

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT OWNERS CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday 20th November 2010
at Library Room, Braunston Memorial Hall, Braunston
starting at 10.00 am

Committee members present were: Phil Prettyman (Chairman), Matt Beamish, Richard Booth, George Boyle, Sue Cawson, David Daines, Sandra Green, Steve Harmer, Mike Harrison, Martin Jiggins, David Lowe, Iain MacTavish, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Alison Smedley and Rupert Smedley. Jim Cook was co-opted on to the committee as Fens Rep. Clair Butler, Margaret Booth and Sarah Hale were in attendance.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Richard Frost and Viv Scragg.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on 18th September 2010 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

3. Chairman's Report

3.1 Phil had attended a BWAf meeting on 14 October 2010 where there was an outline presentation of the proposed New Waterways Charity (NWC). He also attended a further BWAf meeting on 4 November 2010 where there was a more detailed presentation by Robin Evans on latest developments:

- Public Bodies Bill will enable statutory transfer of BW's role to NWC, means that current legislation binding upon BW will be binding upon NWC, eg 1968 Transport Act.
- Charity Commission will be day-to-day regulator of NWC.
- Investment property will be transferred to commercial subsidiary which will be new type of company - Community Interest Company (CIC) – CICs must have community benefit purpose; 'Asset Lock' ensures that any distribution by CIC must go to a charity or other CIC; endowment assets must follow waterways.

Proposed Structure of NWC

- Board of Trustees - 8-12 persons, 2 terms of 3 years, retirement by rotation; appoints Executive, determines policy and strategy
- Council - 30-50 persons nominated by stakeholder groups for 4-yr (?) renewable terms; appoints Trustees, monitors performance, shapes policy, guidance to Trustees, appoints auditors. Meets twice yearly. Chaired by Chair of Trustees
- Nominations Committee - 2 persons from Council, 2 from Trustees plus Chair of Trustees; nominates Trustees for consideration by Council which then votes.
- Local Boards - one for each waterways unit, 8-10 persons, 6 meetings per year; holds local management to account and oversees work of NWC at local level. Advisory role. Chairs of Boards will sit on Council.

Transitional arrangements

- Minister will make initial appointments to Trustees. Initially 7 Trustees - 3 from BWB, 4 new - (this proportion is recommended by NT and Charity Commission)
- Defra will appoint Advisory Panel to assist with appointments
- Shadow Council will be established (process not yet decided) from which a Nominations Committee will be created to make future appointments.

Timeline

- Late 2010 – 'Cause' finalised (ie mission statement)
- Late 2010 – nominations for Trustees finalised
- Early 2011 – head of fundraising recruited
- Early 2011 – new name for NWC selected and brand work to begin
- Early 2011 – 1st phase of govt consultation on NWC shape & governance
- March 2011 – Cause finalised and presented to Trustees
- April 2011 – shadow Council in place
- Autumn 2011 – 2nd phase of govt consultation on Transfer Order (to be signed by Minister)
- April 2012 – NWC goes live
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Other comments from general discussion

- There is a need to influence shadow Advisory Panel on how initial appointments are made to the shadow Council
- Finance – BW does not yet know what money will be available but knows that Defra very keen to get flagship charity off to a good start. But it won't be generous, may be 20% cut (however Defra cuts overall estimated to be 29%). Hope to hear about 4 yr settlement in next few weeks. (Note: if settlement insufficient then Trustees could refuse to accept legal responsibility!)
- Simon Salem will send out a copy of the draft Cause.
- Market research on role for waterways. Interesting results – non-waterways respondents ranked “haven for people” first. BW respondents ranked “heritage” first.
- BW has produced 1st draft of contract for Defra's consideration.
- BW's and Defra's lawyers are trawling through previous legislation to check for inconsistencies.
- Merging with EA navigations – There is a political will to merge, but the financial liability is a stumbling block – NWC does not want to agree taking on major new liabilities without extra funding support. Expecting decision in next 3-4 weeks.
- Scottish govt does not want to go down charity route.

