

Head Office Bulletin – November 2007 – Issue 130

Head Office Bulletin is available in pdf format on IWA's Internet site, along with a wide range of information about the Association and the inland waterways. www.waterways.org.uk should be the first place to look for any information that you need. You can also subscribe to receive Head Office Bulletin in text form by e-mail as soon as it is published each month. Additional e-mail mailing lists (news@waterways.org.uk and pressrelease@waterways.org.uk) provide more frequent mailings of timely news, which enable the Association to keep members and other supporters more up-to-date with all that the Association is doing, but all the news is reported at the end of each month, updated where appropriate. If you wish to make any changes to the mailings that you receive, please contact Vicky Clark at IWA Head Office.

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About People

We are deeply saddened to record the death of **Mike Stevens** on 2nd October, aged 65, whilst boating on the Trent & Mersey Canal. Mike was a former secretary and newsletter editor of IWA's London

Region and South London Branch, publicity officer for Canalway Cavalcade for many years and a trustee of the London Canal Museum. He ran the 'Save our Waterways' web site over the past year, edited the newsletter at IWA national festivals, conducted numerous walks along the towing paths around London to raise funds, and was widely respected as an authoritative figure on the waterways, particularly around London. Originally a maths teacher by profession, he concluded his career as a full-time trades-union official. He started boating in 1972 with a hire-boat holiday, and in 2005, following retirement, used a legacy to purchase a new boat, his third, on which he commenced life as a 'continuous cruiser' around the inland waterways with his wife Wendy. His funeral on 15th October was well attended by the waterways community, especially for the Internet waterway groups, of which Mike was a keen participant.

Bruce Hall has retired as chairman of Cotswold Canals Trust after 20 years in the post and 22 years as a trustee of the charity. Throughout this time he has been the public face of the Trust whilst negotiating ever-greater progress to advance what was seen by many as a 'hopeless case', when he took over as chairman, to one of the leading restoration projects in the UK, and with the Trust now having the largest membership of any local canal restoration group (currently about 5,200 members) and widespread popular support, including from nearby resident Prince Charles. Bruce, whose outstanding chairmanship was recognised with an MBE, will remain involved in the restoration work as an ambassador for the Cotswold Canals Partnership. His successor as chairman is **Liz Payne**, who retired as a member of IWA's Council and deputy national chairman at the end of September.

Following a disagreement amongst trustees of the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust, a vote of no confidence was passed in the Trust's chairman, **Brian Poulton**, and he resigned along with the vice chairman (**Mike Lee**), treasurer (**David Lindop**), company secretary (**Fleur de Rhe-Philipe**) and one other trustee (**Mike Davis**). There remain ten trustees, but new officer posts have yet to be announced.

Kevin Blick left Canal Boat magazine, and its publishers Archant, on 25th October, to take up a freelance journalist career. His last edition of the magazine as editor is the December edition. His successor has yet to be announced.

David Long has retired as chairman of Sankey Canal Restoration Society, having led the campaign for the restoration of the St Helens / Sankey Canal through the Society's 20-year existence. **Andy Screen** is acting chairman pending a more formal election.

Following a challenge to the chairmanship of the board of the River Stour Trust at its meeting on 11th October, **Peter Hesketh** was voted in to the post to succeed **Tony Platt**.

Boatmasters' Licence

The Government's response to the House of Commons Transport Committee's inquiry into the Boatmasters' Licence has been published. Government has not accepted the Committee's main recommendation that implementation of the new Boatmasters' Licence be delayed. The Government's response also says that the Boatmasters' Licence is a significant improvement on the previous arrangements and that no aspect of the licence represents a diminution of safety standards.

Potentially of interest to the voluntary sector, the Committee recommended that the Government introduce an alternative, assessment-based, revalidation process for licence-holders who would not be able to complete the necessary days of service during the currency of their licence. The Government has supported this recommendation, and says it will develop an amendment to the regulations to accommodate it, following a consultation process.

In response to the Committee's recommendation that the Government monitor training costs and, if

necessary provide assistance, the Government responded that it was conscious of the financial impact, but that the tiered and modular structure is intended to minimise the cost of training new entrants, and that courses are being developed that may be eligible for funding from the Learning and Skills Council.

The Committee recommended that the Government suspend the introduction of the new licence, with suitable transitional provision for those already in training, until it had resolved the problems with the scope of European Union Directive 96/50/EC, which led to the new regulations, the perceived potential damage caused to the inland shipping industry by increased training costs, and concerns about safety on the tidal River Thames. The Government has not, however, agreed that this would be a proportional response to the scale of the issues identified in the report. Delaying introduction of the licence would put the UK in breach of the European Directive as there would be no mechanism under which the UK could recognise the European Boatmasters' Certificate from other European countries, and the UK would be without any form of licensing regime, since legislation has already been passed to revoke the previous regulations.

