



In the absence of anyone to edit Coates Cuttings, this mini news sheet was emailed to members in May 2020

We are aiming to produce a Newsletter as soon as possible, but wanted to give you some news in advance of that.

Inevitably the current pandemic has affected what we are able to do and how we are able to do it. The requirements of physical-distancing, as well as restrictions on movement outdoors, have meant that we have had to cancel our weedbusting work parties for the foreseeable future and we've had to meet as a committee via Zoom rather than face to face.

Meeting via Zoom is one of the reasons we are contacting you. Our next Chelmer Canal Trust Talk is scheduled for **Tuesday, 16th June.**

We are grateful that **Chelmsford City Council Councillor Rose Moore** has agreed to give an illustrated talk with the title

A Vision for Chelmsford's Waterways.

This will cover three main areas of focus:

- Achieving Balance - greater accessibility for the public/respect for the natural environment (EWT's Living Landscapes scheme)
- Civil Engineering projects (the new lock and weir, raising bridges, creating living walls along the city centre channels, moorings, slipways)
- Regeneration of Sandford Mill & the wider Country Park

Even with the recent relaxations of the lock down, we won't be able to meet together at Moulsham Mill as we normally do, but plan to deliver the talk via Zoom. We also hope to make a recording available to watch later online. If you are familiar with Zoom you will know how relatively easy it is to use to see and talk to others. If you haven't used Zoom please give it a try. All you need is to have internet access on your laptop, tablet or smartphone. You don't need to download anything! You will simply have to click on a link we'll send you, click on the prompts you will be given and you will be able to watch and listen to the talk, and, if you care to, you can comment or ask a question. You can remain unseen if you want!

We hope you will be prepared to give it a try. Please let us know, preferably by mid day on the 16th June that you want to take part by emailing us confirming that you do. We'll then send you a link and from about 7.20pm on Tuesday 16th June you can get connected and be ready for the talk.

Finally, and importantly, please be prepared to support the Chelmer Canal Trust's 'Dudley's Bench Appeal'. The majority of members of the Chelmer Canal Trust will remember Dudley Courtman. If you didn't know him you'll probably have heard of him. And if you haven't heard of him, you should have! He was a local legend!

Dudley's two main passions were canoeing and the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation.



Protecting the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation

While working for the London Borough of Newham, Dudley introduced literally hundreds of young people to canoeing – and tributes we've received from some of them, now much later in their lives, underline how his commitment inspired a lifelong interest in canoeing and the outdoors.

Involved in a range of groups which had an interest in the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation, Dudley was instrumental in the founding of the Friends of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation, later to become today's Chelmer Canal Trust. It was Dudley who, recognising the threat of Floating American Pennywort, raised awareness of the seriousness of the situation, accessing large amounts of grant aid and starting our now infamous Work Parties.

With the agreement and enthusiastic support of Dudley's son and daughter we plan to install a wooden bench beside the towpath along the Navigation to commemorate Dudley and ensure that his memory lives on. Our target, based on doing the installation ourselves, is to raise £800. Please consider donating to this appeal and supporting the memory of a person to whom we owe so much. You can donate online, which potentially has the added benefit of an extra 25% of Gift Aid being added to your donation at no extra cost to you.

Just visit <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/Dudley>. Or send your cheque, made payable to The Chelmer Canal Trust, to Windmill Pasture, Little Waltham Road, Chelmsford CM1 7TG.

In the meantime, stay well and we'll hope to be able to meet again in the not-too-distant future.