

# THE WHITCHURCH WATERWAY TRUST

[www.whitchurchwaterway.uk](http://www.whitchurchwaterway.uk)

Company No : 02280683 Charity Commission No : 701050



**MINUTES** of a Committee Meeting held on 12Feb2019 at The Wheatsheaf, 19 Green End, Whitchurch SY13 1AD

<b>Present:</b>	Helen Brockman	(WWT Secretary)
	Chris Chambers	(WWT Trustee / Director and Chairman)
	Ray Hatton	(WWT Trustee / Director and Treasurer)
	Paul Radcliffe	(WWT Trustee / Director and Canal Festival Organiser)
	Dave Smith	(WWT Trustee / Director and Membership Secretary)
	Bob Sumner	(WWT Trustee / Director and Grounds Maintenance)
	Alan Allman	(WWT Member)
	Diane Allman	(WWT Member)

- 1) Apologies for Absence  
David Torrens (has sent his views on 3 items to the meeting)
- 2) Matters Arising / Minutes of the Previous Meeting  
The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed by the Chair, also those of the meeting on 27Nov2018.
- 3) Chair's Report
  - a) Dredging  
Since the last meeting, the committee had decided to accept Land&Water's quotation dated 17Jan2019, and to sell COIF investment units to provide sufficient funds for the dredging  
Dredging is currently scheduled to start on 25Feb - because of ongoing difficulties with their present CRT work, Land and Water were over running and will not be able to start dredging until 25Feb.
  - b) The dredgings will be put on the southern (soft) bank at the western end of the canal, behind a Nicospan installation, which is a method Land&Water (Canal and River Trust's sole dredging contractors) use.
  - c) Boundary Fence  
We feel it is necessary to have a fence on the offside bank by the Waterfront View housing estate to mark the boundary of WWT land, to show any contractors where WWT land is, and to provide a safety barrier in front of the canal. Part of the fence disappeared during construction of the housing estate and BS has pegged out the missing bits. We will be erecting a stockproof fence, probably similar to the water vole fence by the Greenfields Nature Reserve.  
The committee agreed a budget of £500 to spend on the fence without further committee approval.
  - d) Patrons, Life Presidents, Sponsors  
No progress.
- 4) Requests from residents of Waterfront View  
We are waiting for the Management Company for Waterfront View to appoint a representative to deal with issues concerning WWT and have requested the chair of the Management Company to inform WWT when someone is appointed. One Management Company covers all houses in the estate.  
David Torrens sent his view to the meeting, which was that the whole area between the black steel estate fence and the canal should be managed as a wild untidy area (the land between the black steel estate fence and the boundary with WWT land was designated as a wildlife buffer zone during planning permission for the estate development).
  - a) 2 residents have requested permission to do tree surgery on trees which are on WWT's land at their expense, disposing of the arisings and have provided details of the work, which is :