3.2 Phil had also attended a BWA Heritage Group meeting on 20 October 2010. Property – 3 nominees from Heritage Group have had meetings with BW to discuss property development and to visit sites. Not intended to subvert normal consultation process, but to facilitate early exchange of ideas. David Fletcher (South) reported on his meeting. Paul le Blique (Midlands) and Alan Platt (North) are meeting with BW in the next 2 weeks. Boat disposals - sub-group had met BW to offer advice on assessing bids. BW had subsequently made the decisions, but had not informed Heritage Group, similarly no feedback received about the recent on-line auction. It was stated that this was due to commercial confidentiality. This was challenged and were promised full feedback prior to the next meeting. Presentation by Chris Rainger (BW) on lock design and its history. According to this many top gate paddles were added in the 19th C and so may not be 'original'. Nevertheless, it was agreed by the group that where locks had gate paddles they should be replaced. Presentation by Nigel Crowe on embedding heritage aspects. His report 'State of Waterways 2010' is available on Waterscape. A list of heritage buildings at risk has now been circulated and members were invited to indicate how they might be able to assist BW with works and ideas to continue reducing 'heritage at risk' numbers and feed these back to Nigel Crowe. There was a report from Sue Day on horseboating.

3.3 Phil had attended a WUSIG meeting 17 November 2010. There were updates from the subgroups looking at cycling, towpath design and WUSIG protocols. There is little to report on these matters. There is a paper on Licence increase proposals on Waterscape – 1 week left for responses! There are signs of movement on the 'continuous mooring' issue. A test case is at the Bristol courts for a ruling over BW's powers. BW lawyers advise an overstay charging policy and this is planned for implementation (in the SE) by next summer. There is a lot of discussion around stoppage communication as new technology is embedded. The role of the 'Technical Advisory Committees' in the NWC is open for debate. It is probably here that HNBOC could make its biggest impact. (Incidentally, we should plan how we get involved in the Local Boards as well!). We made a strong case for gate paddles (once again) but particularly stressing the non-heritage arguments for their retention (eg traffic density and water retention). Phil thinks this took BW by surprise.

3.4 Marsworth - Richard Booth reported that Aylesbury Vale District Council had had a site meeting and were due to go back to the Development Control Committee this week. The recommendation from the planning officer is that it would be approved subject to modifications. The report in Waterways World that planning permission has already been granted is incorrect.

3.5 Liverpool Boat Show - the Club has been asked to have a presence of historic boats at the Liverpool Boat Show at the beginning of May 2011 and have been offered financial support to enable this happen. Phil now has 18 boats on the list of interested people. The original plan was for 2 convoys of 9 boats. Mike Carter (IWA) will organise the convoys, but no more than 9 boats per convoy. He may be able to do a third convoy. Requests have been received from 2 or 3 members with modern boats. Some additional moorings may be available, which could accommodate historic boats from the first/second convoy (only 10 available in the main site), and possibly some non-historic boats. Historic narrow boats are part of a bigger group of historic boats that David Lowe is involved with, eg L&L short boat, etc. Cabins, etc, need to be on display. Jim McDonald has been speaking to Mike Carter (surveyor) and between them they will do the surveys for a nominal charge and donate the cost to charity. 3 pilots have been arranged. There are insurance issues and boat owners need to know that it will not be a picnic! Mike Carter has

suggested a booking form. Plan B if weather conditions are unsuitable will be to go into Ship Canal and round via Manchester. Phil and David are attending a meeting in Liverpool on Wednesday to progress things further.

4. Secretary's Report

- 4.1 Weil's Disease Leaflet - Alison had drafted some text for a leaflet on Weil's Disease as discussed at the last meeting. This had been circulated to the committee. Useful comments received from Clair Butler's son. Alison had written to Laurence with our good wishes and a copy of the leaflet text. Mike and Val had calculated that they can produce the Weil's disease cards for 5p per card. ie £5.00 per 100 and they brought samples. Everyone agreed they were excellent. It was felt that a quote should be sought from a printer for getting 1000 or 2000 printed so that there would be plenty of copies to give away on the stand, to other groups and museums. Val will get price from the printer. Sarah Hale offered to draft a press release about it to go to the waterways press.
- 4.2 Insurance renewal form from IWA – form passed to Matt Beamish for action.
- 4.3 Alison noted that she had received one nomination so far for the Hemelryk Award and nothing for the Keay Award and asked Phil to mention this to members this afternoon.

