

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Inland Waterways Association held on 8th October 2011 at Lapworth Old School, Lapworth, Warwickshire.

Present:

Chris Birks	Clive Henderson (chairman)	Peter Scott
Ivor Caplan	Alasdair Lawrance	Jim Shead
Ray Carter	Alan Platt	Paul Strudwick
Alastair Chambers	John Pomfret	Vaughan Welch
Les Etheridge	Paul Roper	
Gordon Harrower	Jerry Sanders	

In Attendance: Neil Edwards [Chief Executive], Helen Elliott-Adams [Finance Manager], Jo Gilbertson [Campaign and Communications Manager] and Nick Parker [Finance Committee] for items 9472 to 9477.

Apologies for absence were received from Ian West

9472

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Clive Henderson welcomed Gordon Harrower to his first meeting as a trustee, and said that he would write to Doug Beard to thank him for past services, Doug having retired as a trustee following the AGM.

Clive Henderson reminded members of his observer position on the British Waterways Board and his chairmanship of British Waterways Advisory Forum, and asked other trustees present for any declarations of interest. There were none.

9473

MINUTES

Trustees approved the minutes of the Board's meeting held on 13th August 2011, including the edited version for publication, [subject to amendments included in published version]:

9474

NATIONAL CHAIRMAN

The appointment of Clive Henderson as national chairman for a further term of one year, made at the August meeting, was ratified by secret ballot.

9475

DEPUTY NATIONAL CHAIRMEN

There were two nominations for the two posts of Deputy National Chairmen. Vaughan Welch wished it to be recorded that he did not wish to stand for election to the post on this occasion because of recent events. In accordance with agreed procedures a secret ballot was held. Two candidates were elected: Les Etheridge and Paul Roper.

9476

NATIONAL TREASURER

There was one nomination for the post of National Treasurer. In accordance with the agreed procedures a secret ballot was held. Les Etheridge was reappointed to the post for a further term of one year .

9477

RESERVES POLICY

Nick Parker had produced a detailed review of the Association's Reserves Policy, papers for which had been circulated prior to the meeting. In answer to a question, Nick Parker explained that the proposed level of reserves was derived from a range of considerations and represented about four and a half to nine months worth of expenditure for the Association, and was in line with comparable charities that had sufficient reserves. There were no further questions from trustees, who agreed to the recommendations en bloc.

Trustees:

- (a) confirmed that reserves held by the Association are not held merely to generate income, and that investment income is just a by-product of the holding of reserves;
- (b) agreed that The Regions and Branches Fund continues to be "designated" and is therefore excluded from the free reserves of the Association;
- (c) confirmed that the level of free reserves should continue to be maintained within the range of £325,000 to £650,000;
- (d) agreed the slight wording changes to the policy as set out in Appendix A on the paper circulated to trustees;
- (e) agreed that the Association's accounts should provide a shorter version of the reserves policy, and delegated this to Finance Committee to prepare.

Trustees expressed their thanks to Nick Parker for his work on the review.

9478

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND STRATEGY

Jo Gilbertson had prepared a paper to consider IWA branch engagement for better public relations and recruitment. The paper suggested the recruitment of an employee to focus on encouraging and supporting branch activity, and a volunteer to assist with public relations work at Head Office. Les Etheridge reported that the paper had been discussed at the morning's meeting of Finance Committee, and that the Committee had been supportive of the idea, albeit that savings would need to be made elsewhere from the Association's budget to be able to fund the work. Alastair Chambers was concerned that a volunteer to support public relations should not be seen as an exploitation to avoid employment costs, and some region chairmen expressed scepticism whether the proposals would engender any change in activity with branches. Alan Platt said that some of the branches in his region had commented that they would welcome more support, but suggested that care should be taken so that branches did not feel dictated to.

Jim Shead suggested that there might be benefit in forming a project board to oversee the work. There was general agreement that there needed to be clear accountability for the work, with agreed milestones and regular reporting back to trustees, but Jo Gilbertson suggested that another committee could just act as a blanket to stifle the work. The new employee would report to Jo Gilbertson, and there would be a report to each meeting of trustees on progress to the project plan.

Region chairmen reported on recent discussions with their branches to review priorities. Paul Strudwick said there was renewed enthusiasm with new committees in Chelmsford Branch. Paul Roper reported the challenges within South East Region presented by the area having a lot of members whose primary interests were in the Midlands waterways, rather than the South East, notwithstanding some active committee members. The 'competition' with popular and active local waterway societies was also noted. There was some doubt as to the level of IWA membership within such groups, the feeling being that many people were keen to support local causes, but had less interest nationally. There was a general feeling that more could be done to publicise IWA's role in a range of waterway partnerships and support for work led by local groups,

but that each instance needed to be considered on its own merits. There was also felt to be scope to better report more of the work undertaken by national committees.

