

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Inland Waterways Association held on 8th August 2015 at Rowington Village Hall, Rowington, Warwickshire.

Present:

Ivor Caplan	Roger Holmes	Peter Scott
Ray Carter	Gareth Jones	Gillian Smith
Les Etheridge (chairman)	Gren Messham	Vaughan Welch
Gordon Harrower	Alan Platt	
Clive Henderson	David Pullen	

In Attendance: Paul Birkett [chairman of Marketing Committee] Neil Edwards [Chief Executive], Helen Elliott-Adams [Company Secretary] and Jerry Sanders [chairman of Promotions and Communications Committee].

Apologies for absence were received from John Butler, Jim Shead, Paul Strudwick, and also from Mike Palmer [chairman of Waterway Recovery Group] who would have been in attendance.

9944

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.

9945

MINUTES

Trustees approved the minutes of the Board's meeting held on 6th June 2015 including the edited versions for publication, as correct record of the meeting.

9946

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, the new Waterways Minister, had been very encouraging at the Parliamentary reception and had promised a meeting in the autumn. Richard Benyon, the former waterway minister and prospective chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways, had also been very supportive. Trustees expressed their appreciation of all the work that had gone on behind the scenes to make the event the success that it was.
- (b) Noted that the unveiling of the Aickman Blue Plaque had now been fixed to take place on 10th September. Peter Ward, chief executive of UK Warehouse Association (the present occupants of 11 Gower Street) had offered use of their board room, which was thought to be Robert Aickman's office in 1946, and David Suchet had agreed to make a speech using notes that had been prepared. Thanks were recorded to Ray Gill for his considerable behind-the-scenes work. The national chairman would prepare a guest list, which would be restricted by the size of the board room.

- (c) Reported that Canal & River Trust had advised that it was ‘pausing’ its boater user groups meetings. This was unlikely to impact on IWA’s dialogue with CRT. Gren Messham had been appointed to CRT’s Navigation (Moorings and Licences) Advisory Group.
- (d) Reminded trustees to attend the Annual Members Meeting. Ivor Caplan updated trustees on the arrangements. Helen Whitehouse had kindly offered to arrange catering. Trustees were asked to wear name badges and IWA corporate clothing.
- (e) Reported on a dialogue that had taken place with Canal & River Trust over some excessive claims in its press release that accompanied the launch of its Annual Report. There had been apologies from CRT senior management, and the web site version of the press release had subsequently been corrected by CRT. Les Etheridge would seek an early meeting with the new CRT chairman in waiting, Alan Leighton.
- (f) Noted the good progress on the WRG van appeal, which had approached £70,000. The sponsored walk at Droitwich was expected to provide a further boost.

Trustees

- a) Noted the national chairman’s report, and the updates contained therein;
- b) Approved the cost of the proposed small buffet to precede the unveiling of the Aickman Blue Plaque; and
- c) Were asked to support WRG’s Droitwich sponsored walk.

9947

STRATEGY

Reports produced by the chairmen of Marketing, Navigation committees and Waterway Recovery Group, circulated with the agenda, were noted. Vaughan Welch reported that there were no significant points to report from Restoration Committee. Matters drawn to attention included:

- (a) Continuing publicity on IWA’s proposals for the Environment Agency navigations transfer and the need for a careful briefing that would be acceptable to politicians and the Treasury.
- (b) The lack of knowledge by Environment Agency management on the failures of navigation assets in (at least) its Anglian Region.
- (c) The need for improved publicity where EA navigation structure failures had led to frustration of planned events, as had happened at Fulney Lock on the river Welland.
- (d) Recent developments with HS2 and the drafting of IWA’s petition to be submitted to Parliament covering IWA’s remaining objections and the proposed repositioning of the road near Fradley on the Trent & Mersey Canal and the proposed new Heathrow depot near Iver on the Slough Arm of the Grand Union Canal. In each case, IWA would put forward practical alternatives to resolve these issues.
- (e) The spread-sheet on navigation authorities, prepared by John Pomfret, which was due to be made available for IWA branch comments shortly.
- (f) Progress by Canal & River Trust on clearing non-compliant boaters overstaying on moorings, which was much slower than many IWA members would have wished, albeit there was evidence of CRT undertaking necessary legal work.
- (g) There had been a press announcement from Canal & River Trust saying that it was ceasing the roll-out of installing paddle pawl stops in response to IWA’s representations and consultation responses from users.
- (h) The challenge of integrating WRG’s activities and achievements as being an integral part of IWA’s brand marketing, and persuading IWA branches to adopt changes in their local promotion of the

Association as part of a joined up approach. Trustees accepted that there was a need for a much stronger IWA/WRG brand integration.

