

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Inland Waterways Association held on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2013 at Rowington Village Hall, Rowington, Warwickshire.

Present:

Ivor Caplan

Ray Carter

Alastair Chambers

Les Etheridge (chairman)

Gordon Harrower

Clive Henderson

Roger Holmes

Alasdair Lawrance

Alan Platt

John Pomfret

Paul Roper

Peter Scott

Jim Shead

Gillian Smith

Paul Strudwick

Vaughan Welch

Ian West

In Attendance: Neil Edwards [Chief Executive], Helen Elliott-Adams [Company Secretary], Mike Palmer [Chairman, Waterway Recovery Group] and Jerry Sanders [Chairman of Promotions & Communications Committee].

There were no apologies for absence.

9652

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Ivor Caplan, Clive Henderson and Vaughan Welch recorded their membership of the Canal & River Trust's Council. Ivor Caplan, Alan Platt, Peter Scott and Vaughan Welch recorded their positions as members of Canal & River Trust partnerships and other advisory committees. Clive Henderson is a member of Canal & River Trust's appointments panel. Mike Palmer declared that he is also a member of CRT's Council.

Les Etheridge asked trustees present for any other declarations of interest. There were none, other than that with reference to minute 9657, Les Etheridge declared that he was a boat-owner booked in to attend Canalway Cavalcade.

9653

MINUTES

Trustees approved the minutes of the Board's meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2013, including the edited version for publication, as a correct record of the meeting.

9654

RISK MANAGEMENT

A paper from Gordon Harrower and Gren Messham, Finance Committee, summarising the changes made to the risk management paper at the previous meeting was noted.

9655

JOINT CANAL & RIVER TRUST / IWA SEMINAR

Clive Henderson had circulated a paper outlining plans for a proposed seminar with Canal & River Trust for waterways societies, to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> May, and requested a budget for £1,500. Trustees approved joint sponsorship of the event, up to £1,500 in expenses and noted that Promotions and Communications Committee would support the event with information about IWA and help with the registration process. Various trustees noted a number of other events on the same weekend; and explained why they would be unable to attend at such relatively short notice. [Text omitted]

9656

VIVIAN BULKELEY JOHNSON SALT

A recommendation, made by Inland Waterways Freight Group and endorsed by the Awards Panel, that the Vivian Bulkeley Johnson Salt should be awarded to S Walsh & Sons of Brentwood, Essex, was approved. John Pomfret reported that it was intended for the award to be presented at Canalway Cavalcade.

9657

CANALWAY CAVALCADE INDEMNITY

Gordon Harrower reported on discussions at the board of Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd and at Finance Committee earlier in the day. Neil Edwards had written to Westminster City Council, on behalf of Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd, seeking a variation to the indemnity sought by the Council in respect of those parts of Canalway Cavalcade to be held on the Council's property. [Detail omitted]

9658

APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY CONSULTANT ENGINEERS

A Paper from Vaughan Welch had been circulated with the agenda, and which had been endorsed by Navigation Committee. Trustees:

- (a) Appointed Howard Worth and John Taplin as Honorary Consultant Engineers;
- (b) Noted the retirement of Tony Harrison as an Honorary Consultant Engineer and asked the national chairman to write to him to thank him for his services;
- (c) Noted that Tony Harrison and his wife Mary were already Honorary Life Members of the Association.

9659

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

Les Etheridge reported that Ettington Community Centre (between Banbury and Stratford-upon-Avon, in Warwickshire) had been booked for the Association's national Annual General Meeting, which would take place on 29<sup>th</sup> September. Arrangements for the day would be undertaken by Promotions and Communications Committee.

