

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Inland Waterways Association held on 6th June 2015 at Rowington Village Hall, Rowington, Warwickshire.

Present:

John Butler	Clive Henderson	Peter Scott
Ivor Caplan	Roger Holmes	Jim Shead
Ray Carter	Gren Messham	Gillian Smith
Les Etheridge (chairman)	Alan Platt	Paul Strudwick
Gordon Harrower	David Pullen	Vaughan Welch [to item 9934]

In Attendance: Paul Birkett [chairman of Marketing Committee] Neil Edwards [Chief Executive], Helen Elliott-Adams [Company Secretary] and Andrew Watkinson [Director, Saffery Champness – from item 9922 to 9927]

Apologies for absence were received from Gareth Jones, (and also from Mike Palmer [chairman of Waterway Recovery Group] and Jerry Sanders [chairman of Promotions and Communications Committee], who would have been in attendance).

9922

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Ivor Caplan, Clive Henderson and Vaughan Welch recorded their membership of Canal & River Trust's Council. Ivor Caplan, Alan Platt, David Pullen, Peter Scott and Vaughan Welch recorded their positions as members of Canal & River Trust partnerships and other advisory committees. Clive Henderson recorded his position as a member of Canal & River Trust's Appointments Committee.

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

9923

MINUTES

Trustees approved the minutes of the Board's meeting held on 18th April 2015, including the edited versions for publication, as correct record of the meeting.

9924

STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO AUDITORS AND LETTER OF REPRESENTATION

A paper had been circulated with the agenda drawing trustees' attention to the paragraph in the Annual Report concerning disclosure of information to the auditors, which applied to all those in office at the date of approval of the Annual Report and Financial Statements. Trustees confirmed the statement. Neil Edwards and Helen Elliott-Adams had also confirmed (via the paper presented to trustees) that all relevant information had been made available to the auditors from Head Office. A draft 'Letter of Representation' to the auditors, which had also been circulated with the agenda, was approved and authorised to be signed on behalf of all trustees.

9925

AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT

The auditors' report to trustees had been circulated in advance with the agenda. Andrew Watkinson took trustees through the report, particularly noting materiality and independence considerations during the audit. There was a clean report for the Association and both subsidiary companies. There were no misstatements in the prepared accounts and one minor management recommendation. The arrangements for the closure of

Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd were noted, and that there would be an ongoing check to ensure the level of non-charitable trading remained below the limit of £50,000 per annum.

Trustees thanked Andrew Watkinson for the report.

9926

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Trustees approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements, which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, and authorised them to be signed by the national chairman and treasurer. Thanks were recorded to Helen Elliott-Adams and team at Head Office for producing the accounts.

9927

ANNUAL REVIEW 2014-15

Paul Birkett introduced the draft Annual Review, which had been circulated to trustees prior to the meeting, with thanks to Gemma Bolton for preparing the document. Paul Birkett explained that the document was a work in progress, and he was currently working on inclusion of further copy that better highlighted the breadth and depth of the Association's achievements without straying from the factually correct or going into too much detail. Trustees were asked to submit views on any important omissions or other suggestions direct to Paul Birkett as soon as possible, as the document needed to go to press by the end of June. There was general agreement that the document was an important opportunity to showcase the Association to an audience wider than just the membership.

9928

NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

Les Etheridge had provided a written report, which had been circulated with the agenda papers and in introducing the paper:

- (a) Noted that Rory Stewart, MP for Penrith and the Border, had been appointed as the new Waterways Minister.
- (b) Noted the success of the campaign to get parliamentary candidates to sign up to the Waterways Manifesto. 289 candidates had signed up, of which 39 had been elected as MPs. All these and other MPs with waterway constituencies would be invited to a parliamentary reception at the House of Commons on 7th July, with a view to gaining their support for the All Party Parliamentary Waterways Group.
- (c) Noted that David and Sheila Suchet had agreed to unveil the plaque at Robert Aickman's former residence at Gower Street. This would take place some time in the autumn, subject to David Suchet's diary commitments.
- (d) Suggested that Essex Waterways Ltd be invited to give a presentation on the company's activities at a future trustees meeting. Neil Edwards would ask Roy Chandler if he would be willing.
- (e) [Confidential item]
- (f) [Confidential item]
- (g) Asked Ivor Caplan to update the meeting on arrangements for the Annual Members Meeting. Ivor Caplan advised that arrangements were in hand with Birmingham Black Country and Wolverhampton Branch, and that speakers were being approached to make presentations.
- (h) [Confidential item].

