

YORKSHIRE WATERWAYS:
Notes from the User Group Meeting

Date: Wednesday 14th March 2007

Time: 7:00 – 9:30pm

Venue: Fearn's Wharf, Leeds

ATTENDEES	REPRESENTING	ATTENDEES	REPRESENTING
David Allen	Bramwith Moorings	Ian Barton	Fulford Reach Moorers
Steve Blakeman	New Business Venture	Barbara Bradburn	Silsden Boats
Richard Bradburn	Silsden Boats	Lena Brown	Thorne Cruising Club
Terry Brown	Thorne Cruising Club & The Ethel Trust	Jennifer Clarice	Sheffield
John Clarice	Sheffield	Ian Clarke	Pennine Cruisers
Lee Davidson	West Riding Ramblers Association	Sue Day	Horseboating Society
Mr Fielding	IWA	Andy Gill	Stickleback Cafe
Alfe Gillitoor	Riverview	John Gregory	Snaygill Boats
Liz Gregory	Snaygill Boats	Chris Hawkesworth	British Canoe Union
Mr Hawsley		Mr Healey	Cyclist Touring Club
Derek Hitchcock	RMBC Ripon	Dave Hobson	South Yorkshire Boat Club
Alan Hodkinson	AWCC	Raymond Howe	York Marina
S Jeffreys	Leeds & District Society of Anglers	David Lowe	CBOA/HNBOC/Humber Barges
Marion Marsh	Stainforth Waterside Regeneration Group	Roger Marsh	Stainforth Waterside Regeneration Group
Tony Martin	IWA	Ian Moore	West Riding IWA
Keith Noble	Huddersfield Canal Society	Derek Pegg	South Pennine Boat Club
Terry Pound	AWCC	A. Ritchie	YMYC
Mr Robinson	Craven Cruising Club	Mrs Robinson	Craven Cruising Club
Carole Sampson	NABO	Dave Scott	Adsetts Canal Project
Graham Scott	White Rose Boat Club	Peter Scott	West Riding IWA

ATTENDEES	REPRESENTING	ATTENDEES	REPRESENTING
Dave Shaw	Rotherham & Sheffield Canal Association	Bronwen Shooter	SYBC
Colin Snowdon	Rodley Boat Centre	John Snowdon	Rodley Boat Centre
Nigel Stevens	Shire Cruisers	Susan Stevens	Shire Cruisers
Keith Sykes	Huddersfield Canal Society	Norman Taylor	British Canoeing
David Throup	Riverview	P. Waddington	Goole Boathouse
Ken Wild	AWCC NE Region	Glynn Williams	South Pennine Boat Club
BW YORKS ATTENDEES	TITLE	BW YORKS ATTENDEES	TITLE
Karen Arney	Business Support Team	Janet Baverstock	Business Development Manager
Louise Bone	Works Planner	David Crane	Acting Customer Operations Manager
Andy Featherby	Asset Engineer	Kevin Fisher	Leisure Business Manager
Victoria Hare	Business Support Team	Fred Hartley	Acting Asset and Programme Manager
Jonathan Hart-Woods	Heritage and Environment Manager	Alex Holt	Asset Engineer
Josie Madden	Asset Engineer	Laurence Morgan	General Manager
Rob Taylor	Moorings Officer	Martin Walton	Operations Supervisor – Construction/Water Control/Customer Operations
APOLOGIES		APOLOGIES	
Roger Brook	IWA	Mr Fuller	Linton Lock Leisureways
Janet Rinkcavage	Tinsley Boat Club	Eric Taylor	TBA/Ripon Motor Boat Club