5. Treasurer's Report

- 5.1 Matt had circulated a report by email:
The cash book balances are as follows:

Current A/c statement balance (Nat West) as at	31/10/2010	£3,135.40
<i>Errors not yet reimbursed</i>		£61.15
<i>Uncleared cheques including expenses</i>		£468.46
<i>and shop book purchases 8/11/10</i>		£773.77
<i>Current A/C balance</i>		£1,832.02
Savings A/c (Alliance & Leicester) (0.1% interest) as at	01/11/2010	£12,403.15
<i>Total funds at bank</i>		£14,235.17

- 5.2 Matt had followed up the poor level of interest on the deposit account with Alliance and Leicester (now part of Santander). Bank has offered transfer into new deposit account which offers 1% interest. This transfer can be achieved with minimal bureaucracy. Committee agreed that Matt should go ahead with this.
- 5.3 Errors/Fraud. The errors against the account in October 2010 have been reimbursed to the account as of 15/11/2010. A series of letters passed between Matt and NatWest in August regarding the persistent errors. Moving the account may be a long term solution to this issue, but there is no guarantee of stopping the errors, as every current account is open to this type of fraud once a sort code and account number are known. Matt is certain that there has been no loss to the club from this activity, this of course being incumbent on the treasurer to monitor account activity.
- 5.4 Account preparation 2009/10. Matt has informed Dave Turner that due to other commitments it is very unlikely that he will be able to deliver the club's prepared accounts to him for examination before the New Year.
- 5.5 Matt asked for any expenses relating to previous meetings to be sent to him urgently.
- 5.6 The committee were sorry to hear that Matt wished to resign as Treasurer after the AGM and he was thanked for his hard work over the last few years. A new Treasurer needs to be identified and Phil will put an appeal out to members this afternoon.

6. Membership Secretary's Report

- 6.1 David Daines had emailed a report. As at 15th November, 441, including 5 Exchange & 2 Honorary. At time of last meeting 448 inclusive. Of paying members 279 are non SO and 155 are paid by SO. Numbers are down on last meeting, but 1st of July non-renewals are now 'Lapsed'.
- 6.2 The following new members were approved:

Mike and Gill Dutton	N/A	1612 WB
Martin & Aderieke Overheul	[Duke]	1613
Peter Newman	Effingham	1614
Geoff & Gilly Bailey	Crane	1615*

6.3 Martin Overheul has sent £5 to cover additional postage.

7. Newsletter Editor's Report

7.1 Val Roberts had emailed a report. Press date for 2010/4 is 24th Nov.

7.2 Val is still looking for a profile (life story and quirky pic) from each of the new committee members, for our Know Your Committee series. George Boyle, Clair Butler, Richard Frost, Sandra Green, Steve Harmer, Iain MacT. Val suggested taking them in alphabetical order so George Boyle first followed by Clair Butler.

7.3 Val has received lots of really good contributions, but there is not enough room in the magazine. She already has over 40 pages for this 32 page mag and lots of content for future issues. There will be a number of inserts with this issue (Easter Gathering in Ellesmere Port booking form, subscription reminders and Weil's Disease leaflet). It was agreed that, as the newsletter is the most important thing for our members, Val should increase the size to 40 pages (or even more if necessary) even if this means an increase in the postage cost. George suggested that he, and perhaps other members, would be happy to receive it electronically. Agreed that this was a possibility for the future.

7.4 Referring to Malcolm Braine's advert in last NL he has sold items totaling £630.00 from this and sent a cheque for £47.25 being the 7 1/2 % he agreed to pay.

