

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Inland Waterways Association held on 30th January 2010 at Rowington Village Hall, Rowington, Warwickshire.

Present:

Doug Beard (to item 9344 only)	Alan Platt	Peter Scott
Les Etheridge	John Pomfret	Paul Strudwick
Clive Henderson (chairman)	Paul Roper	Vaughan Welch

In Attendance: John Baylis [former trustee – to item 9339 only], Neil Edwards [Chief Executive], Helen Elliott-Adams [Finance Manager], David Forrester [Operations & Information Systems Manager], Jo Gilbertson [Campaign and Communications Manager], Peter Kelly [Secretary, South West Region], Mike Palmer [WRG chairman, from item 9345 onwards], Jerry Sanders [Chairman, Promotions & Communications Manager] and Roger Squires [Chairman, Navigation Committee]

Apologies for absence were received from Ray Carter, Alastair Chambers and Ian West, and from Gerallt Hughes [General Secretary, Committee for Wales], who was due to be in attendance.

9337

MINUTES

Trustees approved the minutes of the Board's meeting held on 14th November.

9338

IWA PURPOSES IN HOLDING NATIONAL FESTIVALS

A paper had been prepared by members of the committee of IWA Festivals and had been posted directly to trustees by Jerry Sanders in advance of the meeting. There was a wide ranging discussion by trustees during which the following points were made:

- The Key Performance Indicator for profitability for the national festival should remain at [an amount] after taking into account all costs, including staff charges;
- British Waterways' annual event at Crick was felt to be failing owing to poor management, and that BW was likely to support an event to be held in Liverpool in 2011;
- It was felt that the Association had always run a national festival, and that it would be a significantly different organisation without it;
- There was concern that the Festival needed to make real profits, and not just show a surplus on paper after bookkeeping entries. Although the KPI was set at [an amount], this included a payment of [an amount] from IWA in respect of stand space for waterway societies and IWA marquee costs;
- It was questioned whether the Festival was a good use of WRG resources, even though WRG volunteers would vote with their feet, and not attend, if they did not enjoy doing so. If WRG did not support the event, it would enable other WRG activities to take place at that time.
- The paper circulated made clear that IWA Festivals had been affected by the recession in reduced sponsorship, and recognised that it needed to reduce and control costs.
- There was concern at the different teams of 'red shirts' and 'blue shirts' and that the friendly rivalry between the two teams presented a confusing impression to visitors, albeit there was recognition of WRG's wish to promote its image.
- There was appreciation for those involved in the IWA marquee in 2009, and it was felt that this created the right impression, and needed to be the standard for the future.
- There was a wish for festival sites to be announced earlier in future years. Jerry Sanders reported that this was also the wish and intention of IWA Festivals.

- There was a view that the event was now being attended almost exclusively by committed waterways enthusiasts, and therefore influencing a declining number of other members of the public. Trustees sought more detailed gate-entry figures to distinguish boaters, campers, works, etc, from others attending.

In summary, it was felt that the purposes of holding national festivals were:

- (a) To make a profit that could be passed to the Association for charitable purposes, and
- (b) To act as a showcase to present the Association to the wider world.

Other reasons were felt to be subsidiary.

9339

NEW WEB-SITE AND E-MAIL HOSTING ARRANGEMENTS

David Forrester gave a presentation illustrating the Association's new web site, which was due to go live within a few days from the meeting. He explained some of the difficulties of the existing site and the difficulties in managing some of the content on the site, and of the past difficulties with the firm that had managed the web site for the Association. David Forrester explained the opportunities for branch, region and national committee officers to become involved in managing content on the web site, and the programme of training that was under preparation. E-mail and mailing list arrangements would also change at the same time as the new web site went live. The existing separate sites for the mail-order operation and for WRG would also close at a later stage, once the content of these sites had been transferred to the new site, and revised e-commerce arrangements had been tested and proved satisfactory.

