

**British Waterways Scotland
Scotland Group**

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 6th February 2003 @ 0930 hours

In The Main Chamber, The City Chambers

Royal Mile, Edinburgh

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: Nigel Bell, Commercial Manager & Richard Millar, Waterway Manager,
Lowland Canals

Patricia Rettie (minutes)

Minute	Subject
	CC welcomed all present to the first meeting of 2003. He welcomed Robin Evans as the recently appointed Chief Executive of British Waterways and introduced the external members of the Group to Robin, Nigel Bell and Richard Millar.
SG 66	Apologies Apologies were given for Ken Collins, SEPA; Neil Butler, UZ Events; Arthur McCourt, Highland Council.
SG 67	Minutes of Previous Meeting Minutes of the meeting held on 30 th October 2002 were agreed.
SG 68	Matters Arising All items under this heading will be covered by Agenda.
SG 69	Lowland Canals Development Strategy – Nigel Bell JS introduced Nigel and explained that he would take the Group through the proposed strategy for a sustainable approach to business development opportunities on the Lowland Canals, which he and his Team are leading, following the successful opening of The Millennium Link.

NB spoke of how consideration has been given to additional land requirements, canal operational requirements and adjoining leisure and recreational needs. He provided an overview of some of the major projects already progressing such as Edinburgh Quay, the Glasgow Joint Venture between BW, ISIS and Glasgow City Council, the Rosebank Distillery mixed use development, the Rosebank corridor of the canal which runs from the Distillery to The Falkirk Wheel and the opportunity for a marina at Auchinstarry. The Auchinstarry development would be ideal for day boats, hire boats and yachts making an ideal stopover point and winter mooring. He also spoke of how the Millennium Link Project creates the potential for a whole range of businesses and activities across the Central Belt of Scotland and of the 10 year Strategy worked up to prevent a fragmented approach. This is a Nodal Strategy containing both large and small nodes, which aims to grow traffic on the canals by encouraging transits, commercial trips, hire boats and private boats, with moorings to suit all budgets, making the canals all things to all people.

It is also planned to have a BW point of contact at every major node and information available to inform customers of other places of interest within easy travel of the various nodes. These nodes will each be a shop window for BW where quality customer service will be provided, as this is critical to the future of the business.

Other examples were given of partnership working: at Kirkintilloch between the public and private sectors where opportunity exists for a marina with business space; the planned development of Firhill Basin, with environmental improvements; working with Local Communities and Local Community Councils to change the culture.

Bowling Harbour, described as the 'gateway from the west' already is a mooring for residential boats and yachts, but has great potential for improvement and development.

On the Union Canal other areas with potential were discussed.

CC thanked NB for his presentation.

ID stated that he felt very encouraged by the proposals presented by NB and is in agreement with the ideas underpinning the strategy. However, he cautioned that returns would have to be monitored, and that it is largely driven towards regeneration and facilities for boaters and the wider public. ID would like to see the equivalent of the Development Strategy for a Water Strategy, and would like to see a paper outlining boating development for the business.

NB explained that approaches are being made in a number of areas to bring different types of boats to the canals in order to demonstrate to potential customers that boating can be very affordable. JS pointed out that Black Prince Hire Boat Company is already in place.

SP stressed the importance of educating people that this is an affordable pursuit and encourage them to own a boat, but that BW must have information available to hire boat customers on where to moor and on transport links, etc. RM stated that this information would be available in the Skippers Guide. JS pointed out that this information is already provided and for those who have access the website has this. He also said it is revised year by year.

CC asked RE if there were any examples of best practice in the south that could be used by Scotland. RE said that there is not an exact parallel, but experience of what works well and how to grow a business and take things forward could be shared through discussion with other waterways. He agrees with partnership