9948

BRANCH AND REGION REVIEW GROUP

A paper from Alan Platt updating trustees on the deliberations of the Branch and Region Review Group had been circulated with the agenda and was noted. The main task ahead was the revision of guidance for branches and byelaws, which Alan planned to continue with, as time permitted.

Trustees considered the present requirement for branches to cover every part of the country regardless of whether there was any practical ability to do so. There was concern that some small branches were being spread so thin that their survival was being undermined. Whilst there was a wish to cover the whole country with branches, trustees agreed that this might not always be practicable.

Trustees agreed to the:

- (a) continued revision of branch byelaws and handbook along the lines set out in the report, and the
- (b) formal dissolution of Branch and Region Review Group.

9949

OBJECTIVES FOR 2016

Les Etheridge introduced a paper on Objectives for 2016. He reminded trustees about previous Objectives papers, produced initially for the Annual Report, and that the 2015 Objectives paper had been developed further to try to make it more useful. The paper attached to the agenda had suggested some longer term objectives with some specific suggestions for 2016. Trustees:

- (a) Agreed that the approach taken in the paper was acceptable and should be developed further,
- (b) Agreed to consider more detailed input for the specific objectives, to be sent to the national chairman by 31st August:
- (c) Requested a further paper for the October meeting taking account of the input received.

9950

TOP RISKS – AVOIDABLE ACCIDENTS

Jenny Black had prepared a paper, circulated with the agenda. Trustees welcomed the paper and:

- (a) noted the intended actions for next 12 months, and that progress would be monitored by IWA/WRG's Volunteering Team.
- (b) agreed to continue to promote a positive culture of Health and Safety within the Association, from trustee level to volunteers.
- (c) would encourage all parts of the Association to report accidents and near-misses so that IWA could learn from mistakes; see trends, and put into place more robust health and safety measures.
- (d) asked that the Annual Review of Accidents, Incidents & Near-Misses continued to be presented annually, at October trustee Meetings.

9951

TOP RISKS – LOSS OF COMPUTER RECORDS

Neil Edwards had prepared a paper, circulated with the agenda. Trustees welcomed the paper and:

- (a) noted the present arrangements for data storage used by the Association, and
- (b) noted the duty for original copies of all documents of substance (whether electronic or printed), including correspondence that might need to be relied upon in the future, to be deposited with Head Office for digitising and incorporating on Cloud-based records.

9952

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 national chairman prepare a review of the Top Risk of ‘*Loss or reduction in calibre of key members of staff, Trustees and / or volunteer officers (real or perceived)*’ for the next meeting.
- (b) asked the chairman of Marketing Committee to prepare a review of the Top Risk of ‘*Failure or inability to communicate effectively with members, stakeholders and others to stimulate new and continuing income*’ for the next meeting.

9953

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

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

- (a) Approved the appointment of Alan Gilmour to Marketing Committee for a term of just under three years, to April 2018, to tie in with other Marketing Committee appointment dates.
- (b) Approved the appointment of Susan Cooper to Restoration Committee for a term of just over two years, to November 2017, to tie in with other Restoration Committee appointment dates.
- (c) Approved the re-appointments of Pat Barton and Mike Moorse to IWA Events Committee for further terms of three years.
- (d) Approved the re-appointments of Colin Edmond, Jim Jenkins and John Pomfret to the board of Essex Waterways Ltd for further terms of three years.
- (e) Approved the appointment of Craig Holliday to the board of Essex Waterways Ltd for a term of three years.

9954

COMMITTEE AND COMPANY MINUTES

Trustees accepted the following committee and company minutes:

Finance Committee	6 th June
Navigation Committee	6 th June
Restoration Committee	16 th May
Marketing Committee	30 th May
Promotions & Communications	9 th May
Waterway Recovery Group	(none)
Inland Waterways Enterprises Ltd	6 th June (including edited minutes for publication)
IWA Events Committee	16 th May (electronic meeting)
Essex Waterways Ltd	(none)

Les Etheridge noted that the reference in the minutes of the 10th May meeting of Waterway Recovery Group concerning on-going IWA support for WRG's work and clarified that this was not an undertaking of financial support, but rather it was meant as general moral encouragement for WRG's work.