British Waterways Annual Meeting

British Waterways' Annual Meeting took place in Birmingham on 17th October. Tony Hales, BW's chairman, and Robin Evans, BW's chief executive, gave upbeat speeches which emphasised that BW had managed to keep its network open and undertake a great deal of work during the year notwithstanding the challenges of floods this summer, which had caused £8 million of additional costs and cuts to its funding from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Questions from the waterway community attending the meeting were challenging and critical of BW in some areas, particularly on licence fee increase proposals and the trial on mooring tenders, but remained polite and well-ordered. A full transcript of the presentations and 'Question & Answer' session is available at www.britishwaterways.co.uk/annual_meeting/index.html

During the meeting, Robin Evans warned that the timing of commercial income from a major property

development was likely to slip, and not therefore be received in this financial year. This was likely to lead to a number of planned winter maintenance works having to be postponed into the next financial year, as BW would not now have sufficient cash to fund them. Some stoppage cancellations have already been announced, including that at Foxton Locks in Leicestershire.

British Waterways Licence Fee Consultation

IWA has criticised both British Waterways' proposals, published on 8th October, to increase licence fees by approximately 9% per year in real terms for the next three years, (a compound increase of nearly 33% overall), and the consultation itself. IWA considers that rises in licence fees should be no greater than rises in BW's costs, under a formula that BW previously promised to waterway user groups. By introducing these proposals, British Waterways is adding to a series of other cost increases, which include higher Boat Safety Scheme charges; fuel prices likely to treble in price following the planned removal of derogation on Red Diesel; and higher mooring fees. IWA is concerned that British Waterways will price some people, especially those with fixed incomes, off the waterways.

IWA additionally criticises BW's consultation document because it fails to consult about the level of price increase and merely seeks views about the detail and manner in which the higher charges will be introduced. IWA intends to formally respond to the consultation after gauging the views of its members and other waterway interests.

The proposals cover increases in boat licence fees in England and Wales from April 2008 until March 2011. They are a change to the previously established method of setting annual licence fees, determined following consultation in 2002. In 2003 British Waterways undertook to peg the boat licence fee to its cost inflation index.

British Waterways says that it recognises the importance of boats and boaters as an essential ingredient to making the waterways so appealing to so many people and says that fostering a vibrant boating market is not only a public duty, it also makes sound business sense. Nevertheless, in reviewing cost commitments against forecast income, British

Waterways has concluded that it is necessary for boat licence holders to increase their contribution to these costs. British Waterways expects part of this increased contribution to come from modest growth in boat numbers and improvements in collection of fees; but for the remainder to be generated by price increases of approximately 9% per year in real terms for each of the next three years.

British Waterways says that it recognises the difficulty such increases would pose for private boat licence holders who have fixed retirement incomes, but believes that it would be extremely difficult to ensure that any concession for this group was granted only to qualifying owners and that it would be unlikely to be a practical or cost effective option. British Waterways suggests that opportunities for boating on the waterways extend much more widely than boat ownership.

There are eight proposals that together are designed to generate an increase in licence income and on which British Waterways has invited comment. Within the proposals there is one which asks whether part of the revenue should be raised by lowering the discount for prompt payment. Alternative proposals are also invited if they are clearly substantiated and recognise that licence fees would have to be raised to generate the required increase in real income. Details of how to access the consultation document are given below.

British Waterways has moved its craft licensing department from its head office in Watford to its shared services operation in Leeds, and renamed it the boat licensing team. Boat owners wishing to contact BW with a craft licensing enquiry should, in the first instance, continue to contact BW's Customer Service Centre ☎ 01923 201120 or email: enquiries.hq@britishwaterways.co.uk. This customer service team is not changing and remains at Watford.

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As IWA is unhappy with the approaches adopted by both British Waterways and the Government, because it feels that neither appears to have got its act together regarding funding of the waterways, the Association intends to take the initiative, and plans to present alternative solutions to bridge the funding gap to navigation authorities and Government. To achieve this, IWA is canvassing members' and other interested

keeping our waterways alive



parties' views on how the waterways should be funded, and has launched a consultation asking waterway supporters to submit their views and ideas for innovative or creative solutions or approaches to contribute to the discussion on how to adequately and sustainably fund the waterways. Full details of the consultation are available at:

www.waterways.org.uk/News/Pressreleases/Anotherway

Views and suggestions should be addressed to Jo Gilbertson at IWA Head Office or e-mail funding@waterways.org.uk

British Waterways Marketing Campaign

British Waterways has launched a new marketing campaign entitled 'Yours to enjoy anytime' to help encourage more people to enjoy canals and rivers as part of their everyday life. BW has cited that:

- greater use of canals and rivers means greater appreciation of waterways as a national asset
- the more people make use of canals and rivers, the stronger the case for public funding, and
- a greater number of visitors creates greater business opportunities for BW and the private sector

As part of the new campaign there are billboard posters, press promotions and booklets in the following five areas, which have been chosen for pilot test activity because they have substantial lengths of waterway with a high-density population nearby and so offer good potential to increase visitor numbers:

- Lancaster
- Nottingham & Leicester and surrounding area
- Birmingham (plus Hatton & Fradley)
- Milton Keynes and surrounding area
- Paddington to Camden in London

The campaign also includes the re-launch of www.waterscape.com, which has been redesigned to try to make it easier for people to find out where their local waterway is and what they can do there. The site includes an improved search capability. BW welcomes feedback on the re-launched site (email: feedback@waterscape.com) and intends to continue to make further improvements.

