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**British Waterways Scotland  
Scotland Group**

**Continuation of Meeting held on 4 March 2004 at 1300 hours**

**Open to Public & Held in The Parish Halls,**

**266 George Street, Glasgow**

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**Representing British Waterways:** Susan Achmatowicz  
Jonathan Bryant  
Campbell Christie (Chairman)  
Nicola Christie  
Ian Darling  
Professor George Fleming  
George Greener  
Jane Karwoski  
Kenneth MacKenzie  
Rod Michie  
Richard Millar  
Sandra Purves  
Stewart Sim  
James Simpson  
Jim Stirling

Patricia Rettie (Minutes)

**Christopher Breslin – Presentation on Glasgow Canal Regeneration Project**

**Other Attendees: As listed in Appendix 1**

**Introduction & Purpose of Meeting**

Campbell Christie, Chairman of the British Waterways Scotland Group (BWSG), opened the meeting and welcomed all present. CC outlined the purpose of the Public Meeting. He introduced George Greener, Chairman of British Waterways, Jim Stirling, Director, Scotland and Richard Millar, Manager, Lowland Canals.

CC explained that the British Waterways Scotland Group is an advisory group, providing advice to the British Waterways Board and the Scottish Executive and Ministers on waterway issues.

CC then gave an overview of matters discussed during the morning meeting. These included the Scottish Business Plan, plans for the year ahead on the Lowland Canals, the Development Strategy for the Lowland Canals, an update on The Falkirk Wheel and Visitor Centre, the formation of the Scottish Canals Steering Committee, what the Water Framework Directive means to British Waterways and the recruitment of additional members

for the BWSG. Minutes of this meeting will be published on the Scottish Canals website at [www.scottishcanals.co.uk](http://www.scottishcanals.co.uk)

CC then introduced Chris Breslin, Strategic Planner with British Waterways, and informed the meeting that Chris would give a presentation on the Glasgow Canal Regeneration Project, after which there would be discussion and an opportunity for anyone to ask questions on any aspect of the canals they wished.

Chris explained that the development of the project began just over a year ago. His presentation covered recent projects such as environmental improvements, community projects, BW working with the Canal Societies to get people on the water, BW and Glasgow North working together to provide access for canal trainees, where some of those involved have gone on to work with BW and other organisations. Educational programmes involving the local police, police patrols creating a presence, to generate a feeling of safety and security, but not as an enforcement. Together with local events, where everyone can join in.

The presentation also covered the nodal points on the canal identified as being areas for development of business opportunities. The proposal to establish a joint venture company between Glasgow City Council and ISIS, working with British Waterways aiming to regenerate and develop a sustainable mixed use corridor. Together with environmental improvements and involving partners such as Scottish Enterprise Glasgow, local agencies in the form of housing associations, community groups and canal users.

Chris explained that whilst this is an ambitious waterside regeneration project encompassing an overall area of 1,000 acres, it is at the same time a socially responsible investment which will deliver social and environmental benefits whilst achieving acceptable financial returns. The project area covers numerous north Glasgow communities, including Firhill, Westercommon, Hamiltonhill, Maryhill, Lambhill and the reconnection of the Forth & Clyde at Port Dundas, which is next to the busy city centre, providing an opportunity for the development of a major attraction. A haven for boating with recreational facilities and canalside development.

CC thanked Chris for his presentation and acknowledged the contribution from Glasgow City Council. He then opened up the meeting to questions.

**Alan Muir from the Forth & Clyde Canal Society asked about timescales for the Port Dundas re-connection works.**

British Waterways responded that the contract for the works could be awarded around May 2004 for construction of the new channel connecting Port Dundas to Spiers Wharf.

**Bill Purves from the Edinburgh Canal Society spoke of the similarity between the Coventry Canal Basin cut off from the city centre and Port Dundas and asked if it was too late to consider vehicle access as well as pedestrian access.**

Chris Breslin replied that all sites will have road access with parking facilities and made the point that BW have been encouraged to look at other city redevelopments to gain ideas of best practice, but that the car should not be the main rationale in the project. The scale of the project is such that consideration may be given, in the future, to a pedestrian underground passage.

