



MINUTES OF USER GROUP MEETING

HELD IN

THE GRANGE MANOR HOTEL, GRANGEMOUTH

ON SATURDAY 12 MARCH 2005

09.55 – 12.15 HOURS

Representing British Waterways:

Richard Millar, Waterway Manager, Lowland Canals
John Black, Engineering Operations Manager, Lowland Canals
Ronnie Simpson, Customer Service Manager, Lowland Canals
Linton McBurnie, Waterway Supervisor – Union Canal, Lowland Canals
Tommy Thomson, Waterway Supervisor, Forth & Clyde Canal - East
Elly Storrie, Administration Manager, Lowland Canals
Marion Paterson, Customer Service Administrator, Lowland Canals
Lorna Steele, Finance Administrator, Lowland Canals
Helen Rowbotham, Events Co-ordinator, The Falkirk Wheel
Bill Martin, Team Leader, Forth & Clyde Canal – East
John Ellis, Fisheries Manager, South East & Chairman LCAPS

Guest Speakers

Norrie Courts, Property Development Manager, British Waterways Scotland
Russell Coleman, Archaeologist, Headland Archaeology

Chairman

Professor John Hume, OBE

1.0 Welcome

Professor Hume welcomed everyone to the meeting at 9.55 a.m. and asked that all participants please register with British Waterways staff advising which body they were representing at this particular meeting.

2.0 Apologies

John Hume advised that there were intimated apologies and also advised at registration as follows:

1. Steven Gilmour
2. David Roy, Ratho Union Canal Society
3. Lorenzo Forno, Boat owner
4. Peter Hawkins
5. Tom Jamieson, West Edinburgh Canal Society
6. Robin Black, SIWA
7. Ian Newman, Fieldfare
8. Hamish Leal, Capercaillie Cruisers
9. Mr Jamie and Mrs Eleanor Milne, Seagull Trust

10. Mrs Edith McLean, Edinburgh Canal Society
11. Mr Thomas Jamieson, Dove Centre, Wester Hailes
12. Mrs Myrtle Allardyce, SIWA
13. Tony Williams, Boat owner, Auchinstarry Basin

3.0 Minutes of previous meeting

John Hume

Professor Hume invited any changes to the minutes of previous meeting on Saturday 30 October 2004. There were no amendments and the minutes were accepted as presented.

4.0 Lowland Canals Update

Richard Millar

Professor Hume then invited Richard Millar to give the Lowland Canals Update.

Richard Millar welcomed everyone on the first day of the season. He hoped that the work done over the winter period would be evident and showing obvious improvements.

Lock 17 Locks 18 and 20 on the Forth & Clyde Canal - new lock gates had been installed and additional moorings at Lock 17

Kerr's Embankment 69 - Work done on this embankment costing £150K will make sure that it will last for another 200 years. Vegetation Control on this embankment – planned cost - £40K.

Carmuir's tunnel – repairs have now been completed

Slatford Aqueduct – restoration to 2.3 metres in the past –using local timber.

Applecross Street - Picture was shown of the facilities block at Applecross Street Glasgow which was demolished to make way for the new one. This brought sounds of sad reminiscence from the audience with suggestions that “bricks from the old cludgy” should be sold to raise capital.

Events - Forth & Clyde Canal Society at Clydebank brought along Santa and his elves.

At this point Richard advised that the Scottish Executive have given funds of £3.6m

The ongoing challenges of 2005 will be to try to achieve 180 transits almost double the numbers from last season which was particularly low. We also have to increase long-term moorings to 235 craft (12% increase)

Mooring charge review – at the time of the meeting there had been 13 responses about this and we would be reviewing them, taking on points and compiling a document that will explain our rationale. It is expected that this will be implemented at the beginning of April.

Scottish Executive money - ploughing and dredging to continue. £100K worth of dredging to be carried out on the Union Canal.

The battle against weed continues and new chemical weed control is operational across the system. This chemical has been worked through with ecologists.

Edinburgh Quay Development - due to open on 22 March. The Transport Minister will be there and will take part in the flotilla.

Leamington Basin - Richard was keen to point out that the properties sold with moorings would only be able to take up the offer of moorings within one year. These moorings would then revert to the open market on the moorings list as moorings are owned by British Waterways. 80m of visitor moorings at present in Leamington Basin.

Port Dundas - At the last User Group Meeting Paul Colenzo spoke on the reconnection . It is hoped that the works may be finished by November and possibly open by next Spring.

