

Fossdyke & Witham User Group
Notes Of Meeting Held On Thursday 6 October 2005

At The Pyewipe Inn

Present

Richard Noble	Customer Operations Manager, British Waterways (Chair)
Mark Owen	Maintenance Supervisor, British Waterways
Debbie Mclardy	Customer Operations Supervisor, British Waterways
Allan Linley	Patrol Officer, British Waterways
Janet Reynolds	Lincoln Boat Club
Dave Carnell	IWA Lincolnshire
Chris Hayes	Sleaford Navigation Trust
Steve Hayes	Sleaford Navigation Trust
Michael Gaisford	Lincoln Moorings
Lee & Debbie Conlon	Lincoln Moorings
Ray Rogers	TYC
Frances Audas	TYC
Dennis Audas	TYC
Pete Justice	Sheffield Boat Club
Jonathan Franklin	Sheffield Boat Club
Theresa & Gary Thompson	RBOA
AA Richards	Lincoln & District Angling Association
Joy Pitt	Lincoln Moorings
Rev Perry	Waterways Chaplain
Nicholas May	Lincoln Swan Society
Gregg Spriggs	Belle Isle Marina
David Mylett	Lincoln Canoe Club

1) Apologies

John Handley	Brayford Trust
Robert Aspey	RBOA
Ivor Milnes	Lincoln Moorings

2) Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3) Matters Arising

a) **Works to Stamp End lock approach** – Steve Hayes asked if there were any plans to carry out work to the moorings at Stamp End. Richard Noble (RN) replied that emergency works required at Torksey took priority this year. He acknowledged the need for works to the moorings at this location but was unable to confirm when this is will happen.

b) **Jet washing of visitor moorings** – The moorings at Langrick Bridge are very slippery. Mark Owen (MO) confirmed that all moorings on the F&W are jetwashed. Until next year's

budget is confirmed he is unable to say how often this will be carried out, but he will note Langrick as a problem area

c) **Grass cutting on EA land** – Darren Smith had contacted the EA regarding their grass cutting. RN suggested that users also contact the EA direct to ask them to increase the frequency

d) **Slipway at Brayford** – Nicholas May asked if the slipway was BW's responsibility. RN replied that Lincoln City Council or Brayford Trust were responsible as BW only have ownership of a 30ft chanel through the pool. He added that the Trust have been given notice to quit with effect from May 06 so it was certain to be the council after then. RN said he would pass on the Swan Society's concerns about the amount bird droppings on the slipway.

e) **Navigation Notices** – Notice boards will be updated with details of restrictions on the Witham for the winter period and the information would be sent out in the same way as last year.

f) **Access for disabled anglers** – Tony Richards informed the meeting that the gate behind the grand stand is now left open to allow access. The angling association are very pleased with this decision and passed on their thanks.

g) **Fiskerton Moorings** – Dave Carnell asked if BW knew when the EA were going to complete the connecting path. RN replied that he didn't as BW have finished their work at this site

h) **Dredging at Bardney** – Rev Perry asked if BW were going to do any dredging at Bardney moorings. MO replied that there were no plans to do this over the winter period but will check the site

i) **Torksey jet washing** – Ray Rogers mentioned that BW were going to contact boaters prior to jet washing, but this did not happen. RN apologised and will take steps to make sure this didn't happen again

4) Maintenance Update – Mark Owen gave an update as follows:

Works completed since the last user group meeting:

- Boston moorings
- Saxilby moorings
- Refuse area at Boston
- Torksey silt bar
- Torskey (Trent side) moorings redecked
- Replaced Chapel Hill moorings
- Fiskerton moorings
- Work carried out on walk ways and H sections to floating pontoons
- Improvements to Bardney access road

Works due to commence:

- Bardney floating moorings
- Improvements to Lincoln moorings access road and parking areas

New visitor moorings at Torksey

RN confirmed that the electricity supply had been installed at Saxilby but the lights were still awaiting connection. Users were asked to submit comment cards regarding their requests about the installation of electricity here.