8. Archivist's Report

8.1 Richard reported that he had heard from Margaret Clark, who from time to time meets up with Rosemary Bray and Laura Carter at Braunston, that they (Rosemary and Laura) were concerned at inaccuracies in Tim Coghlan's articles about the Whitlock family. Richard will encourage Margaret to write them up for the newsletter.

8.2 Richard had developed the slide film which was mostly railway photographs. These, and other railway photographs, are to be offered back to the Railway and Historical Society in the hope that they may have found some further canal scenes to swap for them.

8.3 Richard has been developing the boat list and will aim to get something in the first newsletter of 2011 to tell members that the list will be on the website.

8.4 Richard has been looking at content on the website which is useful exercise prior to starting on the main database. Richard has bought a couple of memory sticks to assist in getting info backwards and forwards.

9. Possible new HNBOC Award

It was agreed that discussion on this would be deferred until the January meeting. Alison to put on the agenda.

10. Weaver Collection

There was discussion about what to do with the original prints and slides now that Mike and Val have finished scanning them. It was felt that the archive at Ellesmere Port ought to be the first choice and that a discussion should be had with Cath Turpin. It was also noted that it is important to keep a set of digital copies with a formal archive organisation too. Both these issues, along with the idea of a book, to be discussed at the next meeting. Alison to put on the agenda.

It was noted that Roger Fuller's idea for a book had fallen by the wayside and that he should be invited to the January meeting. Alison to invite him and to put on the agenda.

11. Website

- 11.1 Website stats - the website had 1,528 visitors (who between them made 2,146 visits) in the eight week period from 16 September to 14 November 2010. They spent an average of 4mins 30sec on each visit, and viewed an average of 8.5 pages. The 2,146 visits were predominantly from the UK (1,903) but others were from USA (74), Australia (26), Canada (17), Germany, France and New Zealand (11 each), Netherlands and Russia (10 each) and Switzerland (8). Boat pages continue to attract the most attention.
- 11.2 Website updates – Ros has recently added about 50 photos of boats to the site, and Richard is working his way through the listings (most of which were transferred from the old site) and is updating them from the club's archive. They have so far done the As in the GUCCC section - it is a time-consuming process.
- 11.3 Modern replicas – Ros has started to add photos of modern boats, built to resemble historic narrow boats, on a closed section of the website for reference purposes and suggested making this public. There was discussion about this, and it was felt to be a very grey area in terms of classifying what boats should go on, and the committee felt it was better not to include any non-historic narrow boats. A note could go on the website to say if the boat you are looking for is not on here, it is probably a replica.
- 11.4 Val/Ros will discuss process for putting back issues of the newsletter on the website.

12. Club Shop

- 12.1 Clair reported that she and Iain had taken the club stand to the Whitchurch Boat Canal Festival on the Llangollen Canal over the Weekend of 18th & 19th September where they took £281.44 in sales and donations (57 packs cards, book sales £77.44; new members – Mike & Gill Dutton; sweatshirt £15.00; donations £6).
- 12.2 Clair has dealt with numerous postal orders for books, cards and clothing.
- 12.3 To date the Club has sold 495 packs Christmas cards, only 20 packs Grindley Brook left and no cards from previous years.
- 12.4 At present we have got a large stock of books. This includes the new FMC book (80 copies), the BCN through Time and Shadows on the Water. Clair collected these from Belmonts' warehouse in Derbyshire so got them at the discount where we make a third of cost price. (Unfortunately books can only be rarely collected from there so we do have to carry the stock)
- 12.5 Iain and Clair are still researching new display boards. The lightweight folding ones do not come with legs. As the boards are often erected on damp ground we feel feet are essential. They found two suppliers who do stands with feet. They visited one supplier in Surrey but found they were very difficult to erect plus they advised the stands were put on level ground!
- 12.6 Val asked what had happened about the “On the Cut” – 4 CD sets. Iain and Clair offered to pick this up and Alison will forward them all email correspondence that took place with Steve Jackson and Steve Wood.

