

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Inland Waterways Association held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2015 at Rowington Village Hall, Rowington, Warwickshire.

Present:

Paul Birkett	Les Etheridge (chairman)	David Pullen
John Butler	Gordon Harrower	Peter Scott
Ivor Caplan	Roger Holmes	Jim Shead
Mike Carter	Gareth Jones (to item 9991)	Gillian Smith
Ray Carter (to item 9996)	Gren Messham	Paul Strudwick

In Attendance: Neil Edwards [Chief Executive], Mike Palmer [chairman of Waterway Recovery Group], Jerry Sanders [chairman of Promotions and Communications Committee], Alicen Stenner [Marketing Manager] and Vaughan Welch [chairman of Restoration Committee].

Apologies for absence were received from Helen Elliott-Adams [Company Secretary], who would have been in attendance.

Mike Carter was welcomed to his first meeting as a trustee.

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#### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Ivor Caplan, Mike Palmer and Vaughan Welch recorded their membership of Canal & River Trust's Council. Ivor Caplan, Gren Messham, Mike Palmer, David Pullen, Peter Scott and Vaughan Welch recorded their positions as members of Canal & River Trust partnerships and other advisory committees.

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

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#### MINUTES

Trustees approved the minutes of the Board's meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2015 including the edited versions for publication, as correct record of the meeting.

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#### NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

Les Etheridge had provided a written report, which had been circulated with the agenda papers and in introducing the paper the following points were noted.

- (a) [Confidential item].
- (b) [Confidential item].
- (c) [Confidential item].
- (d) The summary purposes for IWA's existence were considered, and important aspects of heritage, planning controls, campaigning and services to members were noted, but considered to be key constituents of, rather than additional to, the principal purposes of 'Protection' and 'Restoration'.
- (e) [Confidential item].

## Trustees

- a) Noted the national chairman's report, and the updates contained therein;
- b) Endorsed the core reasons for IWA to exist and agreed to adopt the wording quoted in the National Chairman's Update paper.
- c) Noted the confidentiality of [a topic discussed]

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### MARKETING PLAN

A detailed marketing plan had been prepared by Alicen Stenner (Marketing Manager) and Marketing Committee, which had been circulated with the agenda. Alicen introduced the plan and explained to trustees what the plan envisaged and its aims for the coming year, including market research, brand improvement and the creation of campaigns that delivered membership sign-up.

## Trustees:

- a) Considered the overall plan and considered it to be the right way forward;
- b) Endorsed the strategic objectives identified;
- c) Approved the intent and priority of activities that the plan contained, and
- d) Thanked Alicen Stenner for her plan and presentation at the meeting.

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### OBJECTIVES 2016

Following a discussion at the August 2016 trustees meeting, proposed objectives for the Association for 2016 had been circulated with the agenda, and an updated paper with four of the objectives refined was tabled at the meeting. Alicen Stenner introduced the paper and outlined the purpose of each of the objectives. Trustees approved the proposed Objectives for 2016, to be set out in IWA's Annual Report, as:

1. Establish stronger foundations for the fundraising initiatives developed by IWA and find ways to keep the activities fresh and relevant. Source new fundraising opportunities and identify a broader range of causes for which funds are being raised.
2. Update the practical restoration handbooks to ensure their on-going use as a reference tool. Re-launch these resources in a broader range of accessible, engaging formats to create a comprehensive and inclusive set of materials.
3. Build on the success of IWA and WRG's volunteer activities in 2015 focusing on running well planned, safe projects, encouraging participation by new audiences of all ages and seeking to improve volunteer retention across the year. Trial new volunteering activities such as family volunteering days and short breaks.
4. To review, update and promote IWA's vision of a single unified and fully integrated national waterways network in a way that resonates with today's waterways users.
5. Increase discussion opportunities at government level in support of commitment to EA transfer with the right funding package. Progress this campaign so that by the end of 2016 support of MPs with EA waterways within their constituency has been gained, waterways user groups in those areas have pledged

their support and IWA will have educated all members on this matter and secured the approval of the majority.

6. Crystallize IWA's prominence as a key provider of support to restoration groups measured by the number of projects where IWA is asked to propose and enable solutions through hands-on WRG involvement, broader strategic advice and specific technical support and a measurement of the quality of this involvement.

7. To gain agreement and support for the membership recruitment strategy across IWA so that every opportunity to attract new members to the Association is identified and taken.

8. Improve IWA's profile through the organisation of a series of well branded events that raise awareness of specific campaigning issues as well as engage with broader sections of the community and attract new members to IWA.

9. To review and respond to all new proposals for phase 2 of HS2 to mitigate threats to our inland waterways

10. To create a vision and promote a culture of "One IWA" where branches, regions, committees and employees work as a single team and respect and support each other's viewpoint for the good of IWA and the greater good of the waterways. To understand the extent of culture change required to bring about this vision and to take the first steps towards achievement of this vision

11. To develop our existing code of conduct for IWA Trustees, Committee Chairs and Regional and Branch Chairmen to ensure that all senior officers operate within the principles of IWA and uphold IWA's standard of ethics and integrity.