Item	Raised By	Meeting Note	Action By
1.1	LM	<p>Format of the evening's meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Items raised by customers in advance of the meeting have been answered on the distributed Q&A sheet (see Appendix A). In addition, a general update newsletter has been published (see Appendix B). There was general agreement that these communications were useful and should form part of future UGMs. - Further clarification on any of the questions submitted, plus questions received after the closing deadline and any new items can be covered within the break-out workshops, or at the end of the meeting under Any Other Business. 	
1.2	KW	<p>Item raised: Which email address should be used to contact BW Yorkshire with UGM agenda items?</p> <p>Response: LM confirmed that agenda items should be sent to enquiries.yorkshire@britishwaterways.co.uk This is also the best address to use for general enquiries.</p>	
2.0	LM	<p>Notification of three emergency closures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collapsed gate on Pocklington Canal at East Cottingley. Investigation under way (as per recent stoppage notice). 2. Hirst Swing Bridge Stoppage on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. 3. Loss of material on Aire & Calder – piles moved. Loss of water, erosion. Emergency clay works in progress at Pollington. 	
3.0	LM	<p>Defra funding update</p> <p>The grant for 2007/08 is fixed at £55m.</p> <p>Comprehensive spending review – 2008/2011, a decision will be made later in 2007.</p> <p>At this moment in time we cannot predict full future impact on the Yorkshire Region.</p>	
4.0	DC	<p>Customer Operations – Functional Teams</p> <p>DC outlined the new structure of the Customer Operations Team from April 2007 and the move to organisation of maintenance work by functional teams. See Appendix C for further details.</p> <p>A copy of the new organisation structure for the Yorkshire Business Unit was circulated. CS requested that this be attached to the meeting notes with some explanation of roles/responsibilities for the different teams. See Appendix D.</p>	

Item	Raised By	Meeting Note	Action By
5.0		Any other business	
5.1		In response to a rumour that British Waterways will be changing its name and company logo. Laurence reminded the audience that this had been reported in <i>April's</i> Waterways World.	
5.2	LM	<p>Lm was concerned to note that some customers had reported not receiving information about the spring UGM and apologised for any inconvenience this had caused. LM requested that BW be kept up-to-date with information regarding change of contact details from user group representatives, which should be sent to the general email address enquiries.yorkshire@britishwaterways.co.uk In future, all communications regarding Yorkshire Waterways' user group meetings will be via our web site which is: www.britishwaterways.co.uk/accountability/local_and_national_meetings/yorkshire.html</p> <p>This site will include previous meeting notes, updates on the organisation, newsletters and agenda for future meetings. It was generally agreed that this would be a welcome improvement and was an efficient way of working.</p>	
5.3	GS	<p>Issue raised: Shortage of long term moorings, particularly at Kings Road.</p> <p>Action: BW is actively encouraging the development of new marinas to address the shortage of moorings across the network. RT will review the mooring site at Kings Road to see if the water space can be used more effectively.</p>	RT
5.4	IM	<p>Issue raised: What is happening regarding the development of towpath routes for Leeds & Liverpool, Huddersfield Narrow and Aire & Calder?</p> <p>Response: Leeds is an extremely important destination for BW and recent contacts suggest that the Local Authority want to work more closely on these issues in future. However, BW does not own all of the land along these routes and extensive negotiation would have to take place with the relevant Local Authorities.</p>	
5.5	IC	<p>Issue raised: What plans are there for towpath improvements in Skipton? Will BW involve its customers in the development of these plans and in the specifications for any improvements?</p> <p>Action: The Business Development Team is currently working with a number of organisations who may be prepared to assist with the funding of towpath improvements to improve sustainable and safe transport links with the town centre and developments on the fringes of the town. We are in the early stages of these talks; however we will want to involve representatives from our user groups as plans start to crystallise.</p>	

Item	Raised By	Meeting Note	Action By
6.0	CS	<p>Issue raised: UGM format – what improvements/changes would the group like to see for future meetings?</p> <p>The venue/facilities and the break-out group format were felt to have been useful. Customers valued the preparation of (and circulation of) answers to agenda items in advance of the meeting, freeing up time to tackle the bigger, strategic issues. The newsletter update was also welcomed.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about the ability to attend all of the break-out groups and whether important points raised in individual workshops would be missed if a customer was unable to attend each workshop. It was confirmed that notes would be provided for all of the break-out workshops, which would pick up the key points raised.</p> <p>The general session could be too big to manage: could the room be laid out differently to improve the acoustics during the main session?</p> <p>Action: BW to take on board points raised when planning the autumn 2007 meeting. Customers are encouraged to raise day-to-day, local issues direct with the relevant staff so that any problems can be resolved as promptly as possible.</p>	
7.0		<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The autumn user group meeting will be held on Wednesday 17th October 2007 at Fearn's Wharf, Leeds.</p>	