British Waterways Moorings Tender Trial

IWA's on-line petition complaining at British Waterway's introduction of tendering for permanent moorings on a trial basis continues to attract a growing level of support, and is now approaching 2,500 signatories.

www.waterways.org.uk/News/OtherCampaigns/MooringsTendering/MooringsTenderingPetition

The first moorings made available for tender (on the Aire & Calder Navigation, Lancaster Canal, Leeds & Liverpool Canal and river Stort), with a closing date for tenders of 23rd November, were published on www.waterscape.com on 26th October.

Government Response to Select Committee Inquiry into British Waterways

The House of Commons Environment Food & Rural Affairs Select Committee has published the Government's response to its recommendations following its inquiry into British Waterways earlier this year. The Government's response, produced jointly by the Department and British Waterways, concurs with some of the recommendations made, but promises little in the way of immediate action, and no sign of immediate additional funding for BW in grant-in-aid. It was the in-year cuts to the Department's funding of BW, and consequent protests by waterway users that prompted the inquiry. (See 'Recent Publications' below for details to obtain a full copy of the Government's response).

David Drew, the chairman of the inquiry, was the speaker at a meeting of the Parliamentary Waterways Group on 23rd October. He pinpointed the protest rallies last autumn as defining the extent of the very low relationships between Government and the providers of the inland waterways network. He cited this as one of the drivers for the Select Committee to investigate why this impasse had occurred. He noted that now he felt there was a better level of trust between the parties. He said that there were more 'good news' stories, enthusiasm, canals back in use, new waterway users and a belief in a better future for the waterways. He praised BW for 'Herculean' efforts during the summer floods. He then identified key concerns:

- Revenue Cuts had caused the breakdown in relations. The Committee tried to find out what the figures really meant. The Committee

considered there was insufficient transparency and he saw this as an ongoing concern.

- The question of identifying what was going on. He quoted confusion over the Cotswold Canals restoration funding and the problems over Gloucester Docks.
- He said he saw BW as a major property developer and personally questioned the extent that property development had to make up the shortfall in government funding. He felt it wrong that property development should be the driver. He also indicated his concern that *'boaters were the meat in the sandwich'*.
- He questioned whether the Department was the right body to oversee the inland waterways network. He pointed up the need to get proper funding from a whole range of users and government programmes. He identified the problems of funding the waterways museums.
- He noted the issue of privatisation and the inference that even the Minister did not know this was being included as part of the BW's structure review. He said that he felt *'Privatisation was not the way to treat such a precious asset'*.
- He suggested that the Government's response to the Select Committee's report was not a good piece of work, but an excuse of a new team, and that the Select Committee's members were disappointed. He indicated that he felt the Select Committee would revisit the matter again to gain more clarity.
- The Committee had raised serious concerns. It was now for the Government to consider the cumulative effect of the reductions they are making in funding as these were not sustainable.

IWA Annual General Meeting Minutes

Minutes of IWA's recent 2007 Annual General Meeting can be found in the library section of the web site at: www.waterways.org.uk/Library/Minutes/AnnualGeneralMeeting

IWA Festivals Trade Show Team

The IWA Festivals Trade Show Team is looking for assistance to contact potential exhibitors by telephone, to encourage them to exhibit at the 2008 IWA National Festival, to be held at Atherley Junction, near

Wolverhampton, over the August bank holiday weekend. Anyone willing to help should contact Jerry Sanders ☎ 01283 711755 or e-mail: exhibition@waterways.org.uk.

IWA Meets Waterways Minister

IWA met the Waterways Minister, Jonathan Shaw MP on 18th October. The meeting, held in the Minister's office in London, reviewed the range of pressures on navigation managers and other waterway interests, and the increasing costs being faced by waterway users. At the hour-long meeting with John Fletcher, IWA's national chairman, and Neil Edwards, IWA's chief executive, the Minister appeared sympathetic to the issues raised and expressed his belief that there was an intrinsic value that boats brought to the waterways through their colour and vibrancy, which attracted other users and commercial investment and made the waterways special.

A key item during the discussion was the need for a sustainable funding regime for British Waterways and the Environment Agency. The Minister agreed, and whilst outlining work in progress in moving towards achieving this for British Waterways, he explained the considerable financial pressures faced by the Department following the 2007 floods and national disease outbreaks. IWA made its views on the priority needs for proper funding for the waterways absolutely clear, and the Minister acknowledged the pressures on the Department's delivery bodies and the case for waterway funding, but said that the Department had a great number of competing pressures and more internal negotiation within the Department on its priorities was required before funding for British Waterways was announced resultant from the Spending Review. He added that a decision was unlikely to be reached before mid-December.