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#### BUDGET 2016

Gordon Harrower introduced a paper that had been circulated with the agenda, along with a summary and detailed budget for 2016. The current excess (an amount) of the General Fund (an amount at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014) above the Reserves Strategy (a range), along with the forecast deficit (an amount) and 2016 budget (an amount) were drawn to attention. Questions were asked about the level of detail in budgetary reporting, and concerns were expressed that too much detailed information hid key figures. Gordon Harrower suggested that income and expenditure projections covering more than one year forward were required. Gordon Harrower asked trustees what key information they would like to see, and asked for written suggestions.

Following a short discussion, trustees:

- a) Approved the proposed IWA budget for 2016;
- b) Noted that current stock market volatility could adversely impact on IWA's free reserves and recognised the significance that this could have on future budget planning if capital values did not subsequently recover;
- c) Recognised the need to find ways to significantly increase income in the medium to longer term to be able to meet expenditure requirements going forward.

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#### EVENTS COMMITTEE – AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

John Butler had prepared a paper that was circulated with the agenda and which set out proposed aims and objectives for Events Committee, which had been proposed following a discussion by that committee. Trustees approved the aims and objectives as set out in the paper:

Primarily by organising a Festival of Water each year:

- to raise the profile of the Association, of the inland waterways generally, with the membership, waterway users, the general public, national and local politicians and funding agencies.
- to encourage the recruitment of new members, by engaging with the public.
- to engage with existing members, thereby improving the rate of member retention.
- to promote and support the Association's campaign objectives.
- to support and encourage the Association's local branch network.
- to promote and where necessary to campaign for restoration projects.
- As a secondary objective to encourage and support other events with similar aims, both those organised by the Association itself and those organised by other bodies, the most notable of these being Canalway Cavalcade and the National Trailboat and Campaign Festivals.

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#### CANAL & RIVER TRUST WORK BOATS

David Pullen had prepared a paper, which was circulated with the agenda, following an approach by Canal & River Trust to set up arrangements for IWA volunteers to help move CRT work boats. Trustees felt that the proposal would bring benefit to the waterways, and could help some existing IWA work party arrangements, although there was the potential for adverse comment about IWA being too close to CRT. David Pullen said he would discuss with region chairmen as a way of taking this forward and report back to trustee. Paul Birkett asked that David Pullen consult with the Press Office over the issue of IWA and CRT positioning as he progressed the proposal.

Trustees:

- (a) Agreed that the initiative was something that IWA should support;
- (b) Asked that a condition of progressing the proposal should be that CRT corporate clothing was not worn by participant volunteers; and
- (c) Asked David Pullen to pursue the opportunity further and keep trustees apprised of the position.

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#### STRATEGY

Reports produced by the chairmen of Marketing and Navigation committees and Waterway Recovery Group had been circulated before the meeting; these were noted. Restoration Committee had not provided a report, but Vaughan Welch had sent a brief note on the subject prior to the meeting. Les Etheridge asked the chairmen of Navigation, Restoration and Marketing committees and of Waterway Recovery Group to review the key actions and strategy for their areas, and to submit papers for consideration at the February trustees meeting. The strategy review was to take account of the two core reasons for IWA to exist

(Protection and Restoration) along with the need for IWA to get its message across, and to take account of the 2016 Objectives agreed earlier in the meeting. Les Etheridge emphasised that the restoration element probably necessitated greater review, which would impact on WRG and Restoration Committee.

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#### ELECTION OF NATIONAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Gren Messham had prepared a paper, which had been circulated with the agenda, addressing the procedural arrangements for the appointment of national committee chairmen. After a short discussion, trustees:

- (a) Acknowledged their responsibility to appoint, and reappoint if appropriate, chairmen of national committees and similar positions;
- (b) Accepted the responsibility for succession planning of national committee chairmen and similar positions, and resolved to discuss this at least annually;
- (c) Asked that the website be updated to reflect this.

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#### IWA CRT APPOINTMENT

[Neil Edwards was absent for this item]

Ivor Caplan and Les Etheridge had prepared a paper, which was circulated with the agenda, reminding trustees that IWA had been offered a nominee position on Canal & River Trust's Council, and that an appointment needed to be made. The paper recommended that Neil Edwards be appointed. [The appointment was for three years, but could be rescinded at any time]. After a discussion, trustees approved the recommendation. Les Etheridge would write to CRT.

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#### RESERVES POLICY

Gordon Harrower introduced a paper circulated with the agenda, setting out thinking behind a review of the Association's Reserves Policy for 2016, which had been considered by Finance Committee at its August and October meetings. Trustees approved the proposed Reserves Policy, as attached to the agenda.

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#### INVESTMENTS POLICY

Gordon Harrower introduced a paper circulated with the agenda proposing the Association's Investment Strategy and Policy for 2016, which was unchanged from 2015 and confirmed that it had been recommended for approval by Finance Committee. Trustees approved the policy for 2016.

