



## **RICHARD PARRY OPEN BOATER MEETING, ANDERTON BOAT LIFT**

1 APRIL 2014, 1800

Answers by RP unless otherwise stated

**Other CRT contributors** David Baldacchino (DB) M&P Waterway Manager,  
Wendy Capelle (WC), NW&B Waterway Manager  
Duncan Davenport (DD), NW&B Maintenance Manager  
Ian Pankhurst (IP) M&P Principal Waterway Engineer,

Richard introduced the session, thanked everybody for coming and explained the background to the Open Boater meetings. Questions were invited, and answers summarised below:

Alan Witter **Been boating 2 years. Last year was their first extended cruise. Experienced difficulties trying to pump out at Red Bull and Grindley Brook**

Richard Parry If we didn't offer the service, we need to work on this. This year we are going to revisit our customer service standards.

We need to gain your feedback to enable us to fix the things that are broken as quickly as possible.

Alan Witter **It's not just that facilities are broken there are difficulties getting hold of cards. At Red Bull had to travel ½ mile north to a shop to purchase a card.**

David Baldacchino Will discuss directly at the end of this session. (Post meeting, determined that operatives had advised the customer that they had to purchase pump out cards at a third party site. This was not correct. The Waterway will ensure that staff are reminded about where cards can be purchased (at the office, Harecastle Tunnel, and shortly at the Welcome Station), and that there are signs to say this)

Ian Haworth **Just up from here the towpath is sodden and falling apart. If we are not careful a breach could happen again. Easynet cabling is visible in some places.**

**On one occasions where coping stones are coming loose, a work boat arrived and work team, packed stuff in behind the coping stones and left. There was no notification that this work would be taking place and no communication from the work team of what was happening.**

Richard A lot of these are cosmetic problems. Our engineers inspect these



- Parry regularly. Our priorities are driven by risk.
- 10 – 15% of our total tasks are done annually and these we do according to risk.
- We do need a more responsive regime of checking work done
- We are putting more money into the Manchester and Pennine area over the next couple of years as it is acknowledged that there is a specific problem in this area with the legacy of recent restoration schemes that makes the condition generally there worse.
- David Baldacchino The exposed cable will be investigated and appropriate action taken. We are working in much of the length between Anderton and Preston Brook this summer, and large works will take place at Saltersford this winter with the wash walls will be repaired, and around Little Leigh where the aqueduct is.
- Ken Clarke **Continuous Cruising – I have a house but also a boat. There are issues with people buying boats, living on them and not paying their way on the waterways.**
- Simon Greer **Not everybody wants to be in a Marina, some want privacy. Some of us don't want a house.**
- Ken Clarke **The right to cruise isn't an issue. It's about a fairer system. If nobody paid, the Trust would suffer.**
- There is a boat on a 48 hour mooring which has been there 3 years.**
- Continuous cruisers should continuously cruise and not block the canal. We can't stuff the canal full of boat that are not moving.**
- Richard Parry We have attempted to be as clear as possible with the law. We need to be clearer. Make sure we encourage and explain how people can use the waterways together. But also have some form of enforcement. We don't want to get situations where we have to move boats. We have a responsibility to enforce.
- There is a separate issue of congestion in attractive places, whether traffic is moving or not.
- Ron Buckley **The principle of continuous cruising is not a problem. It's those who sit in a place for 6 – 12 months. People on a mooring with theirs haven't paid a penny, I have paid in full for a mooring.**
- Simon Greer **Moorings are too expensive.**
- Ken Clarke **Once the Trust revenue stops, we no longer have a canal.**



Rob Ward Dutton	<p><b>Angling Conflict – I have been a boater for 30 years, last 6 as a continuous cruiser. Mostly this has been a pleasant experience but for the last 3 years has been threatened by local anglers. The boat has been covered in maggots while on a mooring.</b></p> <p><b>Recently 2 anglers were sat on the waterpoint in Northwich town centre preventing boats getting in. They became abusive and the police were called. There are clear no fishing signs here.</b></p>	
Richard Parry	<p>We have positive input from anglers and angling associations. That doesn't mean there isn't the odd exception.</p>	
Rob Ward Dutton	<p><b>This wasn't an odd incident. It is repeated. Threatened physically twice. This has only ever happened in Northwich – there are no problems elsewhere.</b></p>	
Wendy Capelle	<p>Northwich Anglers have their own enforcement, their own bailiffs. They have powers and they should come and stop them.</p>	
Rob Ward Dutton Wendy Capelle	<p><b>Who do we contact.</b></p> <p>Contact our Northwich Office.</p>	
Dave Vickers	<p><b>We have done, we get told there is nothing you can do.</b></p> <p><b>There are keepnets hanging off every mooring ring.</b></p> <p><b>How many police incidents does it take before Northwich Anglers lose their licence.</b></p>	
Richard Parry	<p>We will make sure we have a conversation with Northwich Anglers.</p>	RP
Attendee	<p><b>Slipways – I Keep a boat on a trailer and need to access the network. There is nowhere on the website that says how to go about this</b></p>	
Richard Parry	<p>Take this up along with Helen Hall and take it forward.</p>	RP/HH
Graham Russell	<p><b>Do we have a national restoration policy and where would this be published.</b></p>	
Richard Parry	<p>The Trust are developing more focus and resource into restoration, but a facilitative and supporting role.</p>