

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Inland Waterways Association held on 8th February 2014 at Rowington Village Hall, Rowington, Warwickshire.

Present:

Ivor Caplan	Clive Henderson	Peter Scott
Ray Carter	Roger Holmes	Jim Shead
Richard Collet-Fenson	Gren Messham	Paul Strudwick
Les Etheridge (chairman)	David Pullen	Vaughan Welch
Gordon Harrower	Paul Roper	

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

Apologies for absence were received from Alan Platt and Gillian Smith.

Les Etheridge welcomed Richard Collet-Fenson and David Pullen to their first trustee meetings.

9754

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Ivor Caplan, Clive Henderson, Mike Palmer and Vaughan Welch recorded their membership of Canal & River Trust's Council. Ivor Caplan, David Pullen, 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.

Les Etheridge asked trustees present for any other declarations of interest. There were none.

9755

PUBLICATION OF MINUTES

Les Etheridge introduced his paper, which had been circulated with the agenda, to clarify whether individual trustees should be allowed to request publication of their name as to whether voting for or against a particular resolution in the published edition of the minutes. It was accepted that trustees could request their name being recorded in the full 'Companies House' version.

In response to a question from Clive Henderson it was agreed that trustees should not consider themselves obliged to vote in favour of the resolutions at the forthcoming Extraordinary General Meeting.

Trustees voted (7 votes to 6 with 1 abstention) in favour of maintaining the existing policy whereby the names of trustees voting one way or another would not appear in published versions of the minutes.

Paul Strudwick suggested that the arrangements for publication of minutes should be reviewed and offered to produce a paper for a future meeting.

9756

MINUTES

The minutes of the Trustee Board's meeting held on 7th December 2013, including the edited version for publication, were approved as a true record of the meeting.

9757

NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

Les Etheridge reported on a meeting, held on 5th February, with the Waterways Minister Dan Rogerson. The minister had reaffirmed that it was still Government policy to transfer the Environment Agency's navigations to Canal & River Trust and that he was encouraging CRT to progress discussions with the Environment Agency to this end. Les Etheridge had written to Richard Parry, CRT chief executive, who had advised that a meeting with the Environment Agency had already taken place. There had been an offer for CRT to run these navigations without taking on the risk, which had previously been rejected by the Government, possibly as a consequence of the view of civil servants of the time. This suggestion would be promoted again.

Les Etheridge reported that he had seen a detailed report from Katie Thomas, Membership Recruitment Officer, covering results of recent approaches to waterside businesses to support membership recruitment. The report was encouraging, but there was still a lot of work to do.

The planned meeting with the Association of Continuous Cruisers had taken place shortly after trustees' December meeting, but there had not been any agreed outcomes to action of any great significance. Les Etheridge had also met with British Marine Federation, again with no agreed specific actions of significance.

Clive Henderson reported that there had not been any significant progress on plans for IWA's attendance at the Stratford River Festival. A decision was awaited on whether it might be possible to situate an IWA marquee at Bancroft Gardens, rather than at the recreation ground on the opposite side of the river where the rest of the event would take place.

Les Etheridge reported that an article to commemorate Robert Aickman's birth centenary had appeared in Waterways magazine, and which had seemed to have gone down well from comments received. The idea of arranging for a Blue Plaque at Aickman's former Gower Street residence was suggested; Paul Strudwick offered see if there was interest within London Region to pursue this. Trustees noted that Chester and Oxfordshire branches had arranged for Blue plaque to commemorate Tom Rolt in their areas.

[Post meeting note: Les Etheridge circulated trustees subsequent to the meeting to say that he had meant to comment on the *Acheman Challenge*, where four members of staff were fundraising, and wished to express gratitude for their efforts and to encourage support for them. Trustees agreed, and asked this to be added as post meeting note.]

Les Etheridge reported on discussions at a boating groups meeting with Canal & River Trust, which he felt had been constructive and which had discussed CRT's medium term plans.