EAST RIDING BREAK-OUT GROUP			
Item	Raised By	Meeting Note	Action By
ER 1.0		<p>Issue raised: Shift System on Tinsley Flight</p> <p>Customers were asked their views on advance bookings (giving 24 hours notice) and change of hours on assisted passage through Tinsley Flight. It was explained that, as these locks can be difficult to operate and due to a history of pounds being emptied when customers operate the locks themselves, self-operation by customers is not considered to be possible.</p> <p>Action: There was general agreement that the lock could be manned 08:00 – 16:00, unless a booking is received with at least 24 hours notice for passage outside these hours.</p>	
ER 2.0		<p>Issue raised: Are staff at Keadby Lock trained in the use of marine band radio?</p> <p>Concerns was expressed that there is sometimes no answer from BW staff to customer calls via marine band radio. MM recommended the training provided by Associated British Ports.</p> <p>Action: DC confirmed that staff have been trained. Particular attention will be paid to this issue over the coming months to monitor and resolve any reports of poor customer service.</p>	DC
ER 3.0		<p>Issue raised: Lock maintenance at Keadby Lock</p> <p>GS noted that, since completion of the mechanisation scheme, the Keadby Lock experience has been significantly improved. A request was made for the installation of mooring hooks on the Trent side of the lock, to hold locks before entering the lock.</p> <p>Response: DC reconfirmed that this land is not in BW ownership therefore BW is not able to install rings here.</p>	
ER 4.0 ER 4.1 ER 4.2		<p>Issue raised: Medge Hall swing bridge</p> <p>An update on progress with repairs was requested, and a query raised about what assistance was available for infirm boaters who have problems operating the bridge.</p> <p>Actions: The bridge is to be lifted up and a new pintle installed. This work is programmed to begin in November 2007. BW will investigate whether it would be possible for the roving lock-keepers to assist customers who have problems with the bridge in the short term. Regarding anti-social behaviour, this should be reported to the police in the first instance and then to BW, using the Visitor Incident Report Forms which are available from the BW web site. Please include the police's crime incident reference number on reports to these report forms.</p> <p>Issue raised: Customers have experienced problems with anti-social behaviour from local youths at this bridge and asked what could be done about this.</p> <p>Action: Anti-social behaviour should be reported to the police in the first instance and then to BW, using the Visitor Incident Report Forms which are available from the BW web site. Please include the police's crime incident reference number on reports to these report forms.</p>	DC

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Item	Raised By	Meeting Note	Action By
ER 5.0	MM/GS	<p>Issue raised: Emergency services</p> <p>Concerns were raised that that the emergency services may experience problems finding sites on the BW network.</p> <p>Action: DC confirmed that BW Yorkshire's emergency plans include postcodes and grid references for our structures. These plans have been issued to the emergency services. It was agreed that this emergency list will be posted on the Yorkshire area of the BW web site. DC to look again at the possibility and available resources for signing structures with grid reference information.</p>	DC
6.0		<p>Issue raised: Victoria Quays – problems with fish theft and drunken anglers</p> <p>Action: Fish theft and drunk/disorderly behaviour should be reported to the police in the first instance and then to BW, using the Visitor Incident Report Forms which are available from the BW web site. Please include the police's crime incident reference number on reports to these report forms.</p>	
7.0		<p>Issue raised: Boats mooring on the aqueduct at Stanley Ferry.</p> <p>Action: It was acknowledged that this continues to be a problem, in spite of repeated visits to site to move craft off the aqueduct. BW staff visited the site most recently on 13th March and dealt with two craft illegally moored. In addition, the issue has been highlighted to the operator of Stanley Ferry Marina, who has been reminded that craft should only moor here to use the diesel point, and then move off. BW will continue to monitor the situation closely and deal with offenders.</p>	KF