9660

NORTH WEST REGION BOUNDARIES AND BRANCH NAMES

Alan Platt, North West Region Chairman, had circulated a paper with the agenda reviewing the responsibilities of branches within the region and some minor boundary adjustments that had been negotiated with branches in neighbouring regions. This followed extensive discussions with all four branches in his region and with the relevant neighbouring branches. Trustees:

- (a) Approved a change of branch name from 'Chester & District Branch' to 'Chester and Merseyside Branch'.
- (b) Approved a change of branch name from 'North Lancs and Cumbria Branch' to 'Lancashire and Cumbria Branch'
- (c) Revised the postcode allocations for members for the WN (Wigan), WA (Warrington), PR (Preston) and L (Liverpool) postcode areas as follows:  
WN1, 6 and 8 to Lancashire and Cumbria Branch; all other WN postcodes to Manchester;  
WA1 to 12 to Chester and Merseyside Branch; all other WA postcodes to Manchester Branch;  
L39 and L40 to Lancashire and Cumbria Branch, all other L postcodes to Chester and Merseyside Branch.

PR8 and 9 to Chester and Merseyside Branch; all other PR postcodes to Lancashire and Cumbria Branch.

- (d) Approved the transfer of waterway responsibility for Bosley Locks on the Macclesfield Canal from Manchester Branch to North Staffordshire and South Cheshire Branch.
- (e) Revised the allocation of members in the NE (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) postcode area so that the whole of this area would be covered by North Riding Branch.
- (f) Approved a range of changes in waterway responsibilities for those waterways that had previously been covered by the old Merseyside Branch prior to that branch's closure
  - (i) Lancashire and Cumbria Branch to cover the Leeds and Liverpool Canal from bridge 17 (Lydiate) to Greenberfield Top Lock, and the Rufford Arm.
  - (ii) Manchester Branch to cover the Leigh Arm of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal up to the junction with the main line in Wigan.
  - (iii) Chester and Merseyside Branch to cover all other areas formerly covered by the old Merseyside Branch, including the Liverpool Link, Leeds & Liverpool Canal to bridge 17, Bridgewater Canal from the M6 road bridge at Lymm to Preston Brook, including the Runcorn Arm, and the St Helens / Sankey Canal.

9661

#### COMMITTEE AND COMPANY MINUTES

Trustees accepted the following committee and company minutes:

Finance Committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2013
Navigation Committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2013
Restoration Committee	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2013
Promotions and Communications	11 <sup>th</sup> December 2012 and 5 <sup>th</sup> February 2013
Waterway Recovery Group	10 <sup>th</sup> November 2012 and 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2013
Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2013 (including edited minutes for publication)
IWA Festivals	17 <sup>th</sup> November 2012
Essex Waterways Ltd	3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2012 (including edited minutes for publication)

9662

#### NAVIGATION COMMITTEE

Paul Roper reported that the morning's meeting had included discussions covering:

- (a) Recent improvements to the boating area on the website;
- (b) A paper from Promotions and Communications Committee suggesting how to attract people to IWA;
- (c) The slow progress on recruiting new members for Navigation Committee;
- (d) A report that the Boat Safety Scheme Technical Committee chairman had rejected IWA's proposed nominee to the Committee, as the nominee was also an examiner;
- (e) HS2 and the need to address public relations issues;
- (f) A briefing from Paul Roper on a discussion with Simon Salem (Canal & River Trust) about moorings issues, and acceptance that progress on this issue was much slower than the Committee would have wished. Trustees agreed that the Association should stop trying to invent solutions, which had led to adverse publicity, but instead try harder to pressure Canal & River Trust to get on with resolving the issues as was its remit;

9663

#### FINANCE COMMITTEE

Gordon Harrower reported that the morning's meeting had included discussions covering:

- (a) Reducing the volume of printed agenda papers circulated;
- (b) A review of trends in membership levels and recruitment;

- (c) Possible new Key Performance Indicators for the National Festival;
- (d) A proposal from Jerry Sanders to offer an initial twelve-months free-membership for those joining one of the electronic membership categories at the National Festival. This was endorsed by trustees.

9664

#### IWA FESTIVALS

Gordon Harrower reported that there had been a discussion on a revision of IWA Festivals' structure to look at the practicalities of the decisions that trustees had made at the February meeting. There was, however, some uncertainty on accounting and legal issues, and Finance Committee had agreed that the issues need to be discussed with the auditors in the first instance. There would be no effect on 2013 National Festival.

