
British Waterways Scotland Group

Minutes of Meeting Held on Thursday 4 March 2004 @ 1000 hours

In The Parish Halls, 266 George Street, Glasgow

Present: Susan Achmatowicz
Campbell Christie (Chairman)
Ian Darling
Professor George Fleming
George Greener
Jane Karwoski
Kenneth MacKenzie
Rod Michie
Sandra Purves
Stewart Sim
James Simpson
Jim Stirling

In Attendance: Richard Millar, Manager, Lowland Canals; Nicola Christie, Legal & Corporate Affairs; & Jonathan Bryant, Commercial Manager, Scotland

Patricia Rettie (Minutes)

Minute	Subject	Action
	The Chairman, Campbell Christie, opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance.	
SG 97	Apologies There were no apologies.	
SG 98	Minutes of Previous Meeting Jim Simpson referred to Item SG 89, page 5, paragraph 8, which states that " <i>Jim Simpson said that we are in great danger etc.</i> " It was agreed that this was Jim Stirling.	
SG 99	Matters Arising Regarding the work carried out in the Highlands by Beatrice Clark with the communities along the Caledonian Canal and in particular the roll-out of the BW Wild Over Water initiative. Jim reported that Beatrice has now left British Waterways and has moved to Shetland, where she is to be married. Her husband to be is the Deputy Harbour	

	<p>Master for Lerwick Port Authority. We thank Beatrice for her contribution to British Waterways through her work with the Highland communities.</p> <p>However, a new approach is being taken to this work. Discussions are ongoing with The Waterways Trust (TWT) in Scotland re working with them to provide opportunities for young people and children, both on the water and land based activities along the canals, and also the delivery in Scotland of educational programmes. A proposal for working with us in the Highlands is awaited. A new Customer Service Manager has been appointed for the Caledonian Canal, once in place we will look again at the broader agenda.</p> <p>CC stated that this should be kept on future agendas.</p> <p>GG informed the Group that John Martin was about to retire from the Scottish Executive. GG suggested that some of the Group members should meet his successor on an informal basis and CC agreed to arrange this.</p> <p>KMcK made the point that it was important to acknowledge John Martin's contribution to British Waterways. GG added that he has also made a positive contribution to British Waterways south of the border.</p> <p>CC suggested that a proper farewell dinner should be arranged.</p> <p>Note: Subsequent to this meeting we have been informed by the Scottish Executive that John Martin's successor will be John Ewing, who takes up his post as Head of Transport Group from 13 April 2004.</p> <p>Items SG 89; 90 & 91 will be covered as per the agenda.</p> <p>At Item 92 Jim Simpson had asked how the timing of mooring price increases would fit with BWSG meetings. JS advised that there would be no change for this financial from last year, therefore, BW would not be sending out any notices to customers, but when there is to be a change customers and BWSG would be advised.</p> <p>In response to ID's question on whether BW would advise customers of the outcome of a review at the end of the year, JS confirmed that they would be advised in writing.</p> <p>Item SG 92 section on Caledonian Canal Commercial Operators review of fees will be discussed under Item 103, later.</p> <p>Item SG 93 re the Kirkintilloch Initiative. BW has agreed with the Kirkintilloch Initiative to sell them the land, but there is nothing further to report at this stage.</p> <p>SG 95 The report on Openness and Accountability has been issued to the Group.</p>	<p>Action JS</p> <p>Action CC & PR</p> <p>Action CC & PR</p>
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<p>SG 100</p>	<p>Scottish Business Plan</p> <p>Following discussion on the Business Plan with the Group at the BWSG meeting held in November 2003, Jim Stirling presented a paper which is an indicative first cut of the direction of the Scottish Business Plan. Jim made the point that this is the follow on to the work which was done with the Scottish Executive in 2002 on the overall funding requirement. He also stressed that this is the latest position, but it is not yet finalised as it will go before the BW Board when it meets later this month.</p> <p>Jim stated that British Waterways still believes it is essential that we maintain the dialogue with the Scottish Executive on overall funding requirements. Jim also made reference to the welcome additional grant money that the Scottish Executive has provided, £2 million in September 2003 and a further £2.2 million in late February of this year. This money has been allocated to improve operations and services and for arrears and backlog works.</p> <p>There has recently been a visit to the Caledonian Canal, by representatives of the Scottish Executive to view the works being undertaken at Muirtown Locks, as a result of some of the additional grant money and Nicol Stephen MSP, Minister for Transport intends to visit these works on 22 March.</p> <p>CC made the point that whilst the value of the additional grant is greatly appreciated, it is desirable for this to become part of the total funding in order to avoid the difficulties of procurement that arise from ad hoc funding late in the year.</p> <p>CC requested Business Plan and funding issues to remain on future agendas.</p>	<p>PR to arrange for BWSG representation on 22 March</p>
<p>SG 101</p>	<p>Lowland Canals – The Year Ahead</p> <p>Richard Millar gave a presentation on the year ahead for the Lowland Canals.</p> <p>He began with what had been achieved last year and showed how the business has been building up over the year and the different types of boats now using the Lowland Canals.</p> <p>The perception has been that the Forth & Clyde and Union Canals could not accommodate bigger boats and BW is working to change this.</p> <p>The Scottish Boat Show held at The Falkirk Wheel in August of last year resulted in some 25,000 people visiting the site over that weekend and the exhibitors sold £250,000 of boats at the show and £500,000 since then. RM went on to explain how business development is increasing, hire boat numbers are increasing. There were 22 weeks of bookings last summer. Black Prince and Capercaillie Cruisers have come to the Lowland canals and their presence has had an effect on the canals showing people that there</p>	