NORTH RIDING BREAK-OUT GROUP			
Agenda Item	Raised By	Meeting Note	Action By
NR 1.0	MW	<p>Issue raised: Winter lock operations (November – March)</p> <p>For efficiency of operations, BW proposed that the locks at Selby and Naburn would not be staffed every day throughout the winter. Instead, customers would be asked to book passage at least 24 hours in advance and BW would then arrange for a lock-keeper to be on duty at the appropriate time. This would release the lock-keepers to undertake additional maintenance work during the winter season.</p> <p>Action: There was general acceptance of this proposal, provided it is restricted to the winter period only. BW will trial the new arrangement during winter 2007/8. Instructions for the new arrangements for winter passages through Selby and Naburn locks to be published as soon as possible.</p>	MW
NR 2.0		<p>Issue raised: Is there any work scheduled for Linton lock?</p> <p>Response: No work is scheduled at present. Surveys are conducted on a regular basis, which have not shown any further movement. BW</p>	

NORTH RIDING BREAK-OUT GROUP			
Agenda Item	Raised By	Meeting Note	Action By
		has considered what practical improvements could be made to improve the operation of this lock, however all solutions to date have not proved practical due to health & safety and/or heritage considerations (the lock is a listed structure).	
NR 3.0	KW	<p>Issue raised: Problems were experienced with weeds on the Selby Canal two years ago - how is BW controlling weed on this canal?</p> <p>Response: MW reported that big improvements have been made with weed control over the last two years. There was an outbreak of blanket weed last year, which was dealt with as promptly as possible.</p>	
NR 4.0	BS	<p>Issue raised: Have there been any further developments with the proposed café boat at York?</p> <p>Response: Andy Gill (AG) of the Stickleback Café updated the group on the proposed operation, which has been resubmitted for planning approval to City of York Council. The Stickleback Café is a 10m x 2.5m, shallow-draft boat which it is proposed will moor up on the moorings near the Museum Gardens between the hours of 07:30 and 18:30. AG recognises that these are popular visitor moorings – and that such moorings are scarce in York – and, within his planning application, has undertaken to move off the moorings should they ever become full and another boat needs the visitor mooring space. Boats will also be able to breast up to the Stickleback Café.</p>	
NR 5.0		<p>Issue raised: Loss of boaters' facilities in Museum Gardens due to proposed restaurant development.</p> <p>Response: BW has responded to the planning department of City of York Council to register an objection to the development, on the grounds of loss of customer facilities. BW has insisted that there should be no loss of facilities for boating customers during or after the development.</p>	
NR 6.0		<p>Issue raised: Clearance of debris from the River Ouse – could the Environment Agency assist?</p> <p>Response: BW has made approaches to the EA in the past for assistance with this issue, particularly relating to clearance of the banks. However, the real problem lies with the riparian landowners, over whom BW had little or no influence. BW will continue, within its available resources, to remove debris from the river on a frequent basis. Customers are encouraged to make reports about debris to the North Yorkshire maintenance team, via the Customer Service line: 0113 281 6860.</p>	
NR 7.0		<p>Issue raised: Installation of gas pipeline under the river near Goole, between Barmby barrage and the mouth of the Aire – will this work necessitate any restrictions?</p> <p>Response: No disruption of passage for BW's boating customers is anticipated.</p>	

