

Community Projects

2009 Barge Report - 13th June to 10th July

The 2009 Barge trips were another resounding success judging by the smiles and laughter, through to quiet peace and relaxation experienced by our guests.

- [See extracts from 'Thank You' letters below](#)

The success can also be measured by the way in which guests got involved tackling the steering, and working at the Locks and Swing Bridges.



Approximately 280 people benefited from the trips this year.

We set off, on the 13th June, from the Bruce Trust Wharf at Great Bedwyn, full of excitement and expectation, onboard the Hannah, which is owned by [The Bruce Trust](#).



The Hannah is fitted with a "joy stick" steering facility, which our Rotary Club financed a few years ago, to enable those who are not strong enough to use the tiller to steer the Barge. It is also fully equipped for wheelchair users.

28 different groups experienced the fun and challenge of the locks, swing bridges and steering, while enjoying the relaxing pace of the barge and beauty of the countryside.

The weather was exceptionally dry and on occasions exceptionally hot this year.

Our guest groups ranged from profoundly disabled children to disadvantaged children through to elderly disabled with their carers, helpers, family members or friends.



Two groups of children, and their carers, stayed overnight on the Barge which they found exciting and thoroughly enjoyable.



Over the four weeks we cover around 233 miles, opening and closing 1000 lock gates and swing bridges.

Rotarians, their family and friends contributed over 1,100 man and women hours to ensure the safe and friendly passage of the barge. Some are retired but many took part of their annual leave or gave up their weekends to help out.

Such is the joy that we get out of it, the wise ones plan and volunteer

early to again experience the challenge and satisfaction of helping others.



Finally a big Thank You from us.

We are most grateful to our 2009 Sponsors, without whose help we could not finance the trips:

- Abingdon Town Council
- Abingdon Bridge Club
- BrookStreet des Roches LLP
- Joe Hughes
- RWE npower
- Waitrose Abingdon

Extracts from a few of the many 'Thank You' letters

Kingfisher School

"Thank you very much for our barge trip. I liked driving the boat. I enjoyed sleeping on the boat.

Thank you for letting us on your barge. My best bit of the day is when I steered the barge and opened the locks. I would like to go on the barge next year.

I had a good time. I helped open the locks which I enjoyed. I liked sleeping on the boat. Thank you.

Thank you for a lovely time on the Barge. I really enjoyed it. I liked steering the Barge even though I crashed!

Thank you for letting us go on the barge trip. I really enjoyed driving the boat. I liked the Barge trip. I saw ducks.

I feed the bread to the ducks."

Douglas House

"Thank you to all of you who helped us on our two trips. We all had a lovely and relaxed."

Helen House

"A huge thank you to you all for such a lovely day on the canal. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and know that the families and children did too."

South & Vale Young Carers

"Thank you for a fab day on the barge!"

- [This report is also available in PDF format](#)