

Minutes of the 53rd Annual General Meeting of the Inland Waterways Association, held at 2.00pm on Saturday 29th September 2012 at King Edward VI Grammar School, Broomfield Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 3SX.

PRESENT

84 members were present, including 4 members of staff.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Paul Strudwick, London Region Chairman, highlighted the health and safety aspects of the venue. Clive Henderson, national chairman, welcomed those present to the meeting. Clive Henderson remembered Doug Beard who had died earlier in the year with special emphasis on his efforts in helping to save the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation. A few moments silence were taken to remember Doug.

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Les Etheridge, national treasurer, introduced the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2011 and explained that there had been a deficit of income over expenditure during the year. Trustees were conscious that the continuing deficit was not sustainable for the Association and the results for 2012 to date were showing an improvement. Les Etheridge thanked Helen Elliott-Adams and the finance team for all their hard work in producing the financial reports. The benefits of legacies and other potential sources of income were highlighted and members were asked to take all opportunities to support the Association. Les Etheridge reported that the Association's investment brokers had been changed during the year, The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2011 and the Report of the Auditors thereon were approved with one abstention.

AUDITORS

The meeting unanimously approved a resolution to reappoint Saffery Champness as auditors to the Association and trustees were authorised to fix their remuneration.

ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Clive Henderson introduced trustees present at the meeting. Neil Edwards then explained that two nationally elected trustees, Les Etheridge and Clive Henderson, were due to retire on completion of their three-year terms of office. There was also a third vacancy as a result of a resignation during the year. Thus there were three vacancies for nationally elected trustees. Four candidates had put themselves forward: John Butler, Les Etheridge, Clive Henderson and Gillian Smith. A ballot was held and the results were as follows:

John Butler – 196 votes
Les Etheridge – 264 votes
Clive Henderson – 264 votes
Gillian Smith – 235 Votes

Therefore Les Etheridge, Clive Henderson and Gillian Smith were elected as trustees each to serve a three-year term of office.

ELECTION OF REGION CHAIRMEN

Clive Henderson reminded the meeting that nominations had been sought for two region chairman posts where terms of office had been completed, and one where there was a vacancy. In each case there had been only one nomination.

Vaughan Welch, chairman of West Midlands until the 2015 AGM

Alan Platt, Chairman of North West Region until the 2015 AGM

Patrick Moss had been nominated for chairman of South West Region, but had been unable to take up the post owing to ill health. The vacancy would be advertised in the next edition of Waterways magazine.

RESOLUTION CONCERNING MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

A special resolution from the board of trustees had been put forward recommending that as from 1st January 2013, the subscriptions be amended as follows:

	Annual
Ordinary Member (UK)	£ 31.50
Family or Joint Adult Membership (UK)	£ 39.00
Junior Membership Electronic	£ 1.00
Corporate - Non-profit making bodies	£ 54.00
Corporate – Profit making bodies – up to 20 employees	£ 59.00
Corporate – Profit making bodies - more than 20 employees	£ 119.00

Life membership rates are calculated at 20 times the standard rates. Monthly rates are calculated at one tenth of the annual rates. The concessionary rates for senior citizens (65+) is calculated at 80% of the standard rates (the final adjustment being made with this resolution). The reduced rate for electronic membership is 80% of the standard rates (available for ordinary and joint membership categories only).

Lichfield Branch had sent a letter to Les Etheridge expressing their concern over the new electronic membership category. Les Etheridge told the meeting that he had only received the letter the previous evening and had not had a chance to reply to it. However, he informed the meeting that the decision to offer members an electronic option had been carefully considered and members opting for this category of membership were still encouraged to pay the full amount of subscription, the balance being a donation. The option had so far been well received.

Peter Caswell from Milton Keynes Branch asked if the Association intended to exclude children under 18 if they do not have access to electronic media. Les Etheridge responded that if the situation arose then arrangements could be made to overcome this.

Clive Henderson asked for a show of hands to approve the resolution. There were six abstentions and all other votes were in favour of the resolution. The special resolution was therefore approved.