9955

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 David Rowe of Finance Committee had produced a paper for the Finance Committee meeting that took place earlier that day commencing the review of Key Performance Indicators, with the intent of bring a paper to trustees in December.
- (b) Paul Birkett asked trustees to consider examples of IWA and WRG achievements as content for the 2015/16 Annual Review at an earlier stage over the coming year, with any suggestions being made to Alicen Stenner.
- (c) Gordon Harrower reported that he had written to region chairmen about the cash balances held by branches, and had had some feedback on barriers to grant giving. As a consequence Finance Committee had eased the process of authorisation for branch grants.

9956

FINANCE COMMITTEE

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

- (a) IWA's investment portfolio had lost [an amount] in value in the six months to 30th June owing to the volatile stock market.
- (b) The process for the 2016 budget had been issued to committee chairman and budget holders
- (c) Colin Graham of Finance Committee had started the process of reviewing Top Risks, and a note explaining the process would be circuited to trustees shortly. Trustees would be asked to comment by mid September
- (d) Mike Shaw of Finance Committee had started a dialogue with [an organisation]. There appeared to be significant opportunities for joint working and reaching [their] membership to promote IWA's work. Mike had agreed to progress these and to consult Paul Birkett and Alicen Stenner to consider practicalities.

9957

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:

- A number of blogs for the web site were currently being worked on;
- Venues for future festivals were being researched;
- Approval had been given for a £4,000 grant by IWA North Staffordshire and South Cheshire Branch to Caldon and Uttoxeter Canal Trust to undertake a report on the practicability of raising the headroom of Froghall Tunnel on the Caldon Canal.
- There was a need for a local IWA voice in the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads area.

9958

MARKETING COMMITTEE

Paul Birkett reported that the following issues were amongst those currently being worked on by Marketing Committee:

- Urgent work was progressing on the Northampton Festival of Water programme;
- A review was being undertaken of IWA's publications;
- A strategy for membership subscription pricing was being developed;
- A social media policy was likely to come to the October trustees meeting for consideration;
- There was recognition of the need for market research and research on members' views; Alan Gilmour, the newly appointed member of the committee, had considerable experience in that area;
- The press office was working well, was busy; and was now looking at proactive publicity.

9959

RESTORATION COMMITTEE

Vaughan Welch reported that the following issues were amongst those currently being worked on by Restoration Committee:

- A Heritage Lottery Fund bid for £15m for Cotswold Canals Trust;
- Work with Wilts & Berks Canal Trust on a maintenance strategy;
- An application for a grant from [a waterway society] had been deferred until preparation of an Environment policy.
- An application for a grant by [a waterway society] had been deferred for want of more information about its project officer application.
- WRG board members had been invited to attend a strategy meeting in November.
- There was continuing work on the restoration manuals

Trustees noted that the data from a restoration survey being undertaken by Geraint Coles under the CRT joint working group was IWA property and that a copy should be lodged with Head Office by Geraint Coles, who should be asked to confirm that the report and the survey results would be IWA intellectual property to promote as appropriate.

9960

PROMOTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Jerry Sanders reported that: there was concern amongst committee members at the probable failure to fully convey IWA's purpose, function and achievements to visitors to IWA's stand at festivals and at IWA events. Discussion with Marketing Committee was taking place.

9961

VICE PRESIDENTS

[Confidential item]

9962

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

Vaughan Welch had prepared a paper with assistance from Clive Henderson, Roger Holmes and Paul Strudwick suggesting the addition of a clause in IWA's Articles of Association to allow members to propose resolutions at Annual General Meetings. Trustees noted that such resolution should be for discussion rather than decision making, which was the remit of trustees. Les Etheridge reminded trustees that it had been agreed at an earlier trustees meeting to review the Articles with a view to bringing them into lines with the Charity Commission's current recommendations, and that this proposal could probably be incorporated. Trustees agreed and asked for a paper to be prepared to progress this.

9963

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

[Confidential item]

9964

RETIRING TRUSTEES

Les Etheridge led trustees in thanking Alan Platt, Clive Henderson and Vaughan Welch who were retiring as trustees at the AGM, and paid tribute to their work during their terms of office.

9965

NEXT MEETING

Trustees noted that the next meeting of the board of trustees would take place on Saturday 10th October 2015 at Rowington Village Hall. The other planned dates for trustee meetings were 12th December 2015, 6th February 2016, 9th April 2016, 11th June 2016, 6th August 2016, 8th October 2016 and 26th November 2016.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 4.28 p.m.