5) Agenda items raised by group members

a) **Pump out facilities at Lincoln** (Mr Carnell) – RN said that a pump out at BW's Lincoln moorings would be very expensive as a new cess pit or connection to the main sewers would be required. He would prefer to wait and see if the new operators of the Brayford or the potential new marina at Chapel Hill would install one in future, before considering other sites on the F&W

RN confirmed that the Orchard Caravan Mooring Site did not belong to BW, despite a mooring sign with the BW logo being there. The Marketing and Communications Manager is aware of these signs, BW is looking at the use of their signs on a national level.

b) **Craft entering Fossdyke from Burton Waters** (Mr Carnell) – It was reported that craft coming from Burton Waters do not check that the Fossdyke is clear before entering. Boats are often seen speeding at this spot. Allan Linley said that he had spoken to Burton Waters and recommended the construction of at least one mirror there. He asked to be informed of any particular problems at the time.

c) **Craft over staying at Torksey** (Mrs Audas) – It was reported that boaters have been overstaying at the 1 hour moorings near to the pump out at Torksey. RN said he had spoken to the lock keepers previously and would speak to them again about managing that section of moorings. He asked for any problems to be reported to either himself or Allan Linley. MO will amend the sign from '1h' to '1 hour'

d) **BW and council toilets at Torksey** (Mrs Audas) – RN confirmed that the BW toilets were not exclusively for boaters. Any customer with a BW key can use these facilities. The lock keeper will also let visitors to the interpretation centre into the toilets if they request. Mrs Audas mentioned that the cleanliness of the toilets is deteriorating because of the increased use. RN will inform the lock keepers. West Lindsey District Council are reviewing the selling of their toilets to BW as BW said that they would not leave BW toilets open for general public use throughout the day. If BW took over the building it would be used for something else.

e) **Bin area at Torksey** (Mrs Audas) – The bin area can be very slippery, particularly in the winter. RN said that he needs to have a look at this problem, as the bins are now kept on WLDC land. He would need to find out what the council now intended to do with the building before a hard standing was built there.

f) **Trent direction board** (Mrs Audas) – MO informed the meeting that the posts have been purchased and the large 'motorway' signs are currently being produced. These will be installed during the winter. A new gauge board on the bull nose at Torksey cut will also be installed at the same time. If users felt that a specific location would benefit from a sign, please let him know

g) **Maintenance to Torksey mooring jetties** (Mrs Audas) – A boater slipped and fell on a slippery jetty at Torksey, hurting their ankle. MO will look at the whole site to see if any short

term remedial works were possible. Various wood treatments are available but can be very expensive, and have Environmental & Heritage implications. RN asked for the boater to complete a Visitor Incident Report Form

h) **Update on Brayford Pool** (Mrs Audas) – The Trust have been given notice to quit from May 06. BW are not party to the discussions but have been contracted to do a survey of the site.

i) **Position of pontoons in future mooring developments** (Mrs Audas)

Torksey - BW have met with the landowner at Torksey regarding the proposal to install moorings on his land and are waiting for the agreement to be signed. The old gate will be replaced to maintain security and RN confirmed that the existing lock could be retained. No pontoons are planned to be installed at this location as they would encroach too far into the navigation. BW have applied for planning permission to restore the hard edge and install rise and falls. RN said he was happy to consider restricting these moorings to no overnight staying. Concerns were raised regarding the mooring of narrow boats at this location, RN said the turning circle would not be affected.

RN said that the only visitor moorings at Torksey were a mile from the facilities and that's why BW were keen to install some additional moorings closer to the lock. BW would need to consider the water point accessibility at the site of the new finger moorings near the pump out. Arrangements will be made for the plans to be displayed in the visitor centre for members of the user group to see.

Funding for the above work has been provided by the LWP and no additional funding has been allocated for additional electricity at this time.

Fiskerton – Due to the location of the ramp there is restricted access to a whole pontoon at Fiskerton. BW were asked if this couldn't have been changed and access allowed at both sides of the pontoons. MO reported that the EA would not allow this at Fiskerton. They are consulted each time new moorings are installed and the position of the pontoons will vary depending on the profile of the navigation.