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#### TOP RISKS

Les Etheridge introduced a paper with the agenda, which covered the remaining Top Risks from the present review cycle that had yet to be reviewed in detail by trustees. Trustees:

- (a) Noted the risk papers planned for the February 2016 trustees meeting,
- (b) Asked the chairman of Marketing Committee to prepare a review of (a) Top Risk
- (c) Asked the national treasurer to prepare a review of (a) Top Risk

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#### COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

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

- (a) Approved the appointment of Christine Denton as a member of Events Committee for a term of three years.
- (b) Approved the reappointment of Rick Barnes, George Eycott, Dave Hearnden and Harry Watts to the board of Waterway Recovery Group for a further term of three years.

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COMMITTEE AND COMPANY MINUTES

Trustees accepted the following committee and company minutes:

Finance Committee	10 <sup>th</sup> October
Navigation Committee	10 <sup>th</sup> October
Restoration Committee	3 <sup>rd</sup> October
Marketing Committee	5 <sup>th</sup> September
Promotions & Communications	19 <sup>th</sup> September
Waterway Recovery Group	20 <sup>th</sup> September
IWA Events Committee	19 <sup>th</sup> September
Essex Waterways Ltd	27 <sup>th</sup> August (including edited minutes for publication)

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MATTERS ARISING

Trustees noted a report circulated with the agenda covering matters arising from previous meetings. Paul Birkett reported that the finalised Social Media policy had been circulated to trustees during the previous week. Gordon Harrower advised that the proposed KPIs paper was under preparation, but that its author, David Rowe, had been in hospital and had been unable to attend the December meeting of Finance Committee. Trustees recorded their thanks to John Baylis and helpers for the sale and disposal of the Tardis and contents, and asked Les Etheridge to write to John.

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EVENTS COMMITTEE

John Butler reported that preparations were proceeding for the 2016 Pelsall event, and a number of sites were being looked at for the future. The Northampton event had shown a small surplus despite the adverse weather conditions on the Sunday and Monday.

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FINANCE COMMITTEE – BUDGET 2016

Gordon Harrower highlighted the following topics that had been discussed at the morning’s meeting of Finance Committee:

- A long term review of IWA’s financial position;
- Essex Waterways Long Term Plan, as circulated with the Finance Committee agenda papers;
- A Top Risks (light) review paper considered and would come to February trustees meeting. A full review would commence in 2016;
- Membership figures still showed a gradual decline, and this trend would continue whilst the current free memberships ran off during the first half of 2016;
- A summary financial information paper was under preparation.

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WATERWAY RECOVERY GROUP

Mike Palmer reported that he had spent the previous day at Head Office and noted the following work by WRG officers and staff at Head Office:

- The 2016 Camps Brochure had been published; copies had been circulated to trustees.
- Two new WRG vans were about to be ordered.

- Preparations were well in hand for WRG's 2016 major activities.

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#### RESTORATION COMMITTEE

Vaughan Welch reported that the following issues were amongst those discussed at the 5<sup>th</sup> December meeting of Restoration Committee:

- The Cotswold Canals Trust Heritage Lottery Fund bid had been submitted;
- Possible projects for the Tony Harrison legacy;
- The survey of restoration groups being undertaken with CRT;
- A strategy for coping with any failing restoration group;
- Appointment of a Heritage Architect;
- Policy reviews;
- Restoration projects on Environment Agency waterways;

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#### NAVIGATION COMMITTEE

Gren Messham highlighted the following topics that had been discussed at the morning's meeting of Navigation Committee:

- The Government's Housing and Planning Bill, which would require local authorities to take residential vessels into account when planning for housing needs.
- Peel Ports' announcement that as part of measures to avoid abuse of mooring spaces by continuously cruising boaters, it intended not to allow a return with 28 days under its reciprocal arrangements with Canal & River Trust for the Bridgewater and Manchester Ship canals.
- The absence of any apparent progress by Canal & River Trust on its review of paddle pawl stops.
- Inland Waterways Freight Group was declining in activity with an aging membership of the committee; John Pomfret was to review the Group's function.
- There was a further consultation on the proposed towpath closure at Manchester Undercroft on the Rochdale Canal; IWA would write again to object, as there was concern that Manchester City Council would make the present situation more dangerous, especially for boaters.

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#### PROMOTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Jerry Sanders asked trustees to note the date of a planned 'Recruiting the Recruiters' workshop on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2016. The Committee had plans for improved membership recruitment at the events it attended.

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#### NEXT MEETING

Trustees agreed that the date of the June 2016 meeting would be on 18<sup>th</sup>, rather than 11<sup>th</sup>, June, and noted that the next meeting of the board of trustees would take place on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at Rowington Village Hall. The other planned 2016 dates for trustee meetings were therefore 9<sup>th</sup> April 2016, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2016, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2016, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016 and 26<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 4.40 p.m.