IWA also raised concerns at British Waterways' proposals to increase revenue from boat owners, and the overall rise in costs that are beginning to force less affluent boaters, and particularly those on fixed incomes, from the waterways. IWA explained that British Waterways had already attracted a great deal of criticism from many waterway users as a result of the manner in which proposals for increases in boat licence fees and the moorings tender trial had been conducted. The Minister was aware of this friction and announced that he was planning a series of waterside

visits next year, and would hold regular meetings with representatives of waterway user groups, the first of which would take place before Christmas.

IWA briefed the Minister on the importance of the voluntary sector in initiating waterway restoration and regeneration, as well its vital role in running many smaller navigations - all without regular government support. The 2007 floods had been particularly challenging for many, and cutbacks in discreet support for many restoration promoters from British Waterways risked future regeneration potential. The Minister was sympathetic to these concerns and explained that rural regeneration was particularly important to him. The Minister also shared IWA's concern that marina and moorings developments, particularly in rural areas, should include small-scale lower priced moorings, such as lay byes and community / boat-club operations, as well as multi-facility marinas. The Minister was made aware that IWA has asked British Waterways to promote such opportunities to waterside landowners, and not solely concentrate on the larger-scale marinas that can be more difficult to achieve planning approval for.

The Minister explained that he had begun the process of forming an inter-departmental group for waterways issues, as recommended in the recent Select Committee inquiry into British Waterways. The group would ensure that government departments would not work in isolation on the waterways, as many aspects were now seen to cross government department boundaries, such as heritage, regeneration and the carriage of freight by water.

IWA Restructure Proposals

On 15th September, IWA's Council attended an all-day workshop to discuss restructuring the Association, and in particular how this would affect Council itself. There is a particular challenge in finding the right structure for the Association, as so many criteria have to be satisfied. IWA is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity as well as being an organisation comprising an active membership. This means that IWA has to abide by both company and charity law – and, in addition, IWA is registered with the Financial Services Authority, so has an extra set of rules to abide by. Council is aware of the views of many members through the previous consultation exercise, and one of the challenges that Council faces is that a

wide range of opinions are held. Council members considered these, and their own views, about how well the current ways that IWA conducts its business work.

The key findings were that the current IWA committees work but are burdened by a lack of authority and the necessary resources to undertake their work without constant recourse to Council, and that this can undermine their effectiveness and slowdown their ability to respond. The same impact is also felt within Head Office. Council also recognised that it had grown over the years without any due thought being given to its size and composition. It now has 24 members and is seen as too large to make decisions effectively. Council's role was deemed to be ill-defined, slow to make decisions, and in terms of composition of its members it has a preponderance of "doers" which does not provide a good balance for a progressive board of trustees.

Taking these considerations into account the conclusion was that there is a genuine need to restructure Council. Council defined there to be a need for the leadership to carry out three distinct roles.

- Trusteeship
- Implementation and policy development
- Coordination

Council also agreed that none of these functions was best performed by a group of 24 Council members together, so it agreed to take forward the following approach:

- 1. Enhance the role of committees.** Council envisages that committees would make policy (within agreed remits), handle issues for IWA - respond to consultations, etc. As such, they would be given devolved financial authority to spend and earn revenue. Council recognised that it is vital that there is proper representation of views and constituencies from throughout IWA, particularly including non-BW and non-narrow boater constituencies, at this level.
- 2. Create a small board of trustees.** Guidance from the Charity Commission indicates that this board should comprise between five to eleven unpaid-volunteer trustees. The trustees would be the Association's directors for the purpose of company law requirements and would be accountable in law for all aspects of the charity.

3. Define a simpler process for coordination.

There is an ongoing need to:

- avoid conflict,
- avoid missing something important,
- avoid duplication of effort, and
- ensure that overall policy and direction laid out by the trustees are adhered to.

The approach adopted by the Association's trading subsidiary Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd and many other businesses is to have managers' meetings to coordinate activities and resolve any issues arising. Council felt that IWA should have an executive body for the purposes of coordination, at which committee chairmen would appraise each other on what everyone is doing and to ensure no gaps. The executive body would be accountable to the trustees to ensure that the Association's overall strategy and policy as determined by the trustees was properly implemented. The executive body would additionally include three representatives drawn from branches/regions, and senior employees.