Ian West report that:

- (a) Preparations for the National Festival at Cassiobury Park, Watford, were in hand;
- (b) The site for the Trail Boat Festival, at Bodiam Castle, was looking good. There were 28 boats booked in, which was near the maximum;
- (c) There were now 150 boats booked in for Canalway Cavalcade – possibly the highest ever;
- (d) There had been no progress on proposals for a Bow Back Rivers cruise or rally, and the proposed event was now unlikely to happen in 2013.

9665

#### PROMOTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Jerry Sanders reported that:

- (a) A recruitment seminar for Midlands members was taking place today;
- (b) He intended to prepare a paper for the next trustees meeting to propose that the Association hire marketing and publicity consultants.

9666

#### RESTORATION COMMITTEE

Vaughan Welch reported that:

- (a) Restoration Committee's March meeting had been cancelled owing to adverse weather, and an electronic meeting had been held during the following week;
- (b) Support was needed for Lapal Canal Trust to lobby against a proposed development at the eastern end of the Canal at its junction with the Worcester & Birmingham Canal. Vaughan Welch planned to write an article for the next Bulletin, and a press release would be issued.
- (c) He had formed a working group with waterway restoration groups affected by phase 2 of HS2, and had also liaised with relevant Canal & River Trust officers. Vaughan stated that there was some potential for restoration groups to reclaim their costs from HS2 via a CRT agreement. He was writing a further article for the next Bulletin.

9667

#### MATTERS ARISING

Neil Edwards had circulated a paper updating trustees on matters arising from previous trustee meetings. The following issues were raised:

- (a) Les Etheridge reported on lack of response from Region Chairman on Navigation Authority communications, and asked that action be taken on this.
- (b) Les Etheridge noted the lack of proposals from region chairmen for future IWA National Festival sites.
- (c) There had been no candidates for the post of National Awards officer so far, although Jim Shead reiterated his offer to take this on if no one else wished to do so.

- (d) Les Etheridge reminded Ian West that IWA Festivals Committee had yet to initiate and establish specific strategies and campaigning aims for individual festivals for trustees to consider, or to advise on the timing needed by IWA Festivals of any decisions needed from trustees as to priorities and campaigns for each year's events.

9668

#### AGENDA PAPERS

In order to save on unnecessary printing costs, trustees were asked to consider opting out of receipt of printed copies of agenda papers for future meetings, especially where they brought laptops to meetings and did not need the printed versions to refer to. Trustees agreed that all papers for circulation with the printed agenda needed to be submitted by 10.00 am on the day (Thursday for a Saturday meeting) nine days preceding the meeting. Papers received after this time would not be posted out, and would only be circulated electronically with the specific approval of the meeting chairman. A reminder would be circulated to all trustees a couple of weeks before the June meeting.

9669

#### EASTERN REGION CHAIRMAN

Les Etheridge reported that Alastair Chambers had indicated that he wished to resign as chairman of Eastern Region following the region meeting due to be held on 16<sup>th</sup> April. A successor would be sought with notice for nominations due in the May edition of *Waterways* magazine. Trustees endorsed the national chairman's thanks to Alastair Chambers for his work for the Association in recent years.

9670

#### STRATEGY

Les Etheridge had circulated a paper with the agenda, partly updating from previous meetings and looking at levels of membership and the perception of the Association, especially to non-members.

Paul Strudwick said there was a lack of guidance for branch publicity officers. The national chairman noted that this was in the hands of Promotions and Communications Committee to address, but Jerry Sanders stated there was a lack of resources. Neil Edwards noted the importance of electronic media, the need for up-to-date web pages, that some branches were very much better than others in terms of communication at all levels, and that Gemma Bolton, supported by some of the more knowledgeable branch officers, was giving good support to branches. Les Etheridge endorsed this and highlighted how Kent & East Sussex Branch had benefited from particular support from Gemma for the National Trailboat Festival.