- i) To fell safely trees and saplings growing opposite Nos 16 and 17 Waterfront View  
The committee thanked the residents for their offer, but unanimously decided that the trees and saplings should not be removed for the following reasons :
- They soften the transition from the rural nature of the main line to the more urban nature at Chemistry Bridge.
  - They provide some privacy and screening for boaters moored in the visitor moorings on the Whitchurch Arm
  - Live trees are likely to offer more bank stabilisation than dead ones (the canal bank there is a soft bank rather than a piled bank)
  - WWT had consulted a tree specialist, who had advised that the trees are not diseased and there is no need to remove them  
Some of the small shoots at ground level may be covered by the dredgings.
- ii) To remove safely some small overhanging branches of a mature alder opposite the "new gate" and tidy around its base  
It is the committee's understanding that landowners are legally permitted to remove branches which overhang their land so there is no objection to doing that, nor to tidying up which is not on WWT land.
- b) another resident has asked if he may mow some of WWT's land at the top of the western bank above the winding hole  
It was unanimously agreed that WWT have no objection to this, provided the resident has his own public liability insurance. WWT are unable to accept any responsibility while he is mowing our land.
- c) The same resident as in b), also proposes to mow a 2m strip on Waterside Front land along the estate fencing  
The land between the Waterfront View's black steel estate fence and the boundary with WWT land along the southern bank of the canal was designated as a wildlife buffer zone during planning permission for the development. The developers had offered to transfer it to WWT for a nominal sum, but with the condition that it should be mowed once a month during the growing season. WWT had refused the offer because we felt the land should be allowed to be wild and we were not willing to risk a planning enforcement if we mowed it.  
It is not for WWT to tell the residents what to do on their land, it is a matter between the residents and Shropshire Council Planning.  
**HB** to send Alan Allman information on the relevant planning documents for the wildlife buffer zone  
**HB** to write to the residents, copying the chair of the Waterfront View Management Company.
- 5) Any Other Business
- a) Country Park Land Transfer  
HB reported that Peggy Mullock had advised that Nicki Young was happy to talk to us and had asked Zoe Dean (at the Canal Festival Meeting) to tell us where Shropshire Council and Whitchurch Town Council had got to with this.
- b) Honorary Life Membership for Bob Sumner and Arthur Skitt, in recognition of the extraordinary amount of work they do to look after the Whitchurch Arm  
BS left the room for the duration of this item to avoid any conflict of interest  
The rest of the committee voted unanimously in favour of this, however we need to check whether this would be permissible in view of the our status as a charity, as, although relatively small in value, this would be giving a benefit to a Trustee and a member.  
**HB** to check whether this is permissible with the Charity Commission
- c) IWA Quiz 1930 1Mar Narrowboat Inn Whittington  
HB, CC, DS and Joan Crump will go.  
**HB** to advise IWA we will be sending a team.
- d) Quorum at Committee Meetings  
HB reminded Trustees that, since Joan Crump is no longer a Trustee, and the quorum for a committee meeting is 4, our meetings will be inquorate if 3 or more Trustees do not attend.
- e) BS reported that the towpath is getting bad puddles. CC was reminded that Whitchurch Town Council are likely to require evidence of how last year's grant was spent.
- f) Former Gas Works Site  
Scottish Power own this site, which is heavily contaminated and are consulting with community groups about its future. We have a contact in Scottish Power.
- 6) The AGM will be Wed 17Apr2019 1930 in the Chester Suite at The Dodington Lodge  
**DS** to send HB the Membership List or email and postal addresses of members by 12Mar

**CC** to send HB a couple of paragraphs for the Management Report by 12Mar

- a) Independent Examiner's Report  
This is not required by Companies House or the Charity Commission for 2018, since our income in 2018 was less than £25,000.  
David Torrens had sent his view to the meeting, which was that we should only get a report if when it is required and he was not convinced that it would be useful for the purpose of showing good governance.  
**RH** felt it was good practice to do one.  
**DS** will try to get an Independent Examiner's Report done  
**HB** will include the Independent Examiner's Report in the AGM Notice if DS can provide it by 12Mar
- b) Trustees to retire and stand for re-election at this year's AGM are DS, and one of BS, RH or PR  
All these were willing to stand for re-election.  
**HB** to choose one of BS, RH and PR by lot.
- 7) Converting to a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation)  
David Torrens sent his view to the meeting, which was that he was in favour of converting.  
**DS** reported on the implications of converting WWT to a (CIO), and said that the only downside is that lenders may be less willing to lend money to a CIO. Since we were unable to get a bank loan in 2017 because we had no buildings to offer as collateral, there did not seem to be anything to lose.
  - a) The committee resolved unanimously to convert to a CIO, subject to the resolution being passed at a General Meeting.  
To convert to a CIO, these further steps will be necessary :
    - b) The Committee agree a Proposed CIO Constitution (the Charity Commission provide model constitutions)  
**HB** to send Trustees a draft Proposed CIO constitution
    - c) The members decide they are in favour of becoming a CIO at a General Meeting
    - d) The members approve the Proposed CIO Constitution at a General Meeting
    - e) We apply to the Charity Commission to process the conversion  
If the Committee can agree a Proposed CIO Constitution by 12Mar, the question could be put to members at this year's AGM.  
Since the Charity Commission provide a model constitution for an Association CIO (one which has members), and provide a conversion process for charitable companies, the committee did not feel it is necessary to take legal advice
- 8) Should membership payments should be exclusively made through BACS / Direct Debit ?  
Members have up to now had the option of paying by cheque or Standing Order, however payment by cheque involves more administration (paying the cheque in to the bank, chasing late payments, notifying the Treasurer).  
It was agreed that we will work towards only offering Standing Orders for new members, and try to get existing members to set up standing orders instead of sending cheques.  
**HB** to get Membership Form changed
- 9) Canal Festival 2019  
PR reported on the Canal Festival Meeting which took place on 6Feb :  
PR will undertake getting permission from Shropshire Council to :
  - a) use the land between the 2 bridges as part of the Canal Festival
  - b) flatten the land between the 2 bridges using machines so stalls could be erected on it
  - c) use the flat area on the basin site below the car park for the Dog Show