- (i) Noted that the WRG Van Appeal was making good progress and had reached about £42,000. The planned sponsored walk around the Droitwich Ring in September was noted, and trustees invited to participate and suggest ideas on how IWA could further support the walk. Ivor Caplan said that he would speak to Jude Palmer to develop ideas further.
- (j) Noted opportunities for publicity on the occasion of James Brindley's three hundredth birth anniversary in 2016. Further ideas were requested and it was noted that Paul Birkett would be attending a meeting with CRT and Chesterfield Canal Trust to discuss this further.

Trustees

- a) Noted the national chairman's report, and the updates contained therein;
- b) Agreed that an update on progress on the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation should be included on a future agenda;
- c) Agreed to consider ideas for IWA's involvement in WRG's Droitwich sponsored walk, which would also honour the memories of Richard Bird, Sheila Davenport and Ernie Pull.

9929

STRATEGY

The reports produced by the chairmen of Marketing, Navigation and Restoration committees and Waterway Recovery Group, circulated with the agenda, were noted. Matters drawn to attention included:

- (a) The appointment of a new Marketing Manager (Ms Alicen Stenner), who was due to join on 15th June;
- (b) Recent work of the Press Office, and that Alison Smedley had attended a press training course;
- (c) The new prompt cards for membership recruiters, which had been successfully used at Crick;
- (d) The opportunity to gain efficiencies in the purchase of media space across the Association;
- (e) Further developing the marketing plan once the new Marketing Manager had settled in;
- (f) The replacement of the first-year-free membership offer with the '3-months-for-£3' offer;
- (g) Finance and Marketing committees' joint recommendation not to increase membership rates at present;
- (h) The requirement for a longer term (3 to 5 years) policy on subscription rates;
- (i) Internal communication on IWA's brand refresh, including practical issues of materials replacement;
- (j) Better promotion of Waterway Recovery Group's activities as an integral part of IWA;
- (k) The need for social media policies and procedures;
- (l) Publicising issues with Environment Agency navigations, notably Spalding Lock;
- (m) New issues at Fradley on realignment of a road close to the canal as part of the HS2 rail programme;
- (n) The navigation authorities database prepared by John Pomfret;
- (o) Current issues with unauthorised long term moorings across CRT's waterways;
- (p) Recruitment of additional expertise for Restoration Committee and honorary officer positions;
- (q) The new restoration groups safety video, produced jointly with Canal & River Trust;
- (r) The next joint restoration conference with CRT, due to be held on 23rd April 2016;
- (s) Data gathering on restoration projects;
- (t) A reminder for trustees to attend a WRG Canal Camp over the summer;
- (u) The position at Inglesham where prospective costs had increased.

9930

BRANCH AND REVIEW GROUP

A paper from Alan Platt updating trustees on the deliberations of the Branch and Regions Review Group had been circulated with the agenda and was noted. The possibility of putting a presentation to the AGM with some options for branches and reviewing the role of regions was considered but not progressed. The difference in London Region from other areas of the country was noted, but otherwise there appeared to be a decreasing role for region committees.

Trustees:

- (a) Noted the review group's update;
- (b) Endorsed proposals for the redrafting of the guidance for branches;
- (c) Endorsed the concept that each branch should have real objectives and activities within the context of IWA's nationally agreed strategic objectives;
- (d) Endorsed the approach that the primary role of regions should be a supporting one.

9931

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Les Etheridge had prepared a paper, circulated with the agenda, which outlined the evolving role of IWA Events Committee. A proposed revision of the 'roles and responsibilities' for IWA Events Committee, which had been approved by the committee, was attached to the paper. Trustees approved the revised Roles and Responsibilities for IWA Events Committee.

9932

NATIONAL AWARDS 2015

A paper from the Awards Panel had been circulated prior to the meeting. Trustees noted that there had been few nominations this year, and felt there was a need for greater publicity, and that perhaps this could be undertaken by the Awards Panel themselves. Les Etheridge would write to thank the Awards Panel for their deliberations and suggest the point about greater publicity.

Trustees approved the awards as recommended by the Panel:

[Confidential until announcement at the AGM]

9933

TOP RISKS – FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE THE EXTENT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF WORK AND CAMPAIGNING

Les Etheridge had prepared a paper, circulated with the agenda. Trustees:

- (a) Noted the present routes used to communicate IWA's message, and did not suggest any other routes that IWA should consider pursuing.
- (b) Supported the work of the Press Office.
- (c) Noted the issues that IWA faced, and did not identify any other issues.
- (d) Noted the investment that IWA had made in raising awareness amongst parliamentary candidates in the recent General Election, and that this was being followed up with new MPs and a reconstituted All Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways.

- (e) Agreed to continue to support the actions being taken, particularly through Marketing Committee, as these were starting to show encouraging signs of progress.