WEST RIDING BREAK-OUT GROUP			
Agenda Item	Raised By	Meeting Note	Action By
WR 1.0		<p>Issue raised: Standedge Tunnel through trip operations Due to poor take-up of the through trip at Standedge Tunnel, BW wants to work with customer to develop alternatives and opportunities for more efficient working. A workshop to explore these is being held at Standedge next month. In the short-term, it is proposed that through trips run on Wednesdays and Fridays during the 2007 season, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the 2008 season. This two-day operation will still enable BW to fulfil the same level of demand as in 2006 plus an increase of 42% in demand.</p> <p>KN expressed concerns that a two-day operation would suppress demand and that customers would have trouble when making their bookings and suggested that through trips should operate at weekends.</p> <p>PS suggested that the Weds/Fri operation, combined with the Rochdale Canal's operating schedule, could make it difficult for boaters to navigate the HNC and the Rochdale Canal in a fortnight.</p> <p>KS questioned the need for a chaperone system, linked to the through trips, when this does not happen elsewhere on the navigation and expressed concern over the maintenance programme and water resources.</p> <p>NS recommended that better communication was needed when such changes are proposed and that it would be sensible to make customers aware of the level of investment that BW makes annually in the HNC, perhaps publishing an update which details start/finish dates of projects and progress reports. Also requested that the moorings on the top flight be made available routinely, and their availability properly promoted.</p> <p>Action: All of these points will be considered during April's workshops, which is being attended by representatives from HCS, NABO, IWA, AWCC and BW's hire boat business customers. KF advised that through trip bookings can be made Monday – Friday via the Business Support Team at Leeds on 0113 281 6860.</p>	
WR 2.0	PS	<p>Issue raised: Staffing of Gargarve and Bank Newton.</p> <p>Action: BW has reviewed the staffing levels and it is felt that one lock-keeper is sufficient on this stretch for water control. There was general acceptance by the group that this was the right staffing level.</p>	
WR 3.0		<p>Issue raised: Water resources</p> <p>AH outlined progress with the Winterburn Study: a reduction in the compensation feed for this season has been agreed by the EA. FH advised that flow measuring will commence during the next stoppage at Bank Newton. The canal will need to be closed for the day of the tests & BW suggested Tuesday 17th April 2007 as the possible date. IC requested that Wednesday 18th April be considered for the closure instead, as this would be more convenient for the hire boat operators.</p> <p>Action: BW to plan works for 18th April. (Post meeting update: the works are scheduled for 06:00 – 18:00 on 18th April.)</p>	
WR 4.0	JS	Issue raised: Leeds Canal Basin	
WR 4.1	JS	Concerns about access from Office Lock to River Lock, now that the developers have sealed off one side of the basin. Boaters have found	

WEST RIDING BREAK-OUT GROUP			
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WR 4.2	PS	<p>that they are having to take the nose end of their boat in and climb off at River Lock.</p> <p>Response: There are moorings available opposite the development and Isis are also making moorings available adjacent to the bridge on the development side itself. Boating customers need to moor up at one of these moorings and walk round to River Lock during the course of the development. It is acknowledged that this does inconvenience boaters and BW and ISIS do apologise for this. In the longer term, as part of the two year redevelopment of Granary Wharf and following consultation with British Waterways and representatives from our user groups, ISIS will be restoring the docks and creating six new visitor moorings within the canal basin. The restored docks will give British Waterways the ability to run educational events within the public realm and will be available for use for boat inspections and minor repairs. They may also have some use by commercial boats.</p> <p>Further information about the development can be found at www.granarywharf.co.uk</p> <p>Issue raised: Where can customers moor in the area?</p> <p>Action: Visitor moorings are still available in Clarence Dock. Representatives from our user groups have also been advising British Waterways on its plans for the development of the water space at Clarence Dock, which is scheduled for later this year. It is envisaged that the three docks will provide a mix of moorings: residential, permanent, commercial and visitor. The plan provides for around 44 moorings, approximately nine of which will be visitor moorings adjacent to the Royal Armouries. In the short term, BW/ISIS to provide better signage advising boating customers of available visitor moorings in Leeds.</p>	KF
WR 4.3	SS	<p>Issue raised: Provision of information for hire boat operators.</p> <p>Action: BW to ensure hire boat operators are kept up-to-date with Leeds mooring information, covering where the current visitor moorings are and where customers should moor during times of flood.</p>	KF
WR 5.0	SS	<p>Issue raised: Hirst Swing Bridge – will the navigation be opened for short periods to enable boating customers to pass?</p> <p>Action: BW staff will be on site between 11:00 and 13:00 daily until further notice to enable boats to navigate through the bridge hole. (Post meeting update: The canal was fully reopened on 30th March 2007. The bridge has been swung into the ‘canal open’ position. Work is progressing on a replacement for the bridge: in the meantime, residents on the north side of the canal have been provided with an alternative access route.)</p>	DC

Appendices:

Appendix A – Q&A sheet

Appendix B – Update newsletter

Appendix C – Customer Operations: Functional Teams

Appendix D – Yorkshire Waterways Organisation Chart