There are some steps that make sense on their own, such as greater delegation to national committees, and Council is implementing these without unnecessary delay. Council is, however, keen to ensure that members are fully consulted and not simply presented with a *fait accompli* at an AGM. As such the Association welcomes members' views on the current thinking and will be formally consulting as the process and thinking evolves. Members wishing to put forward their own views on the current proposal can write to Council, c/o Jo Gilbertson at IWA Head Office or e-mail: structure@waterways.org.uk

Landfill Tax

A welcome announcement for inland waterways interests in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Pre-Budget Report was that the scope of the exemption from Landfill Tax is to be extended to cover waste arising from dredging activities. The extension is being made to ensure that waste from dredging disposed of by Landfill, continues to benefit from exemption following changes to the rules on waste containing free draining liquid. The extended exemption has effect in respect of disposals of waste made on or after 30th October 2007.

Waterway Newsletters, Books and other Publications

The British Library has recently issued a reminder of the legal requirement to deposit with it copies of all newsletters, books and other publications. Publishers and distributors in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland have a legal obligation to send one copy of each of their publications to the Legal Deposit Office of the British Library within one month of publication. This includes books, magazines, newsletters and any other publications, with a number of minor exceptions covering internal reports, diaries, transport timetables, calendars, posters and the like. Although sending a copy of each publication to the Library may seem a chore, it has the benefit of ensuring that a copy is always available for public research in the future. There are also voluntary arrangements for the submission of electronic publications.

The deposit regulations of the Copyright Acts 1911 and 1963, with slightly different conditions, apply also to the other five legal deposit libraries: the Bodleian Library, Oxford; the University Library, Cambridge; the National Library of Scotland; the Library of Trinity College, Dublin; the National Library of Wales. To save multiple mailings, there is an agent in London to which copies can be sent for all the libraries. If the libraries detect non-receipt of copies, they will usually send reminders, and have the legal power to insist on receipt of a copy – even if this necessitates a reprint. Full details of the regulations and relevant addresses are available at: www.bl.uk/about/policies/legaldeposit.html

Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway

The bid to the Big Lottery Fund for a £25 million lottery grant under the 'Living Landmarks' theme, to build the proposed Milton Keynes Waterway Park, as the western end of the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway has not been selected to go through to the final round of the awards. However, The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterways Trust, local authorities and other parties remain committed to the project and cite that the £250,000 awarded already for studies for the new canal, plus the additional money and work in kind that contributed to the matched income, has allowed the promoters to obtain planning permission, work up detailed route plans, and undertake studies needed in order to start the construction of the waterway. This has allowed significant progress for the waterway

during the past year. Alternative funding is now being sought.

The Big Lottery Bid was for the construction of the Milton Keynes section of the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway running from the Grand Union Canal via Willen Lake, through Broughton Brook Linear Park into the Eastern Expansion Area. Under the Living Landmarks funding stream of the Big Lottery, 23 projects made the shortlist to compete for a small number of grants of between £10 million and £25 million each, including the Milton Keynes Waterway Park. A further short listing process has reduced the number to fewer than ten, which does not include the Waterway Park. The total of the short listed bids came to £525million, for which only £80 million is available.

The Living Landmarks bids for the Monmouthshire and North Wilts canals were also both unsuccessful, but the bids for the western end of the Stroudwater Navigation and the Falkirk Helix at the eastern end of the Forth & Clyde Canal, to reconnect it to its original exit onto the Forth, have both made it through to the final round (see below).

Birmingham Canal Navigations

The bid known as the Black Country Urban Park is one of the four finalists short-listed for a national public vote on television to gain a grant of £50 million. The bid comprises proposals for works on a series of projects throughout 'The Black Country' part of the West Midlands – an area where over a million people live. At the heart of this area is part of the Birmingham Canal Navigations and the Dudley Canal, and many of the components of the bid would bring significant improvements to the canals of the area and their environment. On-line votes can be made from 26th November at www.thepeoples50million.org.uk/vote.

The bid emphasises that canals provide the backbone of the local community, interlinked by a network of natural green space resultant from former pits, quarries and furnaces of the industrial revolution. Pocket parks and footpaths would be created and improved where they already exist. Underground man-made limestone caverns and canals, furthering the facilities already provided by Dudley Canal Trust, would be opened to create a new visitor experience with travel by boat and rise to the surface by a funicular train. A new interpretation centre would explain how 400 million

years of geology led to the Black Country becoming the 'workshop of the world'. A 'green bridge park' would bring the countryside into town centres, comprising a 12-mile pedestrian, cycleway and bridleway with a visitor centre at the RSPB Reserve in the middle, linked by a new landmark bridge over the A41 and a visitor centre at Barr Beacon offering views across the Midlands to Wales.

The other three finalists are an extension to the Eden Project in Cornwall, a further development of the Sustrans cycling and walkway network across the UK and a project to protect and develop Sherwood Forest in the East Midlands. The Somerset Waterlinks Project was unsuccessful and did not make the final four.

