



# WILTS & BERKS CANAL TRUST

PATRON: HRH THE DUCHESS OF CORNWALL  
RESTORING IN PARTNERSHIP THE WILTS & BERKS CANAL THROUGH WILTSHIRE,  
SWINDON AND OXFORDSHIRE



Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council  
117 High Street  
Royal Wootton Bassett  
Wilts  
SN4 7AU

12th December 2012



Dear Sirs

## Transfer of Title number WT128921 to the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust

The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust, a registered charity, would like Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council to consider transferring land owned by the Council, and being part of the historic Wilts & Berks Canal, to the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust. The registered title (number WT 128921) encompasses a strip of land approximately 300 metres by 10 metres, and includes the waterway. This transfer would allow the Trust to continue its work of restoring on behalf of the community the whole of the former Wilts & Berks Canal. The Trust's justification for this request is set out below.

We understand that Wootton Bassett Town Council acquired the land in the 1980s, securing formal title in 1994. The purpose of that initiative, as we understand it, was to secure the line of the canal, and to preserve the route.

## The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust

In 1977 a group of individuals came together with a view to restoring the waterway as a national recreational asset. Restoration at various locations along the line commenced almost immediately.

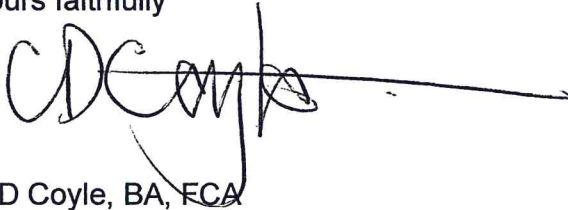
Not acting alone, the group now known as **The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust** were joined in 1997 by a Partnership which was formed to support the aims of the Trust. **The Wiltshire Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership**, under the Presidency of Lord Lansdowne, is now composed of all of the local authorities along the line of the canal, including County, District, Unitary, Town and Parish Councils. RWB Town Council is a supportive member of the Partnership. In addition partners include local commerce, educational establishments, leisure and sporting organisations, Natural England and the Environment Agency. All organisations working together with the Trust to achieve the restoration of the waterway as a twenty first century leisure resource and wildlife trail.

For many years the volunteers of the Trust have maintained this land, as part of the overall stretch of the restored Wilts & Berks Canal in RWB. As the Council will be aware, the canal is enjoyed by many of the people of the town as a valuable recreational asset. The Trust intends to continue to maintain and enhance the canal in RWB in its entirety. In the longer term the Trust intends to restore the entire canal as a navigable waterway. As a shorter term project the Trust has started on a five year project to make the entire length of the canal a footpath and wildflower trail. One of the sub-projects within this is the creation of a safe walking and cycling route between RWB and Swindon. The piece of land which is the subject of this letter will be an integral part of these projects.

The Trust has come a very long way in the 35 years since its inauguration and restoration was started. It has grown from strength to strength through the generous input of countless numbers of volunteers working to protect, conserve and improve the route of the waterway for the benefit of local communities and the environment. It was therefore of great delight to learn through an announcement in the London Gazette on the weekend of the recent Diamond Jubilee that 'Her Majesty The Queen has been graciously pleased to confer Her award in 2012 upon The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust in recognition of its outstanding voluntary work in the community.'

Any assistance that can be given to moving forward this widely supported restoration would be greatly appreciated. We would therefore ask that RWB Town Council should consider transferring the title to the Trust as part of this work, at nominal consideration. The Trust accepts that there will be legal costs for the Council related to this transaction, and is prepared to underwrite the reasonable legal fees of the Council.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C D Coyle', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

C D Coyle, BA, FCA

Company Secretary