Auchinstarry - There is a difference in the time between people taking up the moorings and actually coming into the basin. Hard standing locations for boats will be available also.

Bowling Harbour - £1.1m spend on Bowling to incorporate a new facility block, new moorings, car parking spaces and hard standing places. There is also to be a crane pad. He hoped that this would be made into a commercial success.

Disabled Access Forum - Advised that we are currently checking gates and trial at Hillhead is almost complete

Towpath Improvements - Harrison Park – there is now a high quality towpath here and there will be improvements to the slip way – hopefully by August.

Photographic Competition - This has been relaunched for the 2005 season with a closing date of 11 October.

The Falkirk Wheel - Change of management structure involving Richard since last October. The aim is to try to increase focus on canal as a whole. It is planned that there will be interactive displays and films. This has never been done properly at The Falkirk Wheel previously but hopefully this will be up and running soon. Theatre script with songs written on the theme of The Falkirk Wheel – sourcing funding for this at the moment. Remote control boats are planned and of course the timetable for both trip boats and canal boats are being investigated at the moment.

River Carron Study - The final report for this is due in May 2005. We are hoping that this will be pushed up the political agenda. It is hoped that a report will be available at the October User Group.

The Waterways Trust Scotland - Richard advised that Amanda Durlik would be able to report briefly at the end of the meeting. The Arts Strategy Plan is now beginning to take shape. The Litter Pick would take place on 20 March. Sandra Purves, Edinburgh Canal Society advised that there were forms for this at the Registration Desk at the back of the room.

The Scottish Boat Show – 12th to 14th August – hopefully we will get support from everyone and many people come along to this treating it as an event.

Waterside Pub Partnership - Various places to be developed. We expect to see two or three in the next three years in the Lowlands.

General Objectives - We have achieved over 12 million visits to the Towpath and are trying to encourage good health in every area through cycling along the towpath establishing a “green gym”. We are also working with LCAPS to develop angling throughout Lowlands.

Business Standards - A grading system was being devised at the moment in order to ascertain star ratings for floating businesses. Independent consultants are investigating this in order that we would be able to deliver an appropriate level of customer service.

Structure changes - as follows:

Richard Millar Service and Business Development Manager, Scotland

Pam Swanson Customer Service Manager, Scotland

Pam would report to Richard in her capacity as Customer Service Manager for Scotland and she would be responsible for delivering excellent customer service in Scotland

John Black Customer Service Manager, Lowland Canals

John would report to Pam and would be responsible for delivery of good customer service in Lowland Canals and Operation of The Falkirk Wheel.

Ronnie Simpson Leisure Development Manager, Scotland

Ronnie would report also to Richard in his new role and would be responsible for the development of the leisure business side of the Scottish Canals.

Richard finished his presentation and asked if there were any questions.

4.1 Questions & Comments

Tommy Lawton	Auchinstarry – school trips in June could we possibly moor for two or three days at a time.
Richard Melville	We hope to help – John Black will investigate Construction Scotland about new brewery Fountainbridge – 160 square feet – 160 homes and new street to lead to Union canal. Work due to start next year. Where is the bridge to be.
Richard Norrie	This refers to a press article Scottish & Newcastle spend for their plans at Fountainbridge.
Sandra Purves Norrie	Was there consultation Lift bridge and Lochrin basin and they have assured mooring sites. Consultation on this.
Sandra Purves	We would not like to see another moveable bridge like Clydebank. You cannot moor so close to this. New street is near Tartan Arms. Where Friar Street used to be there are issues.
**	We should have open facilities at Ratho. Why should we have floating facilities
Richard	We would like facilities on west side of bridge end. We have problems concerning talking about the land in this area. It is important to us to have right side moorings once this is resolved. We are looking at the possibility of Floating facilities instead. Access to be resolved also. This may take some time.
Bill Purves	We have seen the value of mature trees at Harrison Park. There is a local Friends of Park Group and there should be a properly arranged programme for this issue.
Linton	Strip of land is not our property along canal - will deal with this and this work will be carried out soon.
Richard Ron Woods	We will try to work closely with councils Locks 17/18/19/20 inclusive – we had advance warning of work going on here. I have concerns about the use of weed killers. We have asked to have an input into this.
Richard Ron Woods Richard Millar	I thought that Olivia Lassiere had done this. keep communicating with anglers Will do
**	2010 – We have to be together on study of Fife/Clackmannanshire/Stirling.
R Millar	We plan a study by going out to the River Forth and then doing a sail-through the canal.
J Hume	Alloa has better chance of backing like this.
Andy Devenport	Asked what was the position concerning cycling permits
R Millar	We will drop this. The cycle permit included in waterway code. It is difficult to apply.
Mel Gray	Surely this is a retrograde step as cyclists are a nuisance. They are dangerous.
John Hume	Next Transport Act – a requirement to have bells. In China cyclists are held to blame if there is an accident.
R Millar	It is difficult to apply rules – they should have a bell. Small minority causing problems.
John Hume	Liaise with David Eaglesham
**	All new cycles to have bells.
*	Will there be a dry dock at tunnel?
R Millar	No