9340

LONDON AND SOUTHWEST REGIONS

Clive Henderson reported that there had just one nomination for the post of London Region Chairman, and that James Kennerley was therefore appointed to this post. [Note: this is with effect from 26th March].

Clive Henderson reported that there had not been any nominations for the post of South West Region Chairman, and Peter Kelly briefed trustees on recent events in the region, and on current membership and officers within the region and its committee. [a member] had expressed possible interest in taking on the post; trustees asked Clive Henderson to follow this up. In the meantime, Peter Kelly agreed to continue as region secretary, and support would be given by Vaughan Welch, as West Midlands Region Chairman, in respect of Gloucestershire & Herefordshire and South Wales branches, and by Paul Roper, as South East Region Chairman, in respect of West Country and Avon & Wilts branches.

Peter Kelly also agreed to continue as editor of Sou'Wester, the region's magazine. Trustees approved that so long as Peter remained editor, the publication did not require the usual checks by a trustee before publication.

9341

DEFRA CONSULTATION - WATERWAYS FOR EVERYONE

Paul Roper reported on a discussion held at the morning's meeting of Navigation Committee to formulate the Association's response to the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs' consultation document *Waterways for Everyone*, which was due by 26th March, the day before trustees were next due to meet. Navigation Committee had felt the document was 'nice to read' but rather hollow, and lacking in substance or commitment, and rather BW-centric. Trustees endorsed these views, and felt that a small team was needed to put together a draft response. John Pomfret reported that Inland Waterways Freight Group would provide comments on the commercial carrying aspects, and volunteers to help with putting together the draft response were invited to contact Paul Roper outside the meeting.

9342

NATIONAL AWARDS PANEL

Clive Henderson reported to trustees that he had asked Tony Hirst to chair the National Awards Panel for the coming year, and to recruit two other vice-presidents to join him on the Panel. Tony Hirst had agreed, and had asked Audrey Smith and Harry Arnold to join him, both of whom had also agreed. Trustees approved the appointment of Tony Hirst (chairman), Audrey Smith and Harry Arnold to the National Awards Panel for a term of one year. Vaughan Welch offered to arrange engraving of Richard Bird medals, and asked that other administrative duties for the panel be handled by David Forrester. Clive Henderson would inform Tony Hirst, and David Forrester would forward nominations received.

9343

COMMITTEE FOR WALES

Clive Henderson reported that Gerallt Hughes was unable to attend this meeting owing to adverse weather conditions. The agenda item would be deferred until the next meeting.

9344

NATIONAL INLAND WATERWAYS CONSERVANCY

Paul Roper introduced a paper that he had prepared, and which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The paper proposed an update to the National Waterways Conservancy document published by the Association about 50 years ago. Paul Roper had also circulated a list of ten key features for the revised document:

- Focus on the core mission of safeguarding, conserving and developing the inland waterway system, including its income streams, for public benefit including in particular navigation;
- Provide a co-ordinated system with a single navigation license, adopting best practice whilst also realising the economies of scale;
- Act as a focus for restoration;
- Respond at a strategic level to relevant high level public policy initiatives such as adapting to climate change, neighbourhood renewal, sustainable transport and healthy lifestyles;
- Effectively harness the utilisation of voluntary effort;
- Still rely on substantial government funding but potentially reduce the extent of the dependence upon it;
- Be a not for profit organisation able to seek additional funding from the third sector;
- Keep at arms length from government potentially reducing funding vulnerability to the departmental fiscal cycle;
- Be responsive to customers needs and include stakeholder representation within the management structure;
- Adopt strong governance and be suitably diligent in the use of public and charitable funds.

During a short discussion, trustees noted the following points:

- Proposals published should clearly demonstrate the benefits and cost-savings of any structural reorganisation of navigation authorities, and make a well-argued case, rather than simply saying what IWA would like;
- The bullet-point list of key features should be published alongside the document;
- BW had recently published '*Setting a New Course*' prepared by its consultants; there was concern about any suggestion that navigation authorities could manage on less government funding than at present;
- IWA needed to ensure consistency between all its consultation responses and published policy papers.