9758

HS2 UPDATE

Gren Messham reported that the HS2 Phase 1 Environmental Statement Consultation had been due to close for responses on 24th January, but due to the 'missing 877 pages' which were not included in a print run for some hard copies (but were always on the web and therefore always in IWA's considerations) the consultation had been extended to 27th February. IWA's response would include:

- Clearances for permanent and temporary works
- CRT input into the design of feeder changes for the Oxford Canal
- Fradley crossings redesign (below)
- HS2 under-bridge over the GUC at Saltley Viaduct
- Curzon Street Station design over Digbeth Branch and Ashted Lock
- Noise Mitigation route-wide
- Vertical deviations on canal crossings

- Waterway Design Principles

Gren gave an update on progress with the IWA/ CRT feasibility study at Fradley:

- Hyder had produced a final report, confirming the viability of IWA's alternative proposal in January 2012, with net neutral environmental impact and potential savings of over £50m, lower embankments and less noise transmission compared with HS2's route.
- This report would be referred to by both IWA and CRT in their Phase 1 responses.
- CRT had begun discussions with HS2 to persuade them of the merits of moving to this route, with the Chairman of HS2
- IWA and CRT had met with Staffordshire County Council to outline to them the conclusions of the report, and the potential benefits to their interests. The Council might be prepared to move towards IWA and CRT's position.
- Les Etheridge and Richard Parry had agreed to work together to exploit the report to get the route changed at Fradley. CRT was preparing to petition Parliament if this became necessary.
- The report was embargoed until 27th February to allow CRT to meet at several levels privately with HS2 to explain, and hopefully persuade HS2 to use, the alternative route.

IWA's response on the Phase 2 Route Consultation had been updated following input from members, waterway societies, CRT and new information, and submitted in good time for 31st January. A copy had been placed on IWA's website for information. Major issues were:

- Crossing of the Trent & Mersey Canal opposite Bostock Hall, where headroom might not be adequate
- Getting a good design for Manchester Piccadilly Station.
- Impact on the Ashby Canal restoration.
- Impact on Chesterfield Canal restoration and on the proposed Rother Link.
- Impact on the longer term Barnsley and Dearne & Dove canals restorations.
- Impact of the Woodlesford Leeds Link Line crossings which could effectively sever the Aire & Calder Navigation if headroom was not sufficient
- Getting a good design for Leeds New Street Station
- Noise Mitigation throughout the route
- Waterway Design Principles

9759

STRATEGY

Les Etheridge had produced two papers since the December meeting, the first giving full details of all the responses submitted by trustees following discussion at the December meeting, and a second paper, accompanying the agenda, which had endeavoured to distil the key issues into actions. These had been circulated with the agenda. Accompanying the first paper was a brief summary setting out the headline priorities as

1. Protecting the inland waterways;
2. Ensuring IWA is seen as an active and responsible organisation that makes things happen;
3. Improving how we get the IWA message across.

Trustees affirmed that these were the right points.

The second paper had set out a series of proposed actions with responsible officers. This was well received by trustees and generally agreed. Paul Strudwick suggested some of the timings might be challenging. For 'Making branches more active', Vaughan Welch suggested there were responsibilities for region chairmen as well as for Promotions and Communications Committee; Les Etheridge responded to say that the Committee should be primarily responsible at the top level. Paul Strudwick asked if committee chairmen

had discussed the proposed actions with their committees. Mike Palmer said that he had discussed those actions relevant to WRG with the WRG board, and was content to subscribe to the actions.

Ivor Caplan said there was a need for joined up thinking across the Association, and welcomed the new Marketing Group and the increased amount of marketing activity taking place at Head Office. Vaughan Welch asked about the 'relationships with the trade' section, and Les Etheridge explained this had stemmed from comments that Clive Henderson had made some meetings ago.

Clive Henderson expressed some concern that there might not be sufficient joined up thinking between Restoration Committee, branches and WRG, especially on waterways under restoration, but also between other parts of the Association. Trustees agreed that it was important for all parts of the Association to communicate better and work as one body.

The recommendations in the schedule were agreed, and Les Etheridge asked committee chairmen and others with actions to report on progress to him well in advance of the next trustees meeting, so that he could prepare at update.

Mike Palmer suggested that officers should flag up any requirements for support needed from Head Office, and reminded trustees of the need for joined-up working. Les Etheridge felt there was no need to formally link the various actions, but it was something that needed to be kept in mind.

Jerry Sanders recommended a monthly note from each committee as to how each of the relevant tasks was being progressed. This met with general agreement and committee chairmen agreed to try to do this.

9760

SAUL JUNCTION EVENT

Gordon Harrower briefed trustees from the morning's meeting of the board of Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd about a proposed modest event at Saul Junction on the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal over the 2014 August Bank Holiday weekend. This would coincide with a WRG 'Big Dig' on the Cotswold Canals. Roger Holmes confirmed that the event would have the support of South West Region. Trustees approved that the event should proceed and be announced as soon as local negotiations were concluded. Gordon Harrower would let Jane Elwell, who was leading on this, know of trustees' support.

