

MINUTES

Title	Kennet & Avon Users Forum	
Date	3 October 2007	
Present:	Ian Jarvis Nick Worthington Paul Griffin Steve Manzi Jane Lee Andrew Colyer Dave Crookes Jane & Bledlyn Griffith John Kirby Mervyn & Marlene Moore G W Paterson Richard Patrick G Rogerson John Webb Tim Wheeldon	British Waterways British Waterways British Waterways British Waterways British Waterways NABO/West Kennet Boating Community Bathampton AA Canalside residents K&A Canal Trust Canal Taverners Boat Club K&ACT Bathampton AA NABO IWA Somerset Coat Canal Co
Apologies	Michael Bennett John Bish Rod Bracey Mervyn Burrows David Butcher Ellen Dexter Terry Fell Sandra Fry Steve Furniss Di Harris Doug Manning Bob Naylor Christine Purchas Danese Rudd Graham Smith Pete & Val Taylor Kay Wardle	K&A CT/BIBC Pewsey Wharf Boat Club Bathampton Angling Association Newbury Angling Association AWCC RBOA Devizes Angling Association Hilperton Cruising Club Thames & Chilterns Holiday Cruises Butty/K&A CT BCU K&A CT Ramblers Association Bruce Trust/KATA K&A CT Newbury Greenham Canal Services Pewsey Wharf Boat Club

Ian invited everyone to introduce themselves and explain their interest.

1 Apologies
As listed above

2 Acceptance of notes of previous meeting
Accepted

Action

3 Actions from previous meeting
 Most were answered before the previous notes were issued.
 Note 6 – John York to consult on demolition - being dealt with.
 Note 12 – John Webb still chasing B&NES re safety at Hanham. Has had a meeting.

Note 13 – agreed name is Thimblemill Lock.

Note 15 - Burghfield lock being monitored

- Spillway at Fobney – stop plank had been vandalised. We have assessed this and feel that the risk of vandalism as experienced in the past and the impact during times of flood conditions do not justify the need for a spillway baffle.

Marketing

Item not on agenda

Ian explained the recent market research report and the thinking behind the current marketing initiative. He then showed the marketing video and posters.

4 Smoke alarms on boats

Boat safety scheme has issued guidance recommending smoke alarms on boats. Copy of notes issued. Carbon monoxide alarms could also be useful but fire service cannot promote them as not Home Office validated. It was reported that boats had been fitted with smoke alarms free of charge at the recent Newbury festival.

5 Update re letters issued to overstaying boats

See below.

6 Evasion issues

Recent efforts have shown positive results in reducing evasion rate.

Non compliant continuous cruisers who have not complied with licence conditions have received letters.

Visitor mooring abuse – two craft have been invoiced recently one for £275 (awaiting payment) the other for £675 (paid). One case involving an outstanding invoice for excess charges has been taken to court and the owner ordered to pay an amount in excess of £800.

Wording of letters had been questioned, and some wording has now been changed. Ian explained his intention to seek funding to put a manned presence at each end of K&A to stop unlicensed boats gaining access to the canal. One result of this would mean that the canal would be locked overnight at each end.

Ian confirmed the policy to reduce on-line moorings by 10% in the vicinity of new marinas.

Somerset Coal Canal considering re-opening another section which could create new moorings.

A question raised: is there any chance of new legislation to strengthen BW's case to make dealing with unlicensed boats easier? Ian felt this was unlikely.

7 Mooring tenders

Ian explained the process which is being trialed for allocating permanent moorings.

Paul distributed leaflets and added some details.

IWA had expressed objection to the process at the consultation stage.

NABO had also expressed objections. One objection was that people would be paying different rates for the same stretch of moorings.

Question of 5m gaps for anglers was raised.

8 Major works

Two projects undertaken, Sheffield Mill weir. Flooding caused delays, but job should be finished this week. Breach at Midgham - temporary repair undertaken, permanent solution will be installed soon.

9 GWP

Failure of lock gate at lock 23, happened on day of floods at Gloucester. Other significant repairs to lock gates including, Ham and County. Lots of trees have been brought down and have had to be dealt with. Improvements carried out on lock quadrants.

Higgs Lock landing rebuilt.
Clearance work at Crofton leat.
Grass cutting, final cut to commence 22 October.

10 Update on planned stoppages

National stoppage programme has been issued. Adjustments have been made in answer to feedback from previous meeting. Caen Hill work will take place in New Year. Public viewing event being planned. It was explained that some stoppages will be within a window of the planned period and will not take the whole period but flexibility is needed to take account of weather conditions and water levels.

Locks: Caen Hill – new bottom gates for 36, 41 42 plus various strengthening works; Dreweatts; Colthrop; Heals.

Bridges: Monkey; Padworth; Woolhampton.

Recent work at Lock 23 was able to be carried out very quickly because gates were already available having been made for another lock.

11 Update on lock gearing

Programme in place to review and replace reduction gearing and also carry out re-alignment.

Any gates being replaced with have improved gearing mechanisms.

12 Staff changes

New organisation chart distributed.

Ian introduced Steve Manzi, new supervisor for Customer Operations Team; Dale Marshall is now supervising Construction Team.

Business Development Manager, James Young joins BW tomorrow, 4 October.

Alison Smith, Volunteer Co-ordinator joining us very soon. John Kirby said the Trust is looking forward to working with Alison.

Heritage & Environment: Oda Dijksterhuis, returns from maternity leave to be E&H Manager. Simon Loaring will be Heritage Advisor.

Maria Nash, new Moorings Co-ordinator started three weeks ago.

13 Minimum safety standards

BW will make a pledge to minimum safety standards. Nick gave some examples.

Audit has been carried out to identify what needs to be done. Work has already started - all cills on K&A locks have been repainted. Vegetation growth on gates – Nick explained current policy with regard to clearance of vegetation and nesting birds. Tim raised question of hedge overgrowth at Limpley Stoke. Nick explained that there is a backlog which will be addressed this winter, between October and March.

Request for cuttings to be cleared to avoid problems for cyclists.

Erosion of Bradford Lock moorings –solutions being designed.

Swing bridge at Bathampton low fence - request for review. Paul explained why it had been installed.

14 Any other business

Request for large fenders in bridge at Reading.

Note added after meeting: The bridge is wide and would need a lot of costly fendering as it would have to cover a large area to take into account the varied heights and water levels. About five years ago the river above High Bridge was altered slightly to allow boats a better angle of approach. This has helped the problem. Additionally, the EA will not let us place any timbering because this would restrict the flows in flood time.

Re BW pubs partnership does BW have plans to build/acquire any on K&A – recently acquired Jolly Sailor at Saltford.

Location of meetings – request for a review.

Comment that recent maintenance work is encouraging – bearing in mind that it is now 20 years since the restoration.

Hanham lock cottage and other properties not needed for operational needs – tenants have been offered options.

Dates and Venues of Future Meetings

Wednesday 13 February – Wessex Room, Corn Exchange, Market Place, Devizes

Wednesday 11 June – Bath

Wednesday 8 October – Reading

NW