

OPERATING THE WATERWHEEL

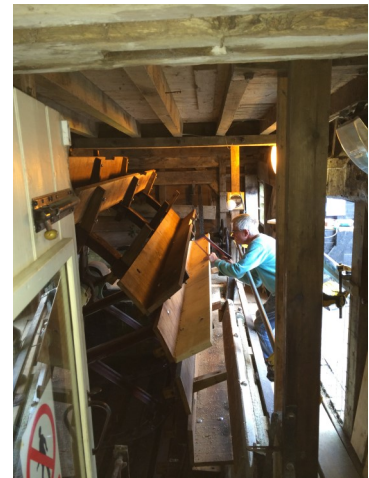
We run the waterwheel by controlling the flow of water. When the main sluice in front of the wheel is open the water flows through it, setting the wheel in motion.

To stop the waterwheel, we close the main sluice. The water then by-passes the wheel and flows through a smaller sluice on the right-hand side.

Discussion point... can you think of any other reasons why the water levels would have to be managed via the sluice gates?



The waterwheel's wooden floats gradually break down through contact with water and we replace them about every ten years.



This is the waterwheel with all the old timber removed. The replacement 1" thick oak boards, were purposefully left raw to prevent any treatment from leaching out into the river and harming the wildlife.

The rebuilding of the waterwheel began with the 90 oak Starts being fitted. The Backboards were then fitted between the Starts, ready for the floats (also known as paddles) to be attached.

Each of the 30 floats were carefully added, working evenly around the wheel to maintain balance. Because the ceiling beam has dropped over the decades, a piece of each float had to be removed to provide clearance.

Discussion point... why do you think the waterwheel was made with a metal frame but wooden paddles, when it was first installed?

