

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Inland Waterways Association held on 26th November 2016 at Rowington Village Hall, Rowington, Warwickshire.

Present:

Rick Barnes	Roger Holmes	Gillian Smith
Ivor Caplan	Gren Messham	Jonathan Smith
Ray Carter	John Pomfret	Paul Strudwick
Les Etheridge (chairman)	Peter Scott	Helen Whitehouse

In Attendance: Neil Edwards [Chief Executive], Andrew Overy [Finance Manager], Mike Palmer [chairman of Waterway Recovery Group], Colin Graham [member Finance Committee to item 10127] and Alison Smedley [Campaigns Officer to item 10126].

Les Etheridge welcomed Alison Smedley and Colin Graham to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from John Butler, Gordon Harrower, David Pullen and Gareth Jones.

10124

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Neil Edwards recorded his membership of Canal & River Trust's Council. Ivor Caplan, Gren Messham, Mike Palmer and Peter Scott 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.

10125

MINUTES

Trustees approved the minutes of the Board's meeting held on 26th November 2016, including the edited versions for publication, as a correct record of the meeting.

10126

ANGLIAN WATERWAYS CAMPAIGN

Alison Smedley had prepared a paper, circulated with the agenda, and updated trustees on letters written to MPs and others to support the campaign to keep the Anglian Waterways open. There had been a good number of responses, including from the Prime Minister's Office and Richard Benyon MP, former Waterways Minister. An updated fact sheet had been placed on the web site, and there had been a good level of support on social media and the electronic waterways press. Alison asked all trustees to write to their own MPs. Reaction from the Environment Agency had not been unsympathetic, and there was a realisation that they did not have sufficient funding to properly maintain their waterways, especially in their Anglian Region. Roger Holmes reported that the lock at Lydney Harbour was closed pending sale of the property by the Environment Agency, but it appeared that the preferred bidder for the property might drop out. This would be added to the list of closed EA structures on the website. Trustees thanked Alison for her work in running the campaign.

10127

RISK REVIEW 2017

Colin Graham introduced a paper that he had prepared, which had been discussed and recommended at the November Finance Committee meeting, and which had been circulated with the agenda. Colin explained the process for identifying the top risks, which had been prepared afresh this year. Some concern was expressed that none of the top risks appeared to cover declining membership, but it was accepted that this

was a symptom of some of the top risks identified, rather than something which could be addressed in isolation. There was also a suggestion that Health & Safety issues should have an overall higher score as a top risk, although likelihood had been rated low owing to mitigations being in place. Trustees:

- (a) Approved the process that had been undertaken;
- (b) Agreed that the top risks had been correctly identified, although Health & Safety needed to be mentioned as part of the review of Top Risks in the Annual Report.
- (c) Agreed to monitor the top five risks at alternate future trustees meetings, commencing 10th June 2017 and agreed that the Owner shown for each of the top risks was responsible for reporting and co-ordinating work rather than required to carry out all the work.
- (d) Noted that Essex Waterways Ltd board was due to review its top risks at its 2nd March board meeting and asked for a report back for the 8th April trustees meeting.
- (e) Thanked Colin Graham for assembling the report.

10128

INVESTMENT POLICY REVIEW

Andrew Overy introduced a paper, circulated with the agenda, which outlined a change in approach to the strategy for investments which took into account the Association's current lower appetite for risk, likely needs for expenditure in the medium term and available funds. Andrew reported that Finance Committee recommended that the phrase 'above inflation' should be used in the Accounts in place of an exact amount above the Retail Price Index. A target above inflation would be proposed at the April meeting following discussion with the Investment Managers. Trustees:

- (a) Approved the approach to the investment policy with no specific mention of the target to be included in the Accounts;
- (b) Approved the revised policy, with the target above inflation to be finalised at the April meeting.

10129

RESERVES POLICY

Jonathan Smith reported that there had been a long discussion about the Association's Reserves Policy at the morning's meeting of Finance Committee, particularly around the need, or lack of it, for an upper limit to the target reserves. The paper circulated with the agenda was therefore withdrawn, and a revised paper would be tabled for consideration at the April meeting.

10130

SOUTH WEST REGION

On a recommendation from South West Region Committee, trustees approved to change the name of South West Region to South West and South Wales Region with immediate effect.

10131

PROCEDURES FOR APPOINTMENT TO REGION CHAIRMEN

A paper with proposals to revise the procedures for the appointment of region chairman had been circulated with the agenda, and some trustees had expressed views both in support and against the revised proposals. Les Etheridge asked all trustees to submit their views in writing, to the trustees mailing list by the end of February so that an updated paper could appear with the agenda for that meeting.