9761

NORTHAMPTON EVENT

Gordon Harrower briefed trustees on proposals for an event to be held at Northampton, on the river Nene, over the August 2015 Bank Holiday weekend. John Pomfret, who was leading on the proposal with Northampton Branch, had produced a presentation and outline budget, which had been circulated to trustees. Approval for the event to proceed was sought so as to enable the Environment Agency to arrange some clearance work at the site during autumn 2014 in preparation. John Pomfret would check sensitivities of our campaign for the transfer of EA waterways. Richard Collet-Fenson supported the reasons for the event and suggested that it could also demonstrate co-operation in the area between Canal & River Trust and the Environment Agency. Trustees approved the event in principle and noted that a detailed budget would be available by June.

9762

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

Neil Edwards had prepared and circulated a paper with the agenda covering proposed committee appointments. Trustees:

- (a) Approved the appointment of Claire Norman to Promotions and Communications Committee to October 2016 (just under three years to tie in with other committee appointments).
- (b) Noted the retirement of John Butler and David Pullen from IWA Festivals Committee.

(c) Approved the re-appointment of Gillian Smith to Remuneration Committee, for a further term of one year.

(d) Approved the appointment of Mike Dyer to Remuneration Committee for a term of one year.

9763

COMMITTEE AND COMPANY MINUTES

Trustees accepted the following committee and company minutes:

Finance Committee	7 th December
Navigation Committee	7 th December
Restoration Committee	30 th November
Promotions and Communications Committee	30 th November
Waterway Recovery Group	9 th November
Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd	27 th November (including edited minutes for publication)
IWA Festivals	23 rd November
Essex Waterways Ltd	(none)

9764

MATTERS ARISING

Trustees noted a report circulated with the agenda covering matters arising from previous meetings. With reference to minute 9636(f), Gordon Harrower said that Finance Committee was looking at Key Performance Indicators and expected to bring a report to trustees shortly.

9765

RESTORATION INITIATIVE WITH CANAL & RIVER TRUST

Trustees noted announcements of an initiative between Restoration Committee and Canal & River Trust to work together, including the appointment of staff by CRT to work specifically on waterways restoration issues and a proposed seminar for waterway restoration groups in May 2014. A budgetary allocation for this work had previously been agreed by Finance Committee subject to detail of the activities planned.

Vaughan Welch tabled draft terms of reference for a joint working group with CRT and asked trustees to review and raise any areas of concern. WRG would also be consulted and invited to put forward comments. Vaughan Welch had held meetings with CRT and was arranging for Geraint Coles to provide some training courses on heritage construction and restoration skills.

Gren Messham asked what the position was with respect to support for non-CRT waterways, to which Vaughan Welch responded that most of the focus of the joint working was in respect of non-CRT waterways.

[Discussion omitted].

9766

RESTORATION COMMITTEE

The following items had arisen from Restoration Committee's recent meeting:

- (a) Restoration Committee was considering a restoration group survey to see what services were needed from the Association. This would need to involve other areas of the Association.
- (b) The committee was aware that the Restoration Handbooks had become out of date, with much of the content written in the 1990s. Updates were to be prepared.
- (c) The Heritage Lottery Fund would now allow commercial activity as support activity for heritage works under change of rules.

9767

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The following items had arisen from Finance Committee's meeting that morning:

- (a) Toby Gomm had presented a paper on fundraising plans.
- (b) There had been discussion on Key Performance Indicators, recent investment gains and membership statistics to the end of 2013, following which there was continued concern at the steady decline in membership numbers.

9768

HEAD OFFICE PREMISES

Gordon Harrower briefed trustees on the break clause in the lease of the Head Office building at Chesham at the beginning of April 2015 and that it was now timely to review the position. Finance Committee had appointed a small working group (Mike Dyer, David Carrington, Ray Carter and Gordon Harrower) to review the position. Jerry Sanders asked whether views from committee chairmen and trustees would be sought, to which Gordon Harrower responded that the facts would be gathered, including committee requirements, so that a paper could be presented at the April trustees meeting.

9769

NAVIGATION COMMITTEE

Paul Roper reported on discussions at the morning's meeting of Navigation Committee covering the following topics:

- a) Environment Agency navigations (as reported in minute 9757) and the potential benefits for navigation as a consequence of any increased dredging following recent flooding.
- b) Visitor moorings on Canal & River Trust waterways, especially the western end of the Kennet & Avon Canal. The fragile public relations issue was noted, along with some success in focussing CRT's attention on the issue.
- c) A meeting held with Richard Parry and Vince Moran on 3rd February and other boating organisations. This had covered major works including dredging, and new general policy to dredge to 1.2 metres.

9770

NEXT MEETING

Trustees noted that the next meeting of the board of trustees would take place on Saturday 12th April 2014 at Rowington Village Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 3.40 p.m.