Brecon & Abergavenny Canal

At about 7.15 am on 16th October a major breach occurred on the Brecon & Abergavenny Canal, just below bridge 106 at Gilwern. A very large quantity of soil, water, mud and debris slid down the hillside, through a farm and onto the A4077 road between Crickhowell and Gilwern. The local fire brigade was quickly on the scene, and eight people had to be rescued, although there were no serious injuries. Significant damage was caused to three properties, leaving them uninhabitable and the road had to be closed for a number of days until the substantial landslide could be cleared by earth-moving equipment. Repairs to the canal and adjacent property are likely to exceed at least £1 million.

British Waterways visited all hire boat operators to assess the impact on their business. It identified 23 boats displaced by the breach and have organised craneage facilities to enable this. Any private boaters requiring assistance should contact British Waterways ☎ 01606 723800.

Caledonian Canal

Highland Council has voted to build a road under the Caledonian Canal as part of the project for a link road around Inverness city centre. The Council has opted for a more expensive aqueduct option instead of building a high level bridge, with 15 metres clearance, for traffic over the canal, which would have cost £30 million less. The £85 million project, which would be reliant on financial support from the Scottish

Government to proceed, is intended to cut congestion at Inshes. If approved, the new road would include a low bridge built over the river Ness and a tunnel and aqueduct under the Caledonian Canal. The Council wants work to start within three years, with completion of the new road by about 2015. British Waterways is in discussion with the Council for a major redevelopment of commercial land adjacent to Muirtown Basin on the northern side of Inverness, and is rumoured to be in negotiation for the acquisition of part of a retail trading estate formerly used by B & Q as part of a land assembly plan.

At the beginning of October, British Waterways suffered vandalism to one of its lock cottages at Fort Augustus, at the southern end of Loch Ness, with the words "English out" daubed in white paint on the door and wall of the property, one of a row of cottages. The house next to the Caledonian Canal is among a number of former lock keepers' cottages being sold by British Waterways in Scotland. The incident is believed to be linked to a local perception that the properties would be bought to be rented out as holiday homes. Property prices have risen significantly in Highland Scotland in recent years, and there is a particular shortage of property affordable to people employed in the rural area.

Chichester Canal

A controversial plan for a major new housing development next to Chichester Canal Basin has been stalled by district councillors. The southern area development control committee postponed a planning decision and called for negotiations to achieve improvements in the appearance of the proposed new buildings. Concerns include external design, the future of trees on the site, and the type of building materials to be used. A planning application, submitted by owners Geoffrey Osborne Ltd, proposes to clear existing buildings and to build 83 flats and houses and a building for use by the Chichester Ship Canal Trust as a cafe and education area. The project faced criticism from Chichester City Council, which considered the western elevation was below the standard needed, although it accepted the principle of development. Other objectors had claimed it would be an overdevelopment of the land. However, planning officers who recommended approval said that the project would transform a 'rather lifeless' existing office premises, with its 'sea of parking and nondescript

outbuildings', into a challenging, high density, but well designed modern development. The other side of the basin, known as the Post Office site, is also likely to be redeveloped.

Droitwich Canals

On 5th October, Wychavon District Council's Development Control Committee considered the planning application for the restoration of the Droitwich Canals. Following an objection by the Environment Agency and local wildlife interests, members of the Committee decided to delegate the granting of planning permission to the Head of Planning at Wychavon District Council due to the need for further information about the potential impact on otters, which are a European protected species. The Head of Planning is also to finalise the wording of the planning conditions.

Forth & Clyde Canal

The bid to the Big Lottery Fund put forward by Falkirk Council, Central Scotland Forest Trust and British Waterways Scotland, to transform an area of land between Falkirk and Grangemouth including the eastern end of the Forth & Clyde Canal, is the only Scottish project left in the running for a £25m lottery grant under the under the Living Landmarks theme. If successful, The Helix project would create 300 hectares of woodland with a new canal link and public art area. The proposed site will face both sides of the new Falkirk Stadium and extend to the Carron Works, through to the Antonine Wall.

The project was given its name because of the spiral shape it would form from Langlees to Laurieston and Polmont. Plans for the new canal link would include the creation of the world's largest equine sculptures in the form of two 30-metre-high Kelpie horse heads by sculptor Andy Scott. These would form part of a new boat lift mechanism at the eastern entrance to the Forth & Clyde Canal. Officials from the Lottery Fund panel made a final visit to the area on 30th October.

Leeds & Liverpool Canal

Just over £1 million is to be spent transforming the Leeds-Liverpool canal between the Eldonian village, in Vauxhall, and Bootle's Bedford Road. At present, this section of the canal is little-used. However, with the

imminent completion of the Liverpool Link, which will make the city an attractive destination, investment in the western end of the Canal is being made to encourage more visitors. The new project will improve towing paths, bridges, locks, access points, the canal-side park and signs. It will connect with a similar £1.1 million Sefton council scheme for the Canal. A separate plan to introduce a team of canal rangers, to tackle security problems, pick up litter and remove graffiti, is also being worked on. More than £860,000 of the project's cost will come from Mersey Waterfront, with the rest coming from Liverpool Council. Work is due to start in January and finished in March 2009.

