

## **Cattle Dock Works at Stogumber 30 June / 1 July 2018.**

The first working party of the project to refurbish Stogumber cattle dock was held over the weekend of 30 June / 1 July.

The work tackled was the clearing of the slope up to the dock and the access to that. This involved digging out some tenacious shrubs; extracting the concrete posts installed to fence off the access ramp when the dock was closed; clearing the vegetation off the slope; regrading it to a proper profile, removing the 'hump' where the slope 'lands' on the Station yard; and grass seeding the cleaned ramp. We also trimmed the bottom of the newly-installed rail access gates so that they open easily when required.

On this weekend of exceptionally hot weather, work started at 06:00 for two of the team, reinforcements arrived later and work stopped by lunchtime. Obviously there was a certain amount of tea / coffee drinking and train watching involved.

All objectives set for the weekend were achieved, and a well-filled skip now awaits collection. It was particularly satisfying to have the ramp seeded in time for the Sunday afternoon rain.

Some WSR archaeology was revealed. The dock was built around the pre-existing Goods Office, demolished in the years running up to closure. The plinth course of stonework has emerged.

The next working party will be 21/22 July, when it is hoped more normal weather will be experienced and we can keep to the planned 10:00 to 16:00 working hours. The object will be to strip the vegetation off the top surface of the dock ready for similar grassing where the surface is beaten earth, and to allow the refurbishment of the brick area under the original pens to be tackled later. More hands welcome.

There are now rumours of the possibility of a significant military exhibit on the dock during the WSR 40's weekend in September...

Bob, Colin, Russell and Robin