Rev Perry mentioned that badly moored boats also restricts space and asked BW to consider erecting signs asking boaters to tie up considerately. RN replied that he was not in favour of more signage and suggested that Towpath Talk or the TBA could help advertise boating etiquette in addition to the clubs.

j) **Update on Torksey slipway plans** (Mr Rogers) – RN informed the meeting that the LWP had granted £42k for the provision of a slipway on the F&W. BW had looked at all the locations and came to the conclusion that Torksey was the only available opportunity. This would be for trailer boats only. He would not be recommending Lincoln, due to the state of the access road there. He is aware of concerns about using Torksey, as there are issues about gaining access from the main road, car parking and creating a slipway next to a busy lock. Dave Carnell said that a slipway for narrow boats would be preferred.

k) **Public use of boaters car park at Torksey** (Mr Rogers) – Mr Rogers asked if the grassed car park was going to be unlocked and open to the public. RN confirmed that BW weren't actively looking to do this at the moment but may be done in the future. He acknowledged that non payment of the parking fee was a problem but it is not the lock keepers priority to enforce this.

6) Any other business

- a) **Speed limit signs** – Nicholas May (Lincoln Swan Society) asked if there were any plans for putting up speed limit signs near to the Brayford Pool as he is very concerned about the swans safety in that area. There is a 3mph speed limit sign near Lincoln moorings, RN said that there were no current plans for additional signs although he would review this need when budgeting for the General Works Programme. He asked for sightings of speeding boats to be passed to Allan Linley.
- b) **Signage** – Rev Perry asked if it was possible to have some consistency of signage. Some signs are in miles, some are in kilometres. RN said that although he acknowledged the comment, it would be a massive task to change all the signs across the network and would not be possible.
- c) **Additional moorings** – Janet Reynolds (LBC) asked about additional moorings. There is no space available at Torksey or Bardney when visiting at weekends. MO said that the additional moorings at Bardney would be completed by the end of November. RN added that mooring availability is a big problem nationally, not just in the East Midlands. BW are aware of the shortage and will continue to look for opportunities to install new moorings, but issues such as land ownership restrict the development of new sites - particularly on the F&W and Trent.
- d) **Belle Isle Marina** – Gregg Spriggs (Belle Isle Marina) said he was awaiting a price for dredging at the moorings there. BW can provide a cost for this but are currently unable to provide the manpower. If Mark Owen is unable to provide costing by mid November, Darren Smith or John Hallam should be contacted.
- e) **Turning point** – Theresa Thompson (RBOA) said that it is very difficult to turn at the turning point near the A57 bridge (near Burton Waters) and asked if it could be dredged. RN said that BW would check into their responsibility for dredging at this particular location and could enter into the works programme if required.
- f) **Torksey best kept lock award** – Dave Carnell (IWA) mentioned that he had heard that Torksey had won the award. RN confirmed that Torksey had won the national competition and Robin Evans, BW Chief Executive, had visited today to present the award. It was not a BW judged competition.
- g) **Lower Witham User Group** – Rev Perry asked about splitting the F&W user group into 2 separate meetings. RN said that he preferred not to do this as there are already several user groups throughout the region. As Torksey has featured largely on the agenda this time he may need to discuss these issues separately with the Torksey users before these meetings.
- h) **Boston lock keeping times** – Rev Perry and Jonathan Franklin mentioned they had problems with bookings and contacting the lock keeper at Boston. RN asked to be told direct if users were not getting the service they expected. He will publish review the booking procedure and publish it on the notice boards at Torksey and Lincoln when finalised.
- i) **Broken lock at Torksey moorings** – Ray Rogers (TYC) said that the access gate to the bank area off the extended linear moorings at Torksey will not open as the key is broken in the lock. Mark Owen will investigate.

j) **New marina** – Ray Rogers asked if BW were aware of plans for a new marina beyond the linear at Torksey. RN replied that he had not heard of anything but would check with the Estates Dept.

k) **Bookings at Torksey** – RN confirmed that Torksey will take bookings for winter locking requests between 7am-9am and 3pm-4pm.

l) **Trafalgar Day** – Dave Carnell asked if BW were aware of ‘Trafalgar Day’ being held at Lincoln on 22 October. MO said that BW do know about this event and apart from producing a restriction notice and putting in the pan for the fireworks, will not be involved.

m) **Suggestions from users** - RN added that Caroline Killeavy, British Waterways General Manager, had asked him to mention that users are encouraged to submit their requests and ideas for improvements in writing, as this helps to support future bids and funding.

7) Date and time of next meeting

RN thanked the members for attending and closed the meeting. The date for next years meeting will be arranged at a later stage. BW were thanked for their time.