Trustees:

- (a) Noted and approved the contents of the paper from Jo Gilbertson;
- (b) Approved a new budget line for this initiative;
- (c) Agreed that Head Office should arrange media training for specific personnel as set out in the paper;
- (d) Agreed that Head Office should recruit a local campaign officer as part of the membership and campaign strategy;
- (e) Agreed that Head Office should try to recruit a volunteer or unpaid placement to provide additional public relations support placement at Head Office, to support increased branch activity;
- (f) Asked region chairmen to facilitate meetings between branches and/or regions and Jo Gilbertson, and to support and discuss issues and agree possible priority projects for IWA to support and initiate;
- (g) Agreed to the creation of a standing agenda item on the Trustee meeting agendas for branch engagement and public relations at future trustee meetings to retain focus and direction;

9479

NATIONAL FUND-RAISING OFFICER

Vaughan Welch had prepared a paper proposing that the Association appoint a national fund-raising officer, which had been circulated with the agenda. Les Etheridge briefed trustees on a discussion that had taken place at Finance Committee that morning covering fund-raising opportunities in general, arising from an agenda item on the Inglesham Appeal. Limitations of gaining funding with the payment of commission or fees to a fund-raiser were noted, and it was felt that plans to improve the effectiveness of the Inglesham Appeal could provide a useful steer on how to progress future fund-raising activity.

9480

INGLESHAM APPEAL

Les Etheridge, Ivor Caplan and Mike Palmer had prepared a paper, which had been circulated to trustees prior to the meeting, and which had also been discussed at the morning's meeting of Finance Committee. In introducing the paper, Les Etheridge made clear that the paper's authors had not wished to appear critical of Cotswold Canals Trust. The unfortunate lack of a clear leader for the Appeal was acknowledged, and felt to be a 'lesson learned' for future. Trustees noted that there was a great deal happening on the Cotswold Canals, including the 2012 IWA National Trail Boat Festival at Stroud. Les Etheridge briefed the meeting on contacts made with two potential fund-raisers, with whom meetings had been held, and a possible remuneration arrangement with one of them who might undertake some fund-raising work. The other, Terry Kemp, might be willing to take a leading role in the appeal on a voluntary basis. Trustees recognised there needed to be an involvement of the local branch, which had not happened so far. Gareth Jones, who had attended the morning's meeting of Finance Committee, had also offered support. For the present, Les Etheridge offered to take on leadership of the Appeal.

Trustees:

- (a) Asked that a meeting be arranged between IWA (including WRG) with Cotswold Canals Trust as soon as possible to put the project on a proper footing for the future;
- (b) [confidential];
- (c) Formally extended the period of the appeal to 31st December 2012;

- (d) Appointed Les Etheridge to lead the appeal and authorised him to appoint a fundraiser to work at no additional cost to IWA general funds (i.e. they could work on a percentage of the funds they raise with any other costs are charged to the appeal);
- (e) [confidential]
- (f) Agreed that first claim on IWA's Restoration Grants budget (usually made via Restoration Committee) for the balance of 2011 and 2012 would be for the Inglesham Appeal;
- (g) Agreed that, subject to satisfactory progress in developing the appeal, the Association's general reserves could be used to effectively make a loan to the appeal so that WRG was able to continue its work in 2012;
- (h) [confidential]
- (i) Agreed that all trustees should provide support from time to time in the Inglesham area so as to support fundraising work.

9481

TRUSTEES SELF APPRAISAL

Clive Henderson reported that no trustees had yet commented to him, or given him completed appraisal forms, as supplied by the Association's auditors, following the August meeting. Nor had he had time to hold one-to-one sessions with each trustee yet. Clive Henderson recommended that there should be an in-depth separate discussion on the matter as the final part of the December trustees meeting, this part of the meeting being strictly for trustees only. Trustees agreed and asked that an electronic copy of the appraisal forms be circulated to all trustees, and also that a note of the role and responsibilities of the senior staff at Head Office be circulated prior to the December meeting.

9482

MERSEYSIDE AND WEST LANCASHIRE BRANCH

Alan Platt had prepared a paper covering the position of Merseyside and West Lancashire Branch, which had been circulated with the agenda. The paper outlined the declining fortunes of the branch and proposals that had been agreed by the remaining branch committee, Chester & District Branch and North West Region. After a short discussion, trustees:

- (a) Approved the closure of IWA Merseyside and West Lancashire Branch;
- (b) Approved the creation of a Merseyside and West Lancashire Group within Chester & District Branch;
- (c) Agreed to the transfer of Merseyside and West Lancashire Branch's funds to IWA Chester & District Branch, to be held as a separate designated fund, but reviewed from time-to-time to consider the potential use of such funds;
- (d) Agreed that as a general rule, groups within branches would not be shown on formal listings of the Association's branches, e.g. in *Waterways* magazine, but that every opportunity would be given to publicise their work and existence, and to encourage people to join in, and for interested parties to contact them.