9934

TOP RISKS - INVESTMENTS

Gordon Harrower had prepared a paper, circulated with the agenda. In introducing the paper he briefly explained the work of the Investments Working Group, a sub-committee of Finance Committee. It was also noted that the assets managed on our behalf were held in trust by a custodian and IWA was therefore not exposed to the risk of the investment manager becoming insolvent. The arrangements with the Investment Managers were noted and that they had been invited to attend the October meeting of Finance Committee to give a presentation.

9935

TOP RISKS – UPDATE

A paper from Neil Edwards, circulated with the agenda, set out the current position with the review of Top Risks. Trustees:

- (a) Asked the chief executive and the chairman of Waterway Recovery Group to jointly prepare a review of the Top Risk of ‘*Avoidable accident causing injury or ‘near miss’ to general public, volunteers or employees*’ for the next meeting.
- (b) Asked the chief executive to prepare a review of the Top Risk of ‘*Loss of computer records (e.g. memberships, financial information)*’ for the next meeting.

9936

MEETING DATES 2016

A paper proposing meeting dates for 2016 had been circulated with the agenda. Trustees:

- (a) Approved the following dates for their meetings in 2016:

6th February
9th April
11th June
6th August
8th October
26th November

- (b) Approved that the 2016 Annual General Meeting be held on 24th September.

- (c) Agreed that meetings should continue to be held at Rowington village hall for 2016.

9937

COMMITTEE AND COMPANY MINUTES

Trustees accepted the following committee and company minutes:

Finance Committee	18 th April
Navigation Committee	18 th April
Restoration Committee	28 th March
Marketing Committee	7 th March and 9 th March
Promotions and Communications	14 th March
Waterway Recovery Group	15 th March
Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd	7 th February (including edited minutes for publication)
IWA Events Committee	28 th March
Essex Waterways Ltd	5 th March (including edited minutes for publication)

9938

MATTERS ARISING

Trustees noted a report circulated with the agenda covering matters arising from previous meetings. The following issues were drawn to trustees' attention:

- (a) Gordon Harrower reported that clearance of the Tardis and adjacent Portacabin was taking much longer than anticipated and had attracted further storage charges of [two amounts]. Finance Committee had decided that 30th September was to be set for final clearance, after which the remaining contents would be disposed of. The Portacabin would be given to the owner of the yard where it is accommodated or scrapped. Thanks were recorded to John Baylis and other volunteers involved for his work in achieving the clearance so far. Trustees endorsed these decisions.
- (b) Gren Messham reported the draft Environment Policy was with Restoration Committee rather than Navigation Committee and needed to be progressed by that committee.

9939

NAVIGATION COMMITTEE

Gren Messham reported that most of the major issues discussed at the morning's meeting of Navigation Committee had been covered in earlier agenda items for this (trustees) meeting, but also drew attention to the following topics:

- Alison Smedley's work with the new Press Office;
- The failed Spalding cruise planned by East Midlands Region members;
- The national chairman's letter to the chair of Yorkshire Wildlife Trust about Elvington Lock;
- IWA's West Country Branch and the proposed Bridgwater Barrier;
- Current dialogue with CRT, especially on mooring issues;
- Discussions with a range of interests concerning the Exeter Ship Canal;
- IWA involvement in possible video training-material provision for boaters.

9940

IWA EVENTS COMMITTEE

John Butler reported that preparations for the Northampton Festival continued to progress well, and mentioned the following issues:

- Liaison with other public facing IWA national committees;
- Identification of sites for future events;
- Success of the 2016 Canalway Cavalcade.

9941

PROMOTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Ray Carter reported, on behalf of Jerry Sanders, that the stand at Crick Boat Show had been particularly successful and that plans were underway for attendance at events at Stratford-on-Avon and Northampton. IWA had provided the harbourmaster at Crick and, led by Gren Messham, had given a presentation for boaters there. David Pullen reported the planned IWA attendance at a pop-up event organised by Canal & River Trust in the East Midlands area.

9942

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Gordon Harrower reported that the following issues were amongst those discussed at the morning's meeting of Finance Committee:

- (a) Closure arrangements for Inland Waterways Ltd Enterprises Ltd had been agreed and the final meeting of the company's board of directors had been held.

- (b) The process for the 2016 budget had been approved, and Gordon Harrower would prepare and circulate a paper for budget holders.
- (c) IWA Branch bank balances now exceeded [an amount] of which [an amount] was committed to specific causes. Gordon Harrower would write to region chairmen to ask them to help branches reduce the cash balances held.
- (d) Finance Committee had supported Marketing Committee's recommendation not to increase subscription rates for 2016. Trustees endorsed this.

9943

NEXT MEETING

Trustees noted that the next meeting of the board of trustees would take place on Saturday 8th August 2015 at Rowington Village Hall. The other 2015 dates for trustee meetings were 10th October and 12th December.

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