<p>approach.</p> <p>GF agreed that emphasis should be on getting boats and people on the canals, but feels that nodes alone will not fund the canals and greater consideration should be given to freight.</p> <p>NB agreed that freight is important to BW and that discussions with companies are taking place.</p> <p>GG is concerned that there is no node planned at present for Grangemouth and would like further discussion on this. He wishes to know that we are not forgetting or ignoring Grangemouth.</p> <p>SP feels local Councillors would back development in this area and that there are 2 basins with potential for development.</p> <p>GG mentioned the relevance of the River Leven to Bowling, and that Bowling Masterplan should have reference to the Leven.</p> <p>GG asked if BW Scotland has any figures for job creation and total amount going into local economy as this would be useful for CC in his discussions with the Minister.</p> <p>NB explained that the PIEDA Reports produced in 1999 predicted figures that The Millennium Link Project could produce and that we are heading towards this.</p> <p>JS confirmed that the targets are the figures set at the start of the projects, BW and Scottish Enterprise have jointly commissioned PIEDA to update the reports.</p> <p>A monitoring regime is in place. GG to be provided with target figures.</p> <p>GF pointed out that Dumbarton Town Centre is subject of development studies and may lead to canal link to Loch Lomond, suggests BW seek early meeting with relevant parties.</p> <p>NB spoke of Clydeport awareness of site at Bowling and that this is being considered by the Scottish Executive and that he and RM are undertaking the clearing up of the outer harbour. A salvage company has offered, at their expense, to remove old hulls and consideration being given to bringing a steam driven craft, from the Holy Loch, to present as a tourist attraction in the outer harbour.</p> <p>GG drew attention to Peel Holdings relationship and said that all such matters should go through RE.</p> <p>CC would like more information on what is planned for Clydebank area where we already have large numbers of people using the Shopping Centre.</p> <p>He also asked about developments around The Falkirk Wheel and responsibility for development of land surrounding it. NB pointed out that this is a major node over the entire corridor from Rosebank Distillery to The Wheel.</p> <p>SA made the point that for any major commercial operator to take a risk initially, they would want numbers of people visiting the area.</p> <p>RE informed the Group of the meeting he and JS had with Robert Crawford of Scottish Enterprise, where he had shown great interest in the development of</p> <p>The Millennium Link and agreed a prolonged marketing strategy was required</p>
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	<p>on the canal with a package to attract customers.</p> <p>GG encouraged by this good news from Scottish Enterprise, but warned of danger of producing equivalent of motorway service stations and that nodes should not become pit stops, but is interested in seeing specialist services provided at each node.</p> <p>GF made the point that the Development Strategy should also relate to the Crinan and Caledonian Canals.</p> <p>CC wants the Group to be provided with regular updates on development progress and the Clydebank issue to be addressed.</p>
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SG 70

British Waterways Scotland Licence Review – Richard Millar

JS introduced Richard and explained that when The Millennium Link Project was proposed BW had to show that it would be sustainable from a business perspective, and how in our submission to the Millennium Commission in April 1995 BW had to show that prices for licence fees would be in line with other BW canals.

RM's presentation showed that BW currently owns virtually all moorings on Scottish Canals and a policy of an 'all in' licence covering navigation and moorings had been used.

It explained that the greater proportion of non commercial water based income comes from transit craft, i.e. customers using the canals as through passage routes. Regular surveys of customer views, with regard to pricing, were undertaken and each canal priced accordingly.

Throughout the development of The Millennium Link regular meetings were held with the Users where discussion took place on how the licence fees would migrate towards being similar to those on the Highland Canals. Since the recent reopening of the Lowland Canals evidence suggests that there is a need to establish an inland boating community and to attract external investment in moorings.

Hence the recent review which proposes a fee structure splitting licensing and mooring charges. This went out to final User Consultation in early December 2002. The response was mixed.

The aim of the review is to produce a system that is easily understood, which is open and transparent and reflects market rates. Some of the common principles which apply across the British Waterways network are listed below:

- Every boat to be licensed
- A separate charge to be levied for mooring on BW property, the price to reflect facilities available and the nature of the location
- Size of boat and length of cruising water available influence the cost of licence
- A full licence, i.e. the most expensive in UK would allow cruising anywhere on BW network
- Trading Agreement will replace Trading Licences for Commercial Operators.

The new fee structure has the following benefits for craft owners:

- Attractive reciprocal arrangements to encourage movement between different waterways
- A new Scottish Waterway Explorer covering short-term use of all BW waterways in Scotland, England and Wales. This licence includes overnight berthing, and is valid for 30, not necessarily consecutive days
- Free access to Scottish waterways for craft holding a full priced standard 12 month licence for BW canals and rivers in England and Wales
- Discounted fees for transit vessels making repeat visits to the same waterway during a single season
- Increased duration of transit licences to encourage longer stays, with flexible 'add on' day rate
- Licence and berthing fees separated for vessels staying on our waterways for 3 months or longer. A nominal £100 pa licence covers all BWS waterways and includes passage through The Falkirk Wheel

- A flexible 'overnight haven' option to encourage coastal craft to berth safely
- A generous 'Founders' Concession' for boat owners on the Lowland waterways who have licensed a vessel continuously since April 1998.

