WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST
Patron: Her Majesty the Queen
Restoring 70 miles of canal and towpath
for the benefit of local communities, wildlife and leisure

Swindon Branch
Work party activities - March 2026

Summary

Overall, progress has been excellent this month, bolstered by favourable weather conditions and thanks to our volunteer's time and efforts.

Key milestones include the arrival of the new storage container and significant progress on bank maintenance and leak identification.

Westleaze



- **Infrastructure:** A new sign has been successfully erected at the landing stage with assistance from Southby employees.
- **Bridge work:** Foundations for both the Swing Bridge and Badger's Bridge are proceeding according to plan.
- **Maintenance:** High water levels helped identify several leaks. These leaks are being addressed by the regular work party volunteers.
- **Landscaping:** The towpath is being cleared of invasive trees and brambles. The bank restoration area is currently being landscaped and prepared for wildflower seeding.
- **Logistics:** The new site container has been delivered and positioned. Special thanks to the volunteers who managed road marshalling during the crane operation.



Mouldon Hill

- **Bank clearance:** Intensive work continues to remove trees from the canal bank. Volunteers are utilizing the Tirfor winch—a physically demanding but essential task.
- **Upcoming support:** Efforts are being prioritised to complete this phase before the arrival of the Waterway Recovery Group (WRG) forestry team and KESCRG volunteers later in the year.
- We have contacted a tree surgeon, who is giving us wood chippings as and when they have some, so we can cover the towpath where it is needed the most.



Colin - WPO Swindon Branch

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East Wichel

- **Current Status:** Ongoing work between Foxham Way and Mill Lane.
- **Pending:** We are awaiting formal confirmation regarding the transfer of responsibility and the specific scope of our contracted duties for this stretch.

Future planning & inactive sites

The following areas remain on our Work Party Works & Projects roadmap for future intervention, though no active work was conducted this period:

- **River Ray Towpath** (Cheney Manor to Purton Road)
- **Hayes Knoll**

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