The meeting went well and PR was happy that the key people had attended.

Lindsay Green will organise the cafe and will act as a consultant for planning the festival.

It is planned to use the dining room at the Masonic Hall (which is separate from the rest of the building) for the Sat evening dinner, as it has tables, chairs, crockery, cutlery and a kitchen and bar. It was thought to be too expensive and difficult to use an outdoor marquee (electricity, other facilities and overnight security would be needed, and everything would have to be carried to and from a marquee). The Masonic Hall has use of the car park opposite at night and a shuttle bus from the canal would be arranged.

It was planned to run a Bric-a-Brac sale after the festival rather than as part of it.

The lane in front of Chemistry Farm would be available for use by traders only, and people would be encouraged to come along the new paths rather than by crossing Chemistry Bridge

Whitchurch Town Council had attended and had been supportive and will put an ad in The Shire magazine. The festival is on WTC's website calendar now.

Dawn Aylwin will put a notice in Waterways World and other canal publications and David Aylwin will act as Harbourmaster.

**PR** and **HB** will draft Terms of Reference for the Canal Festival Sub-Committee for approval by the committee

10) IWA/CRT Restoration Conference on Sat 30Mar in Wolverhampton

We will do not intend to go this year (but if anyone changes their mind, it may be possible to book)

11) We had been invited to bring a small display stand to Gnosall C-Fest 19 - 21 Jul 2019

We will not have a towpath display stand, but CC may be able to go with his boat and have a small display on that.

**HB** to reply to Gnosall C-Fest's invitation

**CC** to contact Gnosall C-Fest if he is able to go

12) There was no Treasurer's Report as David Torrens was not able to come to the meeting

*(Items 13 - 15 record events and decisions made since the last meeting)*

13) Website, Facebook and Publicity

Lizzie Scott is no longer producing a new website, or managing Facebook or Publicity, and has reimbursed WWT for the £42.99 used to buy a hard drive.

DT will continue as webmaster

DS will look after Facebook

14) Membership Secretary

DS will be Membership Secretary

15) Financial Authorisations

Since the last meeting, the committee had decided to :

a) set up authorisation by email for sale of the COIF units

b) set up CC, DS and DT as additional signatories for the COIF units (so COIF signatories will be CC, RH, DS and DT)

c) set up CC and DS as additional signatories for the TSB bank account (so TSB signatories will be CC, RH, DS, BS and DT)

16) Outstanding Actions (*where not covered under a separate item*)

**CC** was to select some artefacts to be borrowed from the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum for a display in the Heritage Centre and liaise with the curator. A/w reply from Heritage Centre.

**CC** was to send a sample project management proforma to HB

**HB** was to produce a similar project management proforma for WWT to use (CC and PR should be contacts on it)

**HB** has now collected Bill Young's files and process to select what to keep is underway..Documents up to 2011 have been dealt with (some kept, most destroyed)

**DA** to provide information about A boards to CC for WWT fundraising material at Grindley Brook Locks.Done.

**RH** was to investigate whether a local solicitor would be willing to act as our registered address.  
New bench

**DT** was to repair and paint the stop plankshelter. Done.

**DT** was to paint the frame and trimmed edges of the OSB of the noticeboard by the winding hole

**DS** and **BS** were to attach protective tyres on the piling around the winding hole

**CC** was to get the stop planks delivered

17) Date(s) of next meeting(s)

Tue 12 Mar 1930 The Wheatsheaf

Tue 9 Apr 1930 The Wheatsheaf

Tue 14 May 1930 The Wheatsheaf