On the Yorkshire side of the Canal, on 29th October, British Waterways installed a new £240,000 Hirst Mill Swing Bridge at Saltaire to restore the regular access route for local residents and Saltaire Garden Centre. British Waterways had decommissioned the previous bridge in March following a breakdown.

Manchester Ship Canal

The supermarket chain Tesco has announced a commitment for the regular movement of goods on the Manchester Ship Canal. The present shipments began on 18th October and comprise three shipments per week of imported wine on a 40-mile journey from the Port of Liverpool to Manchester. Each shipment comprises about 600,000 litres of wine. The containers of wine from Australia, California, Chile and Argentina are then transported to a bottling site a few yards from the Canal in Manchester, where they are packed for Tesco supermarkets across the country. Previously these wine shipments had arrived in the UK at various southern ports by ship before being driven to the Manchester bottling depot. The shipments take 50 lorry loads off the roads each week.

One 20ft wine container - taken by barge - contains the equivalent of 32,000 75cl bottles of wine. If this wine were shipped already bottled it would equal filling 2.4 of the 20ft containers - effectively saving 1800 20ft container movements per year. Each bulk wine movement makes a saving of 15,840 kilos of imported glass - more than 20.5 million kg of imported glass weight not transported to the UK each year. Tesco has said that it is looking at moving other supplies from road to water, and already moves significant volumes of dry goods to its Scottish distribution centre at Livingston by train.

Norfolk & Suffolk Broads

The Broads Authority is to directly manage dredging the rivers and broads in its area in the future following the acquisition of the former May Gurney dredging operation, to which the work had been contracted out. The new arrangements follow a decision by May Gurney, the Authority's main contractor since 1989, to cease the dredging side of its business. The Authority has purchased May Gurney's dockyard at Griffin Lane, Thorpe, which has 300 metres of river frontage, and two modern barges for approximately £250,000. In addition, six cranes, nine barges, three tugs, two dumb-lighters, plus other plant and equipment, have been transferred. A listed Victorian summerhouse which has been home to two generations of the Fox family, who were foremen at the yard, is also included. Re-thatching the ridge of its roof will be used as a training exercise for the Authority's apprentice reed and sedge cutters. A labour force of ten employees has also transferred to the Authority.

Under the new arrangements the Authority predicts that it may be able to achieve up to 25% more dredging than last year for the same amount of money. It estimates that 290,000 cubic metres of mud and silt can be removed over the next five years, representing 16% of the material that the Authority wants to remove to meet the specification agreed with users. The vessels and equipment, which have been transferred, will also increase the Authority's capacity for the repair of moorings and cutting of vegetation. The Broads Authority has hinted that it may have to increase licence fees to help fund the revised arrangements, albeit that it hopes to provide an improved service to waterway users. However, the alternative of leaving May Gurney to cease its operations and sell its equipment and premises would likely to have led to a reduction in the present amount of dredging and deterioration of the Broads for navigation.

Stroudwater Navigation

The bid from the Cotswold Canals Partnership has been successful in reaching the final stage of the Big Lottery Fund's *Living Landmarks* scheme. If successful, the £19 million grant would enable the restoration of the section of the 230-year old Stroudwater Canal that links Stonehouse to Saul on the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal, and thus link the

section of canal being restored with Heritage Lottery funds, from Stonehouse eastwards, to be connected to the rest of navigable network. Big Lottery Fund assessors visited the waterway in June, and undertook two days of analysis, site visits and meetings with stakeholders. One final visit was made on 29th October, with the decision on the grant due to be announced in late November.

River Trent

The Heritage Lottery Fund has announced a £1.76 million grant to Trent Vale Landscape Partnership, led by British Waterways. The funding will enable the

Partnership to undertake £2.6 million of works aimed at delivering significant changes to the river valley from Newark to Gainsborough by means of a linked series of smaller projects addressing issues such as access improvements to and on the river, and traditional skills training. The work is likely to take place between 2009 and 2012 following a year of detailed planning and project development. Projects will include the refurbishment of the late Victorian Old Willow Works at Beckingham, near Gainsborough, for use as a heritage centre, encouragement of sustainable land management to benefit a range of wildlife, celebration of traditional festivals and local access improvements, including improved visitor moorings.