Trustees endorsed the concept of revising and publishing the proposals, approved the ten key features and asked that the paper be reviewed in the light of comments already made by trustees and members of Navigation Committee, and re-circulated with a view to publishing as a consultation draft during the week following this meeting. Trustees also asked that appropriate publicity be given to the consultation document, and that Navigation Committee prepare a response to '*Setting a New Course*'.

9345

STRATEGY DOCUMENT

Clive Henderson had circulated a document to progress consideration of the Association's overall strategy. Trustees felt that a separate meeting was necessary to discuss this properly. Possible dates for such a meeting were considered, and 27th February and 13th March were felt likely to be the least inconvenient. National committee chairmen who were not trustees and senior staff at Head Office would be invited to attend. Clive Henderson would circulate the potential dates to all trustees (as only eight were present at the time of this item) and committee chairmen to see who might be able to attend, and would ascertain availability of Rowington and Lapworth halls.

Clive Henderson drew attention to an updated role paper for branches and regions, included within the document he had circulated, and asked trustees to review and comment on it.

9346

COMMITTEE AND COMPANY MINUTES

Trustees accepted the following committee and company minutes:

Finance Committee	14 th November (including edited minutes, for publication)
Navigation Committee	14 th November (including edited minutes, for publication)
Restoration Committee	24 th October (including edited minutes, for publication)
Promotions and Communications	10 th October (including edited minutes, for publication)
Waterway Recovery Group	17 th October (including edited minutes, for publication)
Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd	10 th November (including edited minutes, for publication)
IWA Festivals	27 th August
Essex Waterways Ltd	10 th September (including edited minutes, for publication)

9347

INCOME & EXPENDITURE

Les Etheridge reported that Finance Committee had considered a report on near final figures of income and expenditure for 2009, and that the outcome excluding investment returns was a deficit of near [an amount]. This was close to the 2009 budget and bucked the usual trend of actual deficits being much less than those budgeted for. Trustees would need to take this into account when setting the level of deficit for 2011.

9348

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Neil Edwards had prepared, and circulated with the agenda, a paper covering matters arising from previous meetings. This was noted, and Clive Henderson gave updates on the following minutes:

Minute 9273 – Consideration was still to be given to arrangements for a trustees training day;

Minute 9279 – The working group had met once, and was awaiting notes of that meeting before proceeding;

Minute 9317 and 9333 – Ian West had advised that he had written to the Charity Commission, but had yet to receive a response;

Minute 9322(v) – The board of Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd had approved the company's budget at its recent electronic meeting;

Minute 9331(x) – [a member]'s membership status would be delegated to Lichfield Branch to resolve;

Minute 9334 – Finance Committee had considered a further paper on a possible appeal, and had asked for further information on some aspects; the matters would be progressed by e-mail by the committee. Trustees asked that Promotions & Communications Committee take an interest in the proposed appeal to help it succeed;

Minute 9335 – John Reeve had also accepted honorary life membership.

9349

HERTFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Roger Squires reported that Hertfordshire Branch was likely to approve a resolution to close down the branch at its forthcoming Annual General Meeting, albeit that a programme of activities would continue until June. Existing members of the branch would be divided between adjacent Lea & Stort and Chiltern branches. In the unlikely event that a new committee came forward, then the branch could be reprieved or re-established at a later date. [Confidential item].

9350

RESTORATION COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Trustees approved the appointment of Edward Gittens (to January 2013) to Restoration Committee, and noted that the Committee had appointed Luke Walker as a deputy chairman, alongside Keith Noble.

9351

NEXT MEETING

Trustees noted that the next meeting (apart from any special meeting to consider strategy) of the board of trustees would take place on Saturday 27th March at Rowington Village Hall. Subsequent meetings, in 2010, are due to take place at:

12 th June	(at Rowington)	9 th October	(at Rowington)
31 st July	(at Rowington)	4 th December	(at Lapworth)

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 5.15 p.m.