Jim Stirling gave the example of Brindley Place, Birmingham, which has a multi storey car park in the middle of it.

Bill Purves raised the point that if the development is not served by public transport it risks isolation.

Chris Breslin made the point that public transport surrounds the area with the railway to the north, the underground to the south and the bus services being central.

Sandra Purves BWSG member asked how many moorings would be created in the area.

Chris Breslin replied that BW was currently putting together a detailed moorings strategy for the area.

Campbell Christie made the point that this is an exciting development, but it will not happen over night and that this presentation identifies British Waterways' aspirations in this area, now, and in the future.

Alan Muir referred to a cutting from The Herald newspaper from Tuesday 2 March, about the issues surrounding the extension to the M80 being built on the existing A80 route which has raised concerns from residents of Cumbernauld, some of whom would have preferred the extension to have been through the Kelvin Valley. He asked what British Waterways' view was of the route through the valley (i.e. the upgrading of the A80 on the present route).

Jim Stirling responded that British Waterways favours the 'Red Route', which does not encroach on the Kelvin Valley and British Waterways' concern is the environmental impact on the Valley and that British Waterways is on record as supporting the 'Red Route'.

Robin Black, Chairman of the Caledonian Canal Commercial Operators Association asked for an update on the progress of the works at Muirtown Locks.

Jim Stirling stated that the works programme was progressing well and that British Waterways had been able to include more works than they had originally planned in preparation for next year at Dochgarroch and Clachnaharry and there should not be any need to drain the basin again for some time.

Brian McGraw, Development & Regeneration Services, Glasgow City Council stated that the emphasis between partnership with ISIS and BW is on regeneration and that often there is disappointment when these things do not happen overnight. The importance is on money being reinvested in the projects and there needs to be programmed investment in the canal infrastructure and environmental improvements. He feels that this type of approach should be reciprocated by British Waterways.

Jim Stirling explained that in British Waterways all self generated income is reinvested in the Waterways. If a commercial project generates capital, BW protects this commercial capital and does not use it for operational purposes. Otherwise we would eventually end up with no commercial capital from which to generate revenue. However, BW does recognise the need to carry out small scale projects alongside large scale commercial projects and these we fund out of our annual revenues.

George Greener stated that this is why people believe in British Waterways and sit on the BW Board. BW plans on a ten year basis and have a good idea of what its commitments are going to be. This places it in a good position when negotiating funding issues.

Brian McGraw said it was important to recognise that the sum of the small improvements is often what sticks in peoples' minds, not just the big projects.

George Greener agreed and made the point that it is sometimes easier to do the big jobs, whereas it is often more difficult to get the detail of the small jobs correct.

George MacAngus, Forth & Clyde Canal Society asked what is being done at Anniesland.

Richard Millar replied that there is a small facilities block for boaters with CCTV, showers and a small office being built and the purpose of this is to help to encourage boaters to come to Glasgow and stay not just pass through.

George MacAngus asked, since the area is prone to vandalism, would this make it secure?

Richard Millar said that the CCTV will help to alleviate this problem.

George MacAngus also pointed out that there is a problem with seepage contaminating the water in the vicinity of the McLellan Rubber site.

Richard Millar responded that British Waterways are aware of this issue and that the site has now been acquired by Bellway Homes who also aware of the problems of the site being contaminated and as part of any development this will be dealt with. The Planning Department are also aware of the situation and British Waterways are negotiating the best possible improvement for the site.

As there were no further questions Campbell Christie thanked everyone for coming along and for their contribution and the points that had been raised.

Campbell informed the meeting that the next British Waterways Scotland Group meeting would be held in Inverness on 20 May 2004. The venue will be the offices of Inverness & Nairn Enterprise, The Green House, Beechwood Business Park North, Inverness, and that he looked forward to seeing those who follow the Group and the local people on that occasion.