13. Area Representative Reports

13.1 London

Sandra Green reported that she had attended a BW User Group Meeting at London Canal Museum on 19th October. The following topics were covered:

- Overstayers - this caused the longest conversation of the night. Audience saying nothing ever changes and its getting worse. BW say they are onto it. They have got 3 more staff in licence evasion and overstaying department. . It has been agreed during Sally Ash mooring consultation that overstay fees if not paid will be logged against next licence. BW will keep records and persistent offenders will not be allowed to renew licence. It was pointed out from the floor that we already have 9% licence evasion in London. Unlicensed boats = 2200 boats in London. (1200 West London, 1000 East & Lea) Maybe overstayers will just turn into unlicensed overstayers?
- Engineering works: Lock Fendering - due to (apparently) large national incidences of boats getting their rear fender and front fenders hung up on gates, BW are fitting a piece of wood between the balance beam and the top of the

actual gate itself, leaving a few inches to allow water to flow over top of gate if needed. Sandra felt that this was ridiculous, unnecessary and unattractive. There was some discussion and those presents agreed it sounded unnecessary but need to see pictures. Works commenced in August at Widewater Lock and are currently waiting consent for listed and scheduled locks. Sue and Phil to follow this up.

- Olympics - a working group has been set up to look at moorings above Old Ford Lock by the main stadium.
- Slough Arm - Has been surveyed but results not yet seen.
- Assignability of moorings – Sandra noted that there is now a notice on waterscape about selling boats on moorings, dated May 2010 but only recently appeared, explaining their new position regarding the sale of boats on moorings on specific sites where moorers have inherited a right to assign their moorings.

13.2 Manchester & Pennine

George reported that he had attended a Manchester and Pennine user group meeting recently. Work has proceeded simultaneously on the reservoirs at Combs and Todbrook, which both serve the summit level of the Peak Forest and Macclesfield canals. This has entailed draining both reservoirs. Work is due to finish by Christmas so we must hope for a wet spring to fill them both before Easter. There was the usual update on enforcement. It does appear that they are ever so slowly cracking down on continuous moorers. The figures show slight percentage drops in offenders and personal observation indicates some movement of persistent offenders and even some going into marinas. There was then a talk about the role of volunteers around the north west including hedgelaying, vegetation clearance and drystone walling. A BW maintenance engineer talked about the replacement of lock gates. Given that grade 1 are the best and grade 5 are dropping to pieces, apparently 32% of our gates are grade 1 and 27% are grade 4 or 5. With a 25 year lifespan they need to replace 37 gates (4%) a year, a figure they are just keeping up with. However, the rather high percentage of gates in grade 4 and 5 means that, as well as replacement, they need to patch some gates until the bulge is eliminated. Of course, this assumes they will continue to have the funding to replace 37 gates a year for the foreseeable future.

The meeting then broke into syndicate groups where once again the issue of blocked bridge holes was raised. George had asked a pre-questions relating to new lift bridge near Fools Nook, piling outside piling, visitor moorings and water point at Macclesfield where signs saying “don’t run your engine” have been put up due to new build houses. It was noted that notices banning moorings are springing up everywhere, eg at Hinckley on the Ashby opposite new housing development. Phil asked for photographic evidence of anything which is an abuse of boaters’ rights so that he and Sue can follow these issue up through WUSIG meetings.

13.3 North East

David Lowe had attended the Autumn BW NE User Group meeting in Leeds on 13th October. The new waterway manager, Jon Horsfall, introduced himself. He is from outside BW, with a background in water engineering. After only a few weeks in the job he seems to have picked up a great deal. He updated us on the 'Third Sector/Big Society' proposals for BW and there was a discussion as to whether EA waterways would deteriorate if they came under the same management. There are major schemes planned for weirs on the Calder & Hebble, bank protection (due to potential collapse) at Woodlesford (A&CN - £1/2 million), and various works on the SYN & NJC including dredging (6000 tonnes). David asked about the reduced and non-statutory headroom at Heck Bridge. British Coal are being asked to pay for restitution which might be raising the bridge or provision of a new one. Upgrades for the SYN and A&C lock equipment is planned / under way. The problem of flood gates on the C&H was discussed at length. A boat can leave a lock, going downstream, with the water level in the 'yellow' and then arrive at the flood gates and find them closed, with nowhere to go. Use of volunteers for lock keeping and other duties was mentioned several times (not in this area, but it is understood that seasonal lock keepers on the L&LC will be reduced in number from next year as it is not cost effective to have a lock keeper at each lock or staircase or flight. This is a luxury not generally enjoyed on any other waterway).