10132

FESTIVAL FINANCES

Les Etheridge explained that he had asked John Butler to prepare a briefing paper on the finances for running of the Festival of Water following the loss that had been made at Pelsall in 2016, and that he and Jonathan Smith had separately discussed the paper with John Butler. The paper had been circulated with the agenda. Jonathan Smith reported that the paper had also been discussed at the morning's meeting of Finance Committee, and the committee had been comfortable with the approach being taken by the Events sub-committee in running the event, with the aim always to try to break even as a minimum but accepting that some costs (up to [an amount]) had to be incurred in advance of income being received. Helen Whitehouse asked that a key aim of the event should be to recruit new members, and that this needed to be reflected in the whole organisation of the event, including layout. Les Etheridge reported that Events sub-committee recognised that it needed additional support. Trustees:

- (a) Agreed to try to help with identifying one or more suitable sponsorship or fundraising officers with volunteers to be requested in both Bulletin and Waterways;
- (b) Gave their authority to continue with the arrangement for an event in 2018, and planning for 2019;
- (c) Gave their on-going support for Events sub-committee's continuing efforts to produce a successful annual festival, of which the Association could be proud and which continued to generate valuable publicity and goodwill.
- (d) Asked to be updated on progress from time to time

10133

OBJECTIVES FOR 2017

Les Etheridge reported that finalising the longer term objectives still required more work, but a paper proposing Objectives for 2017 for the Association had been circulated with the agenda. Trustees approved these objectives as:

External Objectives

- Further establish the Restoration Hub and deliver its first year objectives;
- Publish one high level restoration report and promote its findings widely;
- Make every effort to progress the transfer of Environment Agency waterways to CRT with an appropriate financial settlement, whilst campaigning to keep all of the currently navigable waterways fully available;
- Continue the campaign to mitigate the threats posed to the inland waterways by HS2;
- Establish a group to research and report findings about usage of the inland waterways and how this has changed over recent years; forecast how usage of the inland waterways might develop over the coming 10 years and what IWA should do in readiness for this;
- Generate engagement with the "Love your Waterways" campaign across the branch network and membership;
- Continue to improve the boating experience through dialogue with navigation authorities about the facilities that boaters require;

- Help safeguard the heritage of the inland waterways by reviewing the statutory designations available in the changing planning landscape, and whether IWA should be lobbying for greater use of Conservation Areas and similar listings;

Internal Objectives

- Establish and support IWA's re-brand across all facets of the Association and in all outward facing situations;
- Take steps towards addressing IWA's income shortfall by optimising all existing income generating opportunities and developing new income streams;
- Promote a culture of 'One IWA' where volunteers from branches, regions, committees and subsidiaries as well as 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.

10134

NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

Les Etheridge had provided a written report, which had been circulated with the agenda papers. He drew trustees' attention to the following points.

- (a) Discussions were continuing between the Environment Agency and Canal & River Trust over the proposed transfer of navigation authority function. It now appeared likely that a firm conclusion would be reached one way or another by the early summer.
- (b) Although representations had been made to the Environment Agency to contain charges for abstraction licences to charitable bodies, the Environment Agency had resisted them so far citing its financial constraints. There are, however, some exemptions that could be used and John Pomfret intended to draft a briefing note to assist navigation authorities and restoration groups.
- (c) There had been no progress on the 'State of the Nation' report, notwithstanding promises by Geraint Coles to Canal & River Trust to produce the report.

Ivor Caplan reported that he and Helen Whitehouse had held a meeting with Luke Walker, who had said he did not feel a formal Extraordinary General Meeting was necessary, but wished to have a public meeting attended by trustees to discuss his concerns about restoration. Efforts were being made to fix a mutually agreeable date for such a meeting.

10135

PROCEDURES ADOPTED AT TRUSTEES MEETINGS

A proposed update of the Procedures Adopted at Trustees Meetings had been circulated with the agenda. In the proposed amendments to section 5, the words 'informal agreement' would be changed to 'understanding', and the final sentence deleted, otherwise the proposed revised wording was approved.

10136

STRATEGY UPDATE – NAVIGATION COMMITTEE

Gren Messham had prepared an update on Navigation Committee's strategy, and drew trustees' attention to the following points:

- A policy statement on rented boats had been prepared and would be circulated to trustees for approval (on the basis of any objections to be raised within 7 days).
- There had been further meetings and correspondence on HS2, especially in respect of the Ashby Canal.