R Rusack	Can there be controlling of hire boat fleet from speeding
R Millar	This is difficult for us to police. We are not waterway police. It is a problem across all the canals. How we have done this in the past is we have gone to those who run the fleets and asked them to apply laws.
R Rusack	There will be an accident some time.
A Street	Hamish has done his bit.
R Millar	Unfortunately, they don't understand how much damage this does to the canal.
S Purves	We have to get our message through to foreigners.
G Daly	You will always have someone speeding in this way. It is not an easy problem to resolve.
Seagull trust (K)	Toilet block - Houses above this will cost a lot of money to replace.
R Millar	Development - Modular toilet blocks and have crane point.
Ken	Leaving centre to Townhead Bridge there will be a walkway.
	Small development with another jetty.
Seagull trust	Boat house to come down too?
J Hume	New boat house is not negotiable.
Gordon Daly (ST)	Trustees are aware of the position.
John Hume	Team has done a great job. We wish you very well in your reorganised state.
John Hume	Vegetation management scheme and this will make a difference to everyone – fish/boater/cyclists.
	Port Dundas – will this have supervised moorings?
Richard	Staff will be there just like Edinburgh Quay
John Hume	Temporary
	Bowling – access from road to Bowling Basin. This is not signposted.
Richard	This is being looked into.
John Hume	From cycle hire or road - Bowling Harbour to be looked into.
Richard	Norrie will cover this better than I can. There is a lot being discussed.
John Hume	Hazardous – breakwater to be tied up.
	TWTS – Arts – competitions – sponsorship of artists.
Richard	Richard Demarco worked well in this area.
C Galloway	There is an art group at Manse Road Basin and we have an Easter weekend exhibition.
R Rusack	Master class was run for many years. We used to get as many as 150 entrants.
Mel Gray	Asked about the railing at Manse Road Basin.
Richard	Railings – problems in traffic control - There is no excuse - £25K of spend and we can get better value somewhere else.
Mel	We may be able to do something about this.
Richard	We have to make a decision and John Black will sort this one out.

4.2 Actions

- 4.2.1 Gates on Forth & Clyde Canal to be accessible for disabled.
- 4.2.2 River Carron Study – an update to be given
- 4.2.3 Port Dundas – an update to be given

- 4.2.4** The Falkirk Wheel
 (a) Update on funding for theatre script
 (b) Update on Boat timetable over Falkirk Wheel
- 4.2.5** LCAPS – an update to be given
- 4.2.6** Signage at bowling from road to basin – an update

5.0 Property Development Update

Mr Norrie Courts

Norrie has been Property Development Manager with British Waterways for the last 8 months. He started his presentation by introducing our vision that by 2012 it is planned that we would have an expanded vibrant largely self-sufficient waterway network

He advised that the success of the property business was fundamental to achieve financial self-sufficiency. The wider corporate objectives were –

- Increased attraction and accessibility of the waterways to visitors
- Re-investment for the future
- Urban and rural regeneration, sustainability, social inclusion.

The strategy is as follows acting in a professional and commercial manner at all times

- Add value to acquired assets/acquire assets that add value to the estate
- Invest in larger lot sizes to reduce management costs
- Short term income opportunities with long term development potential
- Joint venture companies for national roll out or substantial single projects
- Medium risk, medium return.

In Scotland the team is as follows:

Property & Development Manager - Norrie Courts

Building Surveyor - David James

2 Estates Surveyors – Catherine Bell

Property Consultant

Development Surveyor

Town Planner – Christopher Breslin

Property Secretary – Lisa McKinnon

Property Assistant – Glenda Asquith

Forth & Clyde Canal

Norrie reported on what had been achieved with the linking East to West - £80m investment in Millennium Link project including the Isis Regeneration corridor, Bowling, Auchinstarry and Clydebank.