Paul Roper felt that a variety of IWA officers had not helped the situation by putting forward their own personal views as if they were IWA policy, rather than adopting a corporate-responsible position and sticking to the policy actually agreed by trustees and promulgated through Bulletin. Trustees agreed there was a need for corporate responsibility from all IWA officers, especially trustees, members of national committees and staff, and that it was vital to put forward a consistent message and policy.

The situation concerning HS2 was considered at some length. Trustees all agreed that IWA needed to be seen to be actively doing something to protect the waterways against the worst effects of HS2, even if views as to how successful this might be were at variance. Vaughan Welch reported he had identified all the waterway crossings affected, particularly for waterways under restoration. Trustees asked that there should be a consultation with branches and agreed there should be no statements against HS2 in general, as that was outside IWA's remit. [One trustee] suggested that a radical stance outside IWA's charitable objectives would attract attention, but other trustees did not support this. There was general agreement that IWA needed to be seen as leading the waterways movement in opposing detrimental effects on the waterways, with a view to moving the alignment of the railway where that benefited a canal, ensuring sufficient head room and lobbying for landscape mitigation measures.

Les Etheridge noted that the Association was not always seen to be as effective on behalf of the waterways as efforts behind the scenes and by a large number of active volunteers justified. There were a small number of vociferous detractors who maintained a high profile on social media, whereas most members were reluctant to get publicly involved to defend IWA's position.

Trustees:

- (a) Agreed to continue to support and develop the work undertaken by the Branch Campaign Officer and asked for a report on those geographical areas where this was currently proving successful for the next meeting.
- (b) Asked Vaughan Welch to prepare a note to consult all IWA branches about HS2 issues in general, to be signed off by the national chairman, and that a separate working group be put together to lead IWA's communication with members and the media on the issue. Les Etheridge would approach Helen Whitehouse to ask if she would lead this group.
- (c) Agreed that a clearer view of how trustees ensure a consistent message is put out by the Association on all matters of policy was needed, and asked Les Etheridge to arrange a simple board evaluation exercise to which all trustees would be expected to respond.
- (d) Asked that members fluent and active in social media be sought to assist the Association's image and put across an accurate picture of the Association's policies and achievements.
- (e) Noted the need for a regular feed of articles covering policy and Association campaigning for the press and other media. These should be submitted via the national chairman.

Trustees discussed the continuing trend of declining membership levels, noted that recruitment levels had dropped in recent years, and discussed a number of factors that had contributed towards this.

Trustees:

- (a) Asked that further effort be put into promoting the 'free membership' scheme, and in particular that those who had volunteered to liaise with waterside businesses followed up the necessary actions to ensure that this moved forward.
- (b) Agreed that recruitment of further waterside businesses to promote the 'free membership' scheme could be developed with appropriate branch members.
- (c) Felt that it would be useful to have more information about membership and recruitment levels, and asked for a simple report for each meeting.
- (d) Noted progress on other strategy matters, as reported in the national chairman's paper and reiterated the need for region chairmen to respond on the navigation authority communications issue.

9671

#### CANAL & RIVER TRUST USER GROUP MEETINGS

Roger Holmes reported that Canal & River Trust's Severn and South Wales Waterways Partnership planned to hold one-to-one surgeries, instead of the existing user group meetings and that the Waterway Manager had refused to meet with IWA branch chairmen other than through such surgeries. Les Etheridge advised that he had arranged to meet with a number of the Partnership chairmen on 19<sup>th</sup> April, and would be taking this issue up at that meeting.

9672

NEXT MEETING

Trustees noted that the next meeting of the board of trustees would take place on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June at Rowington Village Hall.

Dates for other meetings to be held during 2013 were: 8<sup>th</sup> June, 10<sup>th</sup> August, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2013, (all at Rowington Village Hall) and 7<sup>th</sup> December (Tanworth in Arden).

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 4.02 p.m.