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River Wey Navigations

NEWS FROM THE ST CATHERINE'S LENGTHSMAN – AUGUST 2018

The last few weeks have been challenging, with the heatwave continuing. Apart from the business of working in those conditions the policing aspect of my job increased with the large number of people heading for the river. Unfortunately there were issues with people swimming and picnicking at the locks, which is obviously dangerous and hindered boaters attempting to use the waterway. Another concern is the use of barbecues with the grassland being tinder dry at this time. The hot weather seems to bring out the worst in a minority of people and there have been several instances of petty vandalism such as damage to the St Catherine's lock sign and lock gates.

I've managed to get a lot of mowing and strimming done though. With the hot weather the lockside grass had not made a lot of growth but looked better for setting the cutter high and just taking the whiskers off. At Stonebridge Wharf the moorings, access track and car park had a cut with the ride-on mower - a very dusty job in the dry conditions.

Further downstream near Pyrford Lock I spent a day with fellow lengthsmen clearing a large oak tree, which had fallen and blocked the Navigation. It took the three of us a day to clear it and it was a very satisfying moment when, having removed all the weight, the stump and root plate returned to an almost upright position.

Look out at the moment for the flocks of brightly coloured Goldfinches feeding mainly on seeds, especially of thistle - a truly stunning little bird.

See you by the river.

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