Included in the presentation were comparisons with costs of other leisure activities and costs related to touring and residential caravans.

A full discussion within the Group took place after the presentation, which included price comparisons. It was agreed that a comprehensive process had been followed, which involved gathering and considering customers' views and potential market comparators, resulting in the new proposed fee structure splitting licensing and mooring charges, for private boaters, and a Trading Agreement to replace existing Trading Licences for Commercial Operators. The proposals had been sent out to User Consultation.

There was separate discussion on the subject of the changes proposed for Commercial Operators, where the current licence fee is based on a rate per metre of boat length, the proposal is to make this charge a percentage of turnover. This has resulted in strong opposition from some of the Operators on the Highland Canals.

Group agreed that BW wished to see these businesses continue on the canal. Group also agreed that businesses should pay a fair price for the service we provide. The quantum of the charge is difficult to assess and may be different for different types of Commercial Operators.

It was concluded that further discussion should take place between the Commercial Operators and BWS with the aim of clarity of costs and business drivers.

<p>SG 71</p>	<p>Update on Scottish Enterprise & Scottish Executive</p> <p>a) RE & JS had a meeting with Robert Crawford. Chief Executive of Scottish Enterprise on 3rd February. This was a good meeting at which Robert Crawford volunteered to spend a half day brainstorming issues with BW and promised support for a prolonged marketing and development campaign.</p> <p>GG will write to Sir Ian Robinson.</p> <p>JS to write to Niall McGilp.</p>
<p>SG 72</p>	<p>General Update from Jim Stirling</p> <p>Due to time constraints update will be covered under matters arising in AOB.</p>
<p>SG 73</p>	<p>Format of British Waterways Scotland Group Meetings Plus Dates</p> <p>JS asked the Group what they felt about changing the format of meetings to extend the lunch to a more formal style, inviting network contacts of the Group. This would then be followed by the Public Meeting.</p> <p>CC feels it means extending the commitment of the members to a full day.</p> <p>ID stated that the main BW Board Meetings where guests are invited to dinner in the evening work very well. However, his experience of inviting guests to lunch works less well due to business pressure on guests and can result in the whole structure falling apart. Therefore, he would not recommend this lunchtime format for Scotland.</p> <p>CC agreed and suggests that consideration be given to an evening meeting, prior to Board meeting, which may be more beneficial.</p> <p>The dates, previously set for further meetings in 2003, were confirmed and agreed.</p>
<p>SG 74</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was agreed that telephone conferences were good for updating members and should continue. • World Canals Conference 2003 will be held in the Edinburgh International Conference Centre from 24th – 26th September. The delegate fee is £250 if booked and paid in advance £300 for later bookings. <p>Cath Cain has been seconded from the North West Region of British Waterways and is working full time on the conference. Cath has been talking to potential sponsors and she and Mark Smith are meeting with one of the major banks</p> <p>JS reminded the Group of the recent Silver Jubilee RTPi Award. BWS will now pull together all awards – which are now numerous – relating to The Millennium Link and The Falkirk Wheel and consider how to make best use of them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J Simpson asked about the Water Framework Directive. JS informed the Group that he and Dr Olivia Lassiere, BWS Environmental Scientist had sent a response to the consultation paper from the Scottish Executive on

	<p>'Rivers, Lochs, Coasts : The Future of Scotland's Waters'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SP asked for an update on the Carmuir's Tunnel works in relation to the reinstatement of the canal. JS stated that BW await Railtrack's proposals and that BW are in constant touch with Railtrack and a daily charge is in place. RE to contact Chairman of NetworkRail to discuss. JS to provide information. • CC suggests all awards presented to BW in relation to the Millennium Link be pulled together and put on display in the Falkirk Visitor Centre.
<p>SG 75</p>	<p>Dates for Future Meetings</p> <p>Thursday 8th May – Fort Augustus Thursday 4th September – Scotland Annual Meeting, Edinburgh Thursday 13th November – Kirkintilloch</p>