13.4 North Wales & Border

Iain MacTavish attended the Autumn User Forum for this area. Content was on the same lines as the Central Shires report. Nothing more of significance to report other than the matter of no gate paddles on new gates for Hack Green. Hurlleston – Iain had prepared a form for this afternoon for people to fill in according to whether their boat can fit or not through Hurlleston Bottom Lock.

13.5 North West - No report

13.6 South East

Martin Jiggins reported that neither he nor Richard were able to attend the user group meeting at Tring recently but had heard that the issue of overstaying on 14 day moorings was amongst things discussed.

13.7 South Wales & Severn

Richard Frost had emailed a report. He had attended a recent user group meeting and the one issue to report was that BW are looking into the principle of charging for boat access into Sharpness Port (over and above the standard licence fee). Phil had heard that Sharpness costs BW a fortune for a very low amount of use. David Lowe will clarify with John Dodwell to see if it something we should know about and do something about. Unclear whether its use of the lock itself or access into the dock from the canal that will be subject to a charge. Richard recalled that a few years ago there was a specific increase in the licence fee to allow for charges such as Dee Branch, Standedge Tunnel, Anderton Lift, etc. Richard will see if he can find out more.

13.8 West Midlands

Steve Harmer reported that the Dudley Canal Trust has applied for lottery funding for towpath improvements. Chasewater – water is below canal level in the reservoir. From 2012 it will start to be filled but will take until 2013. The cost (electricity bill) of running the pumps was £70,000 just for October. Lapworth gate replacement is being done with special viewing bridge so people can see the works. The diversion of the Worcester & Birmingham still causing issues.

13.9 Central Shires

Rupert and Alison had attended a user group meeting at Rugeley on 12th October and a report had been emailed by Alison. Darren Green, Waterway Manager, spoke about the third sector – lobbying going on by BW, DEFRA, things are changing daily, BW expecting a decision from Government very soon. Lots of things ready in place if green light given. Darren sees it as “Preserving the waterways for the country not saving BW”. Darren talked through, at the request of Sally Ash, the “Autumn national boating brief” which talked about licence enforcement, overstaying moorers, moorings policy, winter moorings and new marinas. Central Shires had a £4.2m plan for the year (50% of which is payroll costs). This enables them to run at 60% of the steady state model. £1.8m spent in first half of the financial year (which is below the £2.1 anticipated, partly due to savings and efficiencies some of which will be reallocated over the next six months. Agreement for money saved in contracting materials to be spent on offside vegetation – due to start soon.

Following the challenge from Vince Moran for all waterway managers to travel all their waterways by boat, Darren so far has only managed 4 trips including 2 on the Caldon and Rugeley to Hopwas on *Skylark*. He is keen to do the rest of it. Central Shires finally has its full complement of supervisors, but are now missing a finance manager and works planner, following recent resignation/secondment to another waterway unit. Works carried out this year include: 130 planned maintenance procedures carried out. 221 notifications (reactive repairs). Dane feeder sluices repaired. Works at Rudyard and Knypersley. 10 unplanned emergency tree works. Tree survey has been undertaken of the full network. Trees are now tagged prior to removal of some trees starting imminently. Embankment clearance is being carried out by contractors at Trentham.

Inspections are being carried out on the “scour effect on structures” following the incident last year in Cumbria. Divers have been checking for scours at all bridges. Nothing found but it will continue to be checked on a regular basis. There are also regular inspections being carried out on embankments particularly where there are residential areas below. Accommodation bridges being damaged by vehicles, eg Redhill Rd Bridge on the Caldon. Occasionally BW are able to get insurance money but often the vehicle is not identified or it takes more time than is worthwhile for the money they get back. Atherstone – Andy Rothen’s yard – owned by BW – is now vacant. Only interest so far is from a local hire company as overflow car parking! Another wharf likely to be lost.