Union Canal

We now have access to the heart of Edinburgh's vibrant commercial centre

Town Planning

The following were highlighted advising that there were quite a number of ideas being investigated at the moment.

Bowling master plan with increased moorings.

Project £1.2m BW £800K

SED £150K ERDF £250K

River Leven – Loch Lomond Link

River Clyde Study

Clydebank Rebuilt – Animating the canal

Falkirk Canal Corridor

Falkirk Wheel Master plan for which Richard Millar is responsible.

Fountainbridge Master plan

West Lothian Structure Plan

Third Party Advice

Nodal Development Strategy

Third Party Development beside the canal

Scottish & Newcastle, Fountainbridge – we would like to see water space being developed here.

Craigpark, Ratho -

This may be further down the line – hoping for a hotel and country park. We have put over our views

Broxburn – Cala development

Winchburgh – Persimmon development

Kirkintilloch – Strathkelvin Development Park -

We are hoping to develop moorings through the nodal development strategy

Redding Park

Norrie urged everyone to put forward their ideas to Edinburgh City Council. He highlighted the housing developments and the possibility of developing water space in these areas.

Edinburgh Quay – Millar Developments have bought buildings here – conflicting attitudes towards the height of buildings which have been built there. Here there is a partnership with Miller Developments. Residential / Retail investment of £40m producing 650 jobs.

Investment activity also at Rosebank Distillery, Falkirk

ISIS Waterside regeneration

This was established July 2002 and is a partnership between British waterways, Morley Fund Management's Igloo Regeneration Fund and AMEC Developments. This takes in regeneration projects in Port Dundas Glasgow. The objective is to maximise regeneration opportunities presented by canal side sites through profitable sustainable and a community conscious development. £800K for investment at Bowling from British Waterways.

Ventures with property involvement.

There are no marinas in Scotland as yet and at Auchinstarry there has been use of core waterway money. There is also opportunity here for a licensed restaurant.

Rosebank Distillery – 2003 we received planning consent for this scheme. Norrie showed the Site Plan incorporating residential, office and pub/restaurant component of this site. With the office space becoming available there may be the possibility of government departments relocating to Falkirk.

Pub Partnership – several sites in Scotland including The Falkirk Wheel. It is expected that we will be able to report back in connection with this in three months time.

Edinburgh Quay – potential for business barges linking to Edinburgh Festival.

Finally, he summarised by pointing out that there was requirement to invest for the long term and they would continue to work with the private sector with continued attention to commercial approach producing quicker response times.

5.1 Questions & Comments

A Carnduff

Saltwater Group

Norrie

Delighted about new developments .

We are on the same team. We have to work together to increase funding and try to cast into Richard Millar's budgets. We are trying to act as buffers – Cala Developments etc.

AC

Norrie

These developments should use the canal.

We have to improve benefits of canal. .

- F Willis Rosebank - need chance for some water space there.
- Norrie The gradient here does not lend towards this kind of water space development
- Fiona Obligation to extend water space. In Edinburgh we should be using developments at side of canal to try to get property owners to have an obligation to have a boat and pay BW for this privilege.
- Norrie Town planners policy should be to make sure it is in their plan. 200 new houses and you should create water space in that scheme. We have to influence all involved.
- Fiona There should be an obligation to use water space.
- Norrie Richard Millar has people waiting for moorings. Developments trying to build there on moorings – this is not allowed.
- Ronnie R No point in building on this fantastic development then.
- Richard 134 on waiting list at the moment.
- Ronnie R I know of 5 people who are able to come onto canal at the moment. This is like putting the cart before the horse. Millennium Link promised 600 boats on the canal.
- Richard There are 134 on waiting list for Union Canal – 28 at Ratho
- Ronnie R I know of 5 people with boats. Even these should get a chance to come on. You are dealing with people abominably.
- Richard We have people looking for boats. Not everyone has a boat when they come on the lists.
- A M Richard – please finish point
- Richard We have to take all this at face value. It takes time. Last season we got even more interest.
- G Daly RYA I am pleased to hear that you are again to encourage business barges and please do not have them moored on navigation channel. 12' wide constancy. Please can we have off-line moorings
- Sandra Purves Water space – more useable water space required. We have just got master plan for Fountainbridge.
- Norrie Triange – we did not support this. This is surrounding Scottish & Newcastle. We have to keep hammering to get what we want.
- Norrie Edinburgh City Council will meet with Jim Stirling in three weeks' time.
- Billy Mason I am trying to get business and plan up and running. Falkirk Council says I have permission but what is British Waterways' situation in this.
- Richard We have provided a place for you – environmental health require compliance. We do not over-ride Falkirk Council.
- Tommy L 10 years ago we would not have had this meeting here. It was the Tory's plan to strip £9.5m from BW's assets.
- A Devenport Edinburgh Quay – the impression was that developers were anti-BW – thought that BW squandered their part at Edinburgh Quay. Asked about Historic Scotland.
- Norrie They don't want Lochrin Basin.