	<p>is increased activity.</p> <p>The Canal Societies took in excess of 30,000 people on trips last year. There are between 1500 and 2000 people paying membership to Canal Societies.</p> <p>GG cautioned that in line with BW's policy on charity organisations, we should be working with Robin Evans to ensure we uphold this. Community involvement is growing on the canals. Security is improving with increased police presence in the form of police cyclists on the towpaths and a police boat in the Maryhill area. And increased CCTV coverage.</p> <p>In line with the Nodal Strategy, residential developments are on the increase.</p> <p>There were 11 million visits to the towpaths over the last year, these include walkers cyclists and fishermen.</p> <p>New facilities blocks are being built as a result of the additional grant from the Scottish Executive.</p> <p>RM also made reference to the Edinburgh Quay development and the importance of ensuring that the waterspace is used and kept active.</p> <p>The number of moorings on the canal has increased and there is at present a waiting list of around 100 people who want a mooring.</p> <p>There will be another Scottish Boat Show at The Falkirk Wheel from 13 to 15 August this year and there is already a great deal of interest from exhibitors wanting to take space at the show.</p> <p>At The Boat Show it is intended to launch a leisure puffer, which has been specially built for the canals by the Ardmaleish Boat Yard on Bute.</p> <p>Scottish Enterprise are working up a proposal for a project called Enterprise Island. They will invite entrepreneurs to put forward ideas and select perhaps 10 to 15 of these ideas and give coaching and assistance where possible.</p> <p>The Millennium Link Barge will be used by Scottish Enterprise as a floating office. As the boat sails up and down the Lowland Canals, anyone interested in finding out about business development can get on board and discuss their interests and get information from Scottish Enterprise on how to develop ideas.</p> <p>BW has an Art Strategy for the canals and community art is being encouraged to get people to view art in different ways. TWT are able to assist with funding for this.</p> <p>Overall RM's presentation provided useful information on the current and future plans for the Lowland Canals and SA commented that it</p>	
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	<p>was good to hear of the increase in the number of towpath users.</p> <p>RM did point out that there is a problem with the increasing numbers of cyclists on the towpaths. RM believes that issuing cycle permits, although free, is useful as they get messages across. SP added that many of the cyclists do not have warning bells and there is also danger, to pedestrians, from the 'high speed' commuter type cyclists.</p> <p>In response to CC asking if there is a 'best practice', SS said that similar problems exist in other areas. Where you improve the surface, You increase the speed at which people will travel, but barriers have been put up, at which cyclists must dismount and these help to deter motor bikes, but they do cause problems for wheelchair users.</p> <p>SP made the point that people generally like the canals and want to know how to get a boat on to them and that there is high a demand for more moorings. SP is aware that there is a lot of interest in the Edinburgh area and suggests getting the Council involved.</p> <p>Jim Simpson asked for an update on additional trip boats for The Falkirk Wheel and JB responded that one is due for delivery on 30 April and another by 4 June. It was suggested that there could be public participation in the naming of these boats.</p>	
<p>SG 102</p>	<p>Lowland Canals Development Strategy</p> <p>Jim Stirling gave a presentation of the progress of the Lowland Canals Development Strategy. The principal objective of which is to promote a sustainable approach to business opportunities created by the reopening of the Lowland canals and to develop a corridor of commercial activity.</p> <p>The presentation covered sites at Auchinstarry, Bowling Basin, Winchburgh, Glasgow, Falkirk, Grangemouth, Edinburgh, Kirkintilloch, Linlithgow and Ratho. Jim spoke of the range of facilities within the various development sites which include, boat service and sales, cycle hire, facilities blocks, shops, moorings, moor & ride, parking, pubs, restaurants, hotels, point of contact, information signs and an interpretative trail.</p> <p>This presentation was also well received and CC asked if Glasgow development was linked to similar developments in Birmingham and Manchester. Jim responded that it was and that there had been visits to these developments.</p> <p>Some discussion followed on whether the Fountain Brewery site could present an opportunity for BW and Jim asked the Group for ideas on waterspace. SP said that the local Community Council would be keen to see development of waterspace. ID made the point that Edinburgh Planners should be involved and that public policy is</p>	<p>Action JB</p>

