

# IWA NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS STRATEGY

1. IWA's established aims are to:
  - Ensure that the existing navigable inland waterways are kept in the most favourable conditions consistent with encouraging widespread public benefit and commercial use;
  - Encourage the full restoration of currently derelict, abandoned and unusable waterways, and the construction of new waterways, to provide further opportunities for public benefit and commercial use;
  - Publish material to further public education on all matters concerning the inland waterways;
  - Generate appreciation of the waterways, goodwill and support from all sectors of society and the widest range of organisations, corporate bodies and private individuals; and
  - Influence public opinion and that of key decision makers in navigation authorities, national, regional and local government and other public agencies to help achieve IWA's overarching purpose.
2. The final aim, as listed above, encapsulates IWA's cardinal purpose since its inception in 1946 – “...to campaign for the retention, conservation, restoration and development of the inland waterways for the fullest possible commercial and recreational use”.
3. A National Campaigns Strategy is required to deliver these aims. The Annexes to this document identify the issues which IWA should be campaigning for at a national level, determining the timescale for campaigning as – *ongoing* (no timescale for completion), *long term* (over 5 years), *medium term* (3 – 5 years) or *short term* (0 -2 years) (detailed at Annexes A, B, C and D respectively).
4. The Strategy is a living document, to be revisited and revised annually, and supplemented in year by unforeseen issues which will crop up from time to time and which IWA needs to react to.

Inland Waterways Association  
22 September 2008

## **ANNEX A - Ongoing Campaigning Issues**

Issues that IWA needs to campaign for the foreseeable future. These are issues which will not be resolved quickly and may be aspirational. The principles are likely to feature as underlying and consistent messages in wider IWA campaigning:

- Restoration of the inland waterways network, where that is practical and economic (in that such restoration is a good use of resource and could not be employed elsewhere with a better return for the waterways network);
- Safeguarding the existing network (including ensuring that representations are made for only appropriate and sympathetic development) for use by all those who enjoy the network and associated infrastructure, with a level of investment commensurate with this aim, and with due regard to the existing environment and built heritage;
- Additions to the existing network as and when opportunities for such projects present themselves; and
- Improvements to the existing infrastructure where that would enhance usage and enjoyment of the network e.g. where navigation between broad canals is either prevented or only navigated with difficulty due to interruption of the broad waterway network by narrow locks, with due regard to the existing environment and built heritage.

## **ANNEX B - Long term Campaigning issues (over 5 years)**

These are issues that will require sustained campaigning over a lengthy period before IWA can realistically expect to see change.

- Policy for inland waterways within central government resting with the appropriate department of state (as concluded by IWA), consistent with that Department's overarching responsibilities, and pursued by government with due vigour;
- For central and local government or other agency policies to be both consistent with and supportive of IWA's overarching aims;
- The establishment of a single navigation licence for the majority of the inland waterways network (i.e. to cover at least British Waterways and the Environment Agency waterways); and
- The establishment of a single navigation authority for the majority of the inland waterways network (i.e. the merger of at least British Waterways and the Environment Agency with respect to their responsibilities as navigation authorities).

## ANNEX C - Medium Term Campaigning Issues (3-5 years)

These are issues which may require campaigning over a period of up to 5 years but which are anticipated to take anything up to 5 years to resolve:

- The Government has established an Inter Departmental Working Group, led by Defra, membership believed to include BERR, DoH, DfT, DCMS, and DCLG, to be a focus for:
  - more effective cross-government co-ordination.
  - a fuller understanding of the contribution inland waterways can make to a range of government policies.
  - Discussion on appropriate research.
  - Refreshing *Waterways for Tomorrow*.
  - Discussion on key strategic issues.

We need to campaign for the work of the Inter Departmental Working Group to fully recognise IWA's aims;

- Support of navigation authorities' initiatives to improve the resources available to it for maintaining and expanding the inland waterways network, to the extent that these are consistent with the aims and objectives of IWA;
- The focus of British Waterways, acknowledged by central government, is now primarily to maintain the existing network. We need to campaign to resurrect the earlier more positive British Waterways attitude towards restoration (in 2002 BW articulated its 10 year vision as "*our ambition is that by 2012 we will have created an **expanded**, vibrant, largely self-sufficient waterway network..*"; and up until a couple of years ago BW was far more positive, sometimes taking the leading role) ;
- The government is supportive in principle of transfer of freight from other modes to waterways. We need to campaign for these policies to deliver real increases in waterborne freight; and
- The Environment Agency needs to be more supportive of waterway restoration, navigation in general, and new waterways, especially in areas where it is not the largest navigation authority.

## **ANNEX D - Short Term Campaigning Issues (0 – 2 years)**

These are essentially current issues and it is this category of campaign item which is the most likely to need to be adapted as events arise:

- During the remainder of the current Parliamentary cycle, ensuring that the leading political parties have a full appreciation of IWA's vision and priorities for the inland waterways, providing scope for influencing these parties' policy development, including the potential for adoption of IWA policies.
- The next Government Comprehensive Spending Review will be concluded by 2010. This will govern the financial settlement for government departments, and consequently the resources available to other public sector agencies, over the 3 year period 2011/12 – 2013/14. IWA needs to campaign for Defra to be provided with sufficient resources that it is able to provide British Waterways with grant-in-aid commensurate with its earlier ambition of, by 2012 (now postponed to 2016) creating "*an expanded, vibrant, largely self-sufficient waterways network used by twice as many people as in 2002*";
- Input to the refreshing and future policing of *Waterways for Tomorrow* so that actions are pursued to timescales and without policy drift (a sub-action to influencing the work of the Inter Departmental Working Group – a medium term objective);
- Maintaining pressure on funding for waterways by all government departments who derive policy benefits from a vibrant expanded waterways network, rather than simply Defra (a sub-action to influencing the work of the Inter Departmental Working Group – a medium term objective);
- Objecting to the proposal of the Environment Agency to dispose of lock-keepers homes along the Thames (decision expected by EA by the end of 2008); and
- Encouraging navigation authorities to systematically conduct full and proper consultation with IWA (and others) on issues where there is a clear IWA interest, and waterway users would be affected by implementation of the proposals e.g. cill signage, bollards at locks, moorings, pump-out and sanitary facilities.