- Dialogue with navigation authorities required more work.
- Draft leases had been prepared and submitted to solicitors for comment in respect of Elvington Lock.
- Representations received over mooring facilities at Limehouse Basin.

10137

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Neil Edwards had prepared a report that was circulated with the agenda. The following points were raised:

- Trustees approved the Google Apps policy, as circulated as an appendix to the report, and noted that the @team.waterways.org.uk e-mail accounts were now available to all IWA officers.
- A presentation to trustees on the work being undertaken by the branding agency had not been included on the agenda for this meeting owing to time pressures, but Alicen Stenner was arranging two webinars for trustees, and details would be circulated shortly. Mike Palmer drew trustees' attention to the importance of the branding work and the need for trustees' visible support. Helen Whitehouse sought assurance that no new branding would be launched before the summer.
- Trustees approved that the National Chairman and National Treasurer had standing authority to sign-off on statements in fund-raising applications to state that the Association was in satisfactory state of financial health and properly managed, etc.
- Trustees asked for a briefing on the proposed 'Love Your Waterways' campaign. Neil Edwards would ask Alicen Stenner for a briefing to be circulated to trustees before the campaign was launched.

10138

CAF BANK ACCOUNT

Trustees approved the appointment of Andrew Overy and Paula Smith to be signatories on the CAF bank account and removal of Helen Elliott-Adams from the list of signatories for that account. The authorisation form to the bank would be signed by Les Etheridge, Gren Messham and Jonathan Smith

10139

REPORT FROM REGION CHAIRMEN'S MEETING

Helen Whitehouse had prepared a report summarising the proceedings of a meeting of Region Chairmen, and drew trustees' attention to the following points:

- The long outstanding Officers' Handbook revision, which was currently with Marketing Committee. (Paul Strudwick offered to assist with this);
- The need for flexible arrangements for running branches;
- Trustees were asked to consider attending branch committee or public meetings from time to time;
- Helen Whitehouse would be taking part in the interviews for the Branch Engagement Officer.

10140

APPOINTMENTS

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

- Approved the appointment of Bowman Bradley as IWA's nominee to the Boat Safety Scheme Advisory Committee for a term of three years.
- Approved the appointment of Sue O'Hare as a full member of Navigation Committee for a term of three years

- (c) Noted the re-appointment of Tony Davis, Liz Payne, David Stevenson, Roy Sutton and Adam Wylie as corresponding members of Navigation for further terms of three years, and the appointment of Bowman Bradley as a corresponding member for a term of three years.
- (d) Approved the re-appointment of Michael Haig and Peter Johns to Marketing Committee for further terms of three years.
- (e) Noted the resignation of Alan Gilmour, and the retirement of Gordon Harrower in April, from Marketing Committee.
- (f) Approved the appointments of Marion Birch, Mike Moore, Lynda O’Hare, Alan Robertson and Andrew Strawson as full members of Canalway Cavalcade sub-committee for terms of just under three years (to October 2019 to fit in with the committee’s appointments cycle).
- (g) Approved the (re-)appointment of Pat Perry Barton, John Butler, Nick Coolican-Smith, Craig Haslam, Hannah Ranken, Dorothy Robbie, George Rogers, Alicen Stenner, Roger Squires and Paul Strudwick as corresponding members of Canalway Cavalcade for the following year.
- (h) Approved the appointment of Tim Wheeldon as IWA’s nominee to the Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership for a term of three years .

10141

COMMITTEE AND COMPANY MINUTES

Trustees accepted the following committee and company minutes:

Finance Committee	26 th November
Navigation Committee	26 th November
Marketing Committee	25 th November
Waterway Recovery Group	5 th November
Essex Waterways Ltd	8 th September (including edited minutes)

10142

MATTERS ARISING

Trustees noted a report circulated with the agenda covering matters arising from previous meetings, and the following points were raised:

- (a) Minute 10014(d) – This would be taken off the list of ‘Matters Arising’ in future reports.
- (b) Minute 10056 – Trustees approved that the award of grants from the Tony Harrison legacy would be announced at the 1st April restoration seminar following circulation to trustees for formal approval during March.

10143

NEXT MEETING

Trustees noted that the next meeting of the board of trustees would take place on Saturday 8th April 2017.

Note: The other dates planned for 2017 meetings are 10th June, 5th August, 7th October and 25th November.

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