CHAIRMANS ADDRESS

Clive Henderson gave a presentation covering his fourth year as national chairman. He reflected upon the changes for British Waterways to the Canal & River Trust. Clive Henderson made a particular mention of the need to monitor the activities of the Trust and to actively work to promote a good working relationship with the Trust to ensure that existing waterways were kept in good condition and ensuring that ambitious waterways restoration schemes were kept alive. Clive Henderson then answered questions from the floor.

Brian Holt asked about the problems that were currently being experienced with Barclays Bank. Les Etheridge informed the meeting that a working group had been established to review the matter but the any change of banking arrangements would involve compliance with the anti-money laundering legislation.

Stephen Broadhead asked whether it was possible to ascertain Canal & River Trust's assets in the Bury and Bolton areas. Clive Henderson suggested, and Vaughan Welch agreed, that the best option would be to contact the local Canal & River Trust waterway manager.

Peter Caswell, Milton Keynes Branch, asked what the Association's policy was in relation to branch volunteers recording boat visitor index numbers in an attempt to prevent boat owners with continuous cruising licences from setting up permanent moorings in the Milton Keynes area. Clive Henderson stated that in recent public relations material published by Canal & River Trust, it was not the aim to use volunteers in such a manner as evidence obtained in this way could not be used to obtain a prosecution but the problem areas should be reported to Canal & River Trust.

A question was asked of the trustees who also sit on a Canal & River Trust committee, about situations where there might be a conflict of interest. Clive Henderson replied that under company law as a director of the Association one must always act in the best interests of the Association to promote its charitable objectives when dealing with Association's business. As a member of one of the Canal & River Trust advisory committees, including its Council and regional partnerships, members have to act in the best interest of Canal & Rivers Trust in an individual capacity. Declarations of interest also need to be made at relevant meetings.

John Reeve expressed his thanks to Clive Henderson for the past four years in his role as national chairman and stated that under Clive's calm leadership the Association had been in very safe hands. John Reeve also enquired about the 2013 National Festival. Ian West reported that negotiations were still under way with a site in the South East, and there was also an aim to have a festival of London's waterways with some presence in the Olympic Park when it opens to the public on 27th July 2013

Les Etheridge also expressed the Association's thanks to Clive Henderson for his efforts as national chairman over the last four years. Many changes have occurred since Clive took over as national chairman in 2008, when at that stage British Waterways had a 2020 vision. Clive has seen the transfer to the Canal & River Trust and the financial settlement achieved, given the current economic climate, had exceeded what had been initially hoped for. Therefore the financial position of the waterways was more secure but there was still a need for wider coverage and more financial support. Les Etheridge concluded that Clive had achieved a lot and the inland waterways were in a better place as a result of his efforts.

Clive Henderson responded by saying that he has received a lot of support from trustees, Head Office and the membership and he also thanked Helen, his wife, for all her support over the last four years;

Clive Henderson handed over to Ian West for the announcement of the following national awards:

NATIONAL AWARDS

The Cyril Styring Trophy; the Association's most prestigious award, was presented to Roger Squires in recognition of his untiring work in the London Region

The Christopher Power Prize. for waterways restoration was awarded to Roger Harding for his work on the Stover Canal. A cash prize had been given to the Stover Canal Society.

The John Heap Salver, for fund-raising work, was presented to Jerry Sanders for his long term commitment and work to bring traders to IWA national festivals, without which none of them would have been financially viable.

Richard Bird Medals were presented to the following for their work for festivals and other IWA activities.

Reece Jones Di Jones Alan Wiffen, Sandy Jones, Dave Jones, Stephen Scholes, Pat Barton, Bob Myall, Anne Myall, Bob Dewey, Liz Dewey, Brian Bayston, Edwina Wallace, Dave Chapman, Beryl Chapman. Ron Probert was also awarded a medal for his long term work for IWA's Chiltern Branch.

The branch achievement award for 2012 was made to IWA's Warwickshire Branch.

THANKS

Clive Henderson thanked Paul Strudwick, the members of Chelmsford Branch and others involved in arrangements for the day's activities and then closed the meeting. Suggestions for location of next year's AGM were invited.