance by Bob Painton (Feb 2010)



After vegetation clearance by Bob Painton (Feb 2010)





Preserving the brickwork by Polly Whyte (Jul 2010)





After tree work by Polly Whyte ( 2011)





South side of lock gate after brickwork preservation by Polly Whyte (Nov 2011)





North side of lock gate after brickwork preservation by Polly Whyte (Nov 2011)





South side of lock gate by Polly Whyte (Nov 2011)



North side of lock gate by Polly Whyte (Nov 2011)



## References

Course, E (1983). *The Itchen Navigation*. Southampton: Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group.

Wessex Archaeology (2005). *Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Hampshire. Heritage Report for a Conservation Management Plan*. Salisbury: Wessex Archaeology.