	<p>to develop water areas. JS suggested that a sub group should be formed to work up ideas for this area and then present them to Sarah Boyack MSP, who represents Edinburgh Central.</p>	to form sub group
	<p>The Falkirk Wheel Site</p> <p>Jonathan Bryant gave an update on The Falkirk Wheel & Visitor Centre. He informed the Group that there had been 350,000 visitors to the site in 2004/05, with 170,000 boat trips taken.</p> <p>Jonathan went on to explain that BW are looking at ways of improving the visitor experience and building the tourist market. He also spoke of the opportunities for the site around The Falkirk Wheel in line with the Nodal Strategy.</p> <p>CC thanked JB for his presentation and short discussion followed.</p>	
SG 103	<p>Updates</p> <p>Caledonian Canal Commercial Operators Fees</p> <p>Discussions are now nearing completion and a final document is being prepared, in line with BW, nationally. Feedback is awaited from a meeting with APCO, which Jim Stirling and Robin Evans attended.</p> <p>Rod Michie stated that agreement was close with the Charter Operators, which only leaves the Hotel Boat Operators to finalise agreement with.</p> <p>The intention is to introduce the new system from 1 April 2004.</p>	
	<p>The Scottish Canals Steering Committee</p> <p>Nicola Christie reported that significant progress has been made on the new pan-Scotland structure, which will consist of three separate committees. The Scottish Canals Development Committee will meet annually and be chaired by the Minister for Transport. In addition the two Steering Committees for the Lowland Canals and Highland Canals will be set up with project groups to oversee specific projects.</p> <p>A proposal from the Scottish Executive for the membership and remit of the committees and project groups has been received. BW will take the lead in setting up the new structure and will provide secretarial backup.</p> <p>In response to GG asking how often committees would meet, NC said 3 or 4 times a year and GG stated that minutes of these meetings should be circulated to BWSG.</p> <p>CC made the point that the real benefit would be that the major players are brought together on a regular basis, ensuring contributions from all Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Companies along the canal corridor</p>	

	Companies along the canal corridor.	
	<p>Water Framework Directive (WFD)</p> <p>The Water Framework Directive is EU legislation to co ordinate water usage. It aims to promote sustainable water use based on the long-term protection of available water resources by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing deterioration in the ecological status of surface water and groundwater bodies • Protecting, enhancing and restoring all bodies of surface water and groundwater with the aim of achieving good status by 2015. Good status is defined as no more than slight departure from undisturbed natural conditions • Preventing or limiting the input of pollutants to groundwater and reverse any significant and sustained upward trend in the concentration of pollutants in groundwater • Achieving compliance with any relevant standards and objectives for protected areas <p>The Water Environment and Water Services Act 2003 has transposed this important environmental legislation into Scotland. The Scottish Executive is working to develop the secondary legislation that is required to implement the new control regimes expected to be in force by the end of 2005. British Waterways are likely to be designated as a public body with functions that have an impact on the water environment, accordingly British Waterways must ensure that those functions are carried out in compliance with the objectives of the Directive.</p> <p>A consultation paper outlining the secondary legislation is to be circulated in April 2004.</p> <p>The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) as the competent authority in Scotland to develop methodologies and monitor progress of the new control regimes is also starting preparations.</p> <p>GF has made a proposal that all papers on environmental issues are submitted to the BW Board. GF also stressed the importance of BW having input to the consultation process, as the impact on BW could be significant and that Nigel Johnson, BW's Legal Director chairs the BW corporate group. GF also suggested that the BW case study should be presented to the Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA).</p> <p>CC asked if there was a particular Scottish dimension to the WFD. GG replied that the problem is not the European directives, but how they are implemented, but the situation with Scotland and SEPA is a good position to be in.</p> <p>It was agreed that the WFD and all related environmental issues should be moved to BW Board level.</p>	

	<p>BWSG Recruitment</p> <p>CC informed the Group that following the resignation of three of the members due to the demands of their respective organisations. They stepped down having served a total of three years of valuable contributions to British Waterways Scotland through their role in the Group. Advertisements were placed in The Herald, The Scotsman and The Press & Journal in December 2003. This resulted in 31 expressions of interest. A selection panel was formed to shortlist candidates for interview. Campbell Christie, George Greener, Ian Darling & Jim Stirling form the panel and interviews will take place on Friday 19 March 2004. The intention is to have new members in place by the next BWSG meeting scheduled for May.</p>	
	<p>General Update</p> <p>As part of their work with us The Waterways Trust Scotland are holding an event at The Falkirk Wheel on Friday 30 April, called Canalscape. This is a private view of an exhibition of 80 new watercolours of the Lowland and Highland Canals by Professor Richard Demarco, of the new Demarco European Art Foundation.</p> <p>On Tuesday 9 March, there will be a hedge planting event at the Carron Sea Lock on the Forth & Clyde Canal. Jim Stirling will be taking part alongside Jim Johnston, Provost of Falkirk and Michael Connarty MP for Falkirk East.</p>	
SG 104	<p>Issues ahead of the Public Meeting</p> <p>There was a short discussion on current issues on the canals, which may be of interest to parties attending the Public Meeting.</p>	
SG 105	<p>AOB</p> <p>There were no items for discussion under AOB.</p> <p>CC closed the meeting by thanking all for their attendance and contribution and announced that members of the public would now join us for lunch ahead of the open meeting.</p>	
SG106	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The date of the next British Waterways Scotland Group meeting will be 20 May 2004. It will be held offices of Inverness & Nairn Enterprise, The Green House, Beechwood Business Park North, Inverness</p>	