



National
Trust

River Wey Navigations

NEWS FROM THE ST CATHERINE'S LENGTHSMAN –2020

At the risk of stating the obvious, the last few weeks have been dominated by dealing with the effects of storm Dennis and Ciara, such as a lot of adjustments to be made to my weirs - fifty adjustments in fact during the course of the month (which, believe me, is a lot). At one point we had water flowing through the garden and around the cottage but thankfully it didn't get high enough to come indoors. At its peak the water was only about nine inches lower than that which we experienced in December 2013.

The other issue caused by the weather that I've had to deal with has been fallen and damaged trees, three of which needed to be cleared from the navigation. On one notable day me and my colleague Richard managed to clear these from the river, as well another tree which had fallen by the Pill Box on the Railway Line Walk and winched out an Alder tree which was threatening to block my weirs. Unfortunately the root ball of this was so large that our attempts to remove it completely were thwarted and I shall need the help of our floating excavator to finish that particular job. It was quite a day, although hopefully not to be repeated.

Signs of spring are around us now. On the Railway Line Walk the primroses are in flower. Below St Catherines Hill the marsh marigolds are making an appearance and on the river banks I am seeing the first of the delicate lady's smock or cuckoo flower. Look out for the linnets perched atop the bramble and gorse bushes near St Catherine's Lock. Also, if you are lucky, you may catch sight of a pretty little tree creeper hopping up a tree trunk using its tail to brace itself whilst searching the crevices in the bark for spiders or insects and their larvae to eat.

See you by the river.

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