Unregulated vehicle accesses on BW property are being looked at with a view to coming up with practical measures to avoid an accident occurring. Darren’s message was “please can people consult BW before undertaking operations such as loading/unloading boats with heavy goods vehicles at unauthorised locations”. This has arisen following Darren spotting a photo in the Ashby Canal Society magazine of *Archimedes* and *Ara* loading at an unauthorised location with a heavy lorry positioned close to the canal edge on a bank of unknown integrity.

Flycatcher (wooden BCN built pleasure cruiser) – an attempt to raise it failed, been down for 10 months. No plant access. Sounds like a lost cause, hull probably in poor condition. Jonathan Telford, based at Fradley, is happy to meet on site anyone interested in having a look at the boat. Their plan is to tender for the boat to be broken up in situ in November during a stoppage in that pound.

Crime enforcement — all boaters encouraged to report any police matters to a new Waterway Crime Stoppers number which is 01908 302502. Can also text to that number, or report online or using BW visitor incident reports available from BW offices. A dredger has been acquired to be based on the Caldon but they still need to sort out an operator for it.

Since the meeting, in early November, there was almost a breach on the Caldon Canal above Bedford St staircase recently, where contractors working on a development site adjacent to the canal dug away at towpath retaining wall and it collapsed. BW dewatered the pound and it remains dewatered until piling has been carried out along the back edge of the towpath wall. BW hope this will be finished by Christmas.

There is a winding hole in Rugeley where a garden seems to be encroaching into the winding hole by the householders filling it in and putting a jetty out over it. Rupert to raise this with Darren Green.

Etruria Industrial Museum have leased *Lindsay* and *Keppel* from BW for £1 a year each, for 5 years. They will be used to transport and store coal for the steam engine.

13.10 East Midlands

Mike reported that there have been two user group meetings. Mike was unable to get to either but has received reports on them. Nothing earth shattering, reports about volunteers working on the Erewash. *Effingham* has been bought by Peter Newman who intends to rebuild it.

13.11 Fens Rep

Jim Cook reported that he had heard that the link on the Great Ouse between Salters Lode and Denver Sluice is likely to be dredged.

13.12 Kennet & Avon

No report in the absence of a K&A rep. Important to get a rep in this area as BW are using the K&A as a pilot.

14. Boating/Navigation Issues

Sue had circulated a lock gate presentation that was given to a recent BWA meeting. At the WUSIG meeting there was another discussion about gate paddles and what the BW policy is going forward.

The contract for dredging for the next four years has gone to Land and Water and the plan is for £5 million per year going forward. BW believe that by using one dredging contractor they will get better value for money!

The passage through Hurlston Bottom Lock is rather random for Historic Craft. *Hadley*, *Marquis* and *Bootes* have failed. *Bexhill* came down without too much problem. *Belgium* and *Swan* have done return journeys without any problems. Wendy Capelle the local Manager is keen for as many of our club members to attempt to go through Hurlston on their way to the Port at Easter.

BW have done some spot dredging on the Staffs and Worcs between Great Haywood and Atherley. Spot dredging is managed by the local areas, full main line dredging is managed nationally.

Sue intends to try to get hold of a list of lock gates that BW intend replacing next year.

15. Any Other Business

15.1 Martin Jiggins had heard that Parliamentary Waterways Group is to be reinvented.

15.2 Val asked about a speaker for AGM [Post meeting note: after the meeting it was agreed to ask Malcolm Braine and he subsequently agreed].

16. Dates and Venues of Next Meetings

- Saturday 8th January 2011 at Tamworth – Ros and Phil to send out directions
- Saturday 5th March 2011 AGM, Braunston.

The meeting closed at 12.50 pm.

Alison Smedley, Secretary