Recent Publications

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs

Summary of responses to the Marine Bill White Paper and partial Regulatory Impact Assessment

A full summary of the responses to the recent consultation

www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/marinebill-whitepaper07/index.htm

Historic Environment - Local Management

Local Area Agreements in London

The publication shows how heritage can be promoted through Local Area Agreements. It explains why and how culture contributes to Local Area Agreements has been produced jointly by the London offices of Arts Council England, the Big Lottery Fund, English Heritage and Sport England, along with the Government Office for London, Museums Libraries and Archives London, and the Association of London Government.

www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/CultureInLAAs.pdf

Inland Waterways Advisory Council

The Inland Waterways of England and Wales in 2007 - What has been achieved since the publication of Waterways for Tomorrow in June 2000 and what needs to be done

A report on progress in implementing the policies contained in the June 2000 policy statement *Waterways for Tomorrow*, published by the then Department for the Environment, Transport and Regions. The Council says that although overall the progress has been encouraging, it is concerned that the waterways still do not have settled funding arrangements. The report also expresses disappointment that disadvantaged groups in England and Wales still do not have the easy access to the waterways that the Government set out as a policy objective in *Waterways for Tomorrow*. The report makes 17 recommendations to Government. Two key recommendations are:

- Government should establish an inter-departmental committee for the inland waterways of England and Wales. This should be made up of representatives of those Government departments with lead responsibilities for environmental improvement, regeneration of local economies, heritage, recreation, planning and transport. The purpose of the Committee would be to ensure that Government policy for the inland waterways is carried through by all relevant departments of Government.
- In partnership with IWAC and the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities, the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs should take the lead in the new inter-departmental committee to produce a new and up to date policy statement for the development of the inland waterways of England and Wales. This statement should give due attention to climate change, environmental improvement, public health and community cohesion.

www.iwac.org.uk/reports

**House of Commons Environment Food & Rural Affairs Committee
Fifth Special Report - British Waterways: Government Response to the Committee's Seventh Report of Session 2006-07**

See article on the Government's response to the Report – above
www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmenvfru.htm

**House of Commons Transport Committee
Tenth Special Report – The new National Boatmasters' Licence: Government Response to the Committee's Sixth Report of Session 2006–07**

See article on The Boatmasters Licence - above
www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmtran.htm

**H M Treasury
2007 Pre-Budget Report and Comprehensive Spending Review**
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr_csr/report/pbr_csr07_repindex.cfm

**Ulster Architectural Heritage Society
Lose or Reuse: Managing Heritage Sustainably**

A new book celebrating the sustainable reuse of historic buildings in Northern Ireland sets out relatively simple steps that can be taken to maintain the integrity of the historic environment whilst establishing the added value of retaining and re-using the existing building stock. Available free of charge, as a pdf file.
www.uahs.org.uk (click 'news')

**Royal Yachting Association
Report & Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2007**
www.rya.org.uk

Current Consultations

**British Waterways
Boat Licence Fee Consultation**
A summary is provided in the article above.
www.britishwaterways.co.uk
Closing date for comments: 7th January 2008

**Broads Authority
Consultation on Submission Statement of Community Involvement - first revision**
The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the Broads Authority plans to consult people in the production of its Local Development Framework (planning policy documents), and in development control decisions (planning applications). The Statement was adopted in January 2006 and has now been revised, principally to take account of changes to the delivery of the Authority's planning service, which was taken 'in house' earlier this year.
www.broads-authority.gov.uk
Closing date for comments: 19th November 2007

**Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs Pesticides Safety Directorate
Consultation on the proposed consolidation of plant protection and pesticide legislation: inclusion of regulation on record keeping in draft regulations**
The consultation seeks views on the consolidation of four sets of pesticides regulations into one, and a new provision in these regulations to make it a legal requirement for all professional users to keep a record of pesticide treatments that they carry out.

www.pesticides.gov.uk

Closing date for comments: 30th November 2007

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs Pesticides Safety Directorate

Non-compliant paints for historic buildings and vintage vehicles

Proposals for a licensing scheme to implement a derogation in the Paints' Directive 2004/42/EC. This is a deregulatory measure which would enable a licence-holder to continue to obtain non-compliant paint products in limited quantities for the purposes of restoring and maintaining historic buildings and vintage vehicles. The introduction of a licensing scheme is intended to benefit the specialist companies undertaking this restoration work and help to ensure that the cultural value of historic buildings and vintage vehicles is maintained. Questions are set on the definition of historic buildings (limited to listed buildings but excluding non listed buildings within conservation areas unless this consultation reveals a strong case in favour). There is also a proposed definition of vintage (pre 1973) but some other criteria are suggested. Comments are also invited on the licensing authorities and licensing procedures.

www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/paint-buildings-vehicles/index.htm

Closing date for comments: 12th December 2007

Environment Agency

Water abstraction charges scheme – third consultation

Since the second consultation, the Agency has been reviewing other possible ways of recovering compensation costs to fund changes to abstractions that are damaging the environment. Government and the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat) have now agreed that the Price Review 2009 can be used to fund changes to water company abstractions to meet the needs of the Habitats Directive. The Agency is now consulting for a third time on its proposals to recover the remaining compensation costs.

www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Closing date for comments: 7th December 2007

Environment Agency

Summary of significant water management issues

Consultation on the best ways to tackle significant water management issues, such as diffuse pollution and river flows and abstraction, in an effort to further protect and improve rivers, lakes and groundwater.

www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wfd

Closing date for comments: 24th January 2008

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