6.0 Update - The Waterways Trust Scotland Amanda Durlik

Amanda was introduced to give a short update on the Waterways Trust Scotland. She advised that they worked with seven local authority areas

along the canal corridor. They continue to fund raise. The main priority for her was access projects identified i.e. Viewforth, Wyndford Locks, Seabegs and Maryhill. Development of these projects over the next three years will continue. The other priority improvements were seating, upgrade towpath standards and improvements to the maintenance of these areas.

A copy of the Report on Access for All November 2004 is available to go out to anyone if they wish. Amanda advised that one report would go to each canal society, and RYA. She also advised that it was a time consuming process establishing all the groups who should be consulted and sending out the questionnaires to the various groups.

6.1 Questions & Comments

T Lawton	Received a copy of this report this week. Can you give us a List of groups contacted.
Amanda	This would have doubled the size of report if we contacted everyone. All Local Authorities will get one copy. If you want copy let me know
Gordon Daly	Seagull Trust – did we get a questionnaire
Amanda	All were represented

7.0 Historical Find at Leamington

Russell Coleman

Russell introduced himself to the group and advised that he had an open day coming up soon and if you would like to hear more about this then he would talk about this to anyone interested.

He proceeded by advising on the historical find was made at Leamington Wharf opposite brewery. The City of Edinburgh have their own Archaeologists who were involved and determined when the work would take place.

Russell showed historical maps on screen and talked through all the various differences on the maps at each time showing the evidence for his conclusions. –

In 1853 there was more buildings in this area. The map showed that a boat Had been built on top of at this time. Map shows some of the old barges. By the 1930's – the only structure left is the Old Rope Works at this area. Traders are shown round about the site. Rope Works eventually were turned into garages. From the screen it could be seen that wooden piles and old quays are shown from 19th century onwards. In 1877 a stone quay is evident possibly laid around 1800. At this point it can be seen that there is evidence of a wooden structure - this is clearly a boat. 70' long 12' wide.

In Autumn – the boat was uncovered – sheds had been built on top of it. Help had been received to uncover this find. It seems to be older than the canal itself and possibly brought on to Union Canal later than it was first built. We should be able to get an exact date.

There has been interest from Edinburgh City Museum and Stern, Summerlee who held an open day which was successful.

7.1 Questions & Comments

A Street	It predates the canal?
Russell	Yes
Donald McKinnon	Monklands or Forth & Clyde design or 20 or 30 years older?
Sandra Purves	Barge seems to tie up with kind of scowls on canal around that time .

8.0 Any Other Business**John Hume**

Professor Hume brought the meeting to a close giving a vote of thanks to all who contributed. The following made final comments -

S Purves Rally on 10 September 12 – 5 – please contact Tom Jamieson at the Dove Centre Wester Hailes

Amanda Durlik Please email Rita Crowe and let us know if you have life jackets for events.

10.0 Conclusion and Next Meeting

The meeting closed at 12.15 p.m.

Date of next meeting: Saturday 29 October 2005

Time: 9.30 a.m. for 10 a.m. start

**Venue: Grange Manor Hotel
Grangemouth**

For your information –

**Advance notification of provisional bookings for next
User Group Meetings all booked at**

The Grange Manor Hotel and all starting at 10 a.m.

Saturday 29 October 2005

Saturday 25 March 2006

Saturday 28 October 2006

Next meeting of The Scotland Group will be 19 May

11.0. FOR YOUR INFORMATION -

actions recorded/MP/August 2005

For ease of reference – items are numbered

.0 – presentation

.1 – Questions & Comments

.2 – Actions