9483

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Neil Edwards had prepared a paper, circulated with the agenda, outlining various recommendations from committees for appointment and reappointment of members. Trustees:

- (a) Approved the reappointment of Paul Roper and Gillian Smith to Remuneration Committee, each for a further term of one year.
- (b) Approved the reappointment of John Hawkins, Jude Palmer, Mike Palmer and Jonathan Smith to the board of Waterway Recovery Group, each for a further term of three years.
- (c) Approved the reappointment of Les Etheridge to the board of Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd for a further term of three years.
- (d) Noted the retirement of Dave Chapman, Malcolm Fry, Sandy Jones and Edwina Wallace from the committee of IWA Festivals, and thanked them for their work.
- (e) Noted the reappointment, which had been approved by the board of Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd, of Ray Carter and Derek Smith to IWA Festivals committee, each for a further term of three years.
- (f) Noted, the reappointment, which had been approved by the board of Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd, of Robin Bishop, Ray Carter and Steve Haywood, and the appointment of John Fevyer and Gary Summers to the Canalway Cavalcade committee, each for a term of three years.
- (g) Approved the appointment of Mike Carter as North West Region's representative on Navigation Committee.
- (h) Asked that the situation of non-IWA members on committees should be brought back to a future meeting for consideration after Clive Henderson had asked the respective committee chairmen (Ian West and Mike Palmer) to report why these committee members were not members of the Association.

9484

COMMITTEE AND COMPANY MINUTES

Trustees accepted the following committee and company minutes:

Finance Committee	13 th August
Navigation Committee	11 th June
Restoration Committee	25 th June
Promotions and Communications	(none)
Waterway Recovery Group	(none)
Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd	13 th August (including edited minutes for publication)
IWA Festivals	(none)
Essex Waterways Ltd	7 th June (including edited minutes for publication)

9485

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. Clive Henderson drew attention to minute 9418 (old South East Region bank account) and suggested that this matter could lapse and be dropped off future reports as the sum purportedly remaining in the old account was trivial (less than £1).

9486

BUDGET 2012

Les Etheridge briefed trustees on a discussion that had taken place at the morning's meeting of Finance Committee. Initial figures indicated that the Association's expenditure needed to be reduced by [an amount] from the draft budget that had been considered by Finance Committee. Les Etheridge reported that

he had already discussed the situation with several budget holders and committee chairmen and, in absence of realistic likely increases in income, the following proposed savings had been put forward:

[various savings and amounts]

Whilst Finance Committee had considered that Navigation Committee and Waterway Recovery Group were visibly part of the Association's activities which helped produce income and that their budgets should not be reduced, it felt all budget holders should be asked to revisit their budgets to see whether further savings could be identified. Ray Carter was concerned at the level of proposed cuts to the budget for Promotions and Communications Committee. The proposed savings did not take into account the current investment loss of [an amount] in 2011.

9487

NAVIGATION ISSUES

Paul Roper reported briefly on a number of issues discussed at the morning's meeting of Navigation Committee:

- (a) The name of the New Waterways Charity has been announced as the Canal & River Trust, and that there was a further Defra consultation, this time on issues within the proposed transfer order. There was concern at proposals within this proposed order that would enable the new charity to progress changes in status of waterways between the categories of Commercial, Cruiseway and Remainder. Whilst there were some benefits in the proposed arrangement, it could pave the way for underused waterways, or those with structural problems, to be demised via relegation to remainder waterway status in any difficult future times. The Committee had accepted that the Freedom of Information rights would have to be lost with the advent of the new charity.
- (b) The Environment Agency had announced budget reductions, leasing of some Thames lock cottages and reductions in standards, and an expectation for each regional area to pay its own way (rather than an overall national position to assist lesser used waterways in Anglia), all of which were of concern and outrage to some Thames users who had lobbied not to be drawn into the new Charity.
- (c) The Government's intended changes to planning law had been discussed; a joint response was planned between Navigation and Restoration committees, which would need to focus solely on waterway-related issues and not get drawn into wider arguments.
- (d) There had been some ill-founded adverse comment about the Association's policies for residential boating, which misrepresented IWA's position. These impressions needed to be countered with better IWA public relations.
- (e) There had also been some adverse comment about IWA's involvement in management of moorings on London Waterways during the Olympics – it being held that IWA was complicit with undesirable and unnecessary restrictions on boating in the area. Clive Henderson asked that the facts be properly researched before comment to the press; he would speak to Jon Guest at British Waterways.

9488

VOLUNTEER WORK ON BW WATERWAYS

Vaughan Welch raised the issue of British Waterways requiring supervision for IWA volunteers working on their waterways whereas WRG had self-supervisory status. Other trustees explained that the level of supervision required was dependent on the activity undertaken and equipment being used, and that such supervision was unlikely to be necessary for simple tasks, such as litter collection, whereas operation of mechanical plant, etc, depended on demonstrate abilities of operators and so on. Clive Henderson said that these issues could be addressed at the seminar that IWA planned to organise early in 2012 in which BW would participate.

9489

NEXT MEETING

Trustees noted that the next meeting of the board of trustees would take place on Saturday 3rd December 2011 at Lapworth Village Hall.

2012 Meeting Dates:

4th February, 14th April, 16th June, 18th August, 13th October, 8th December 2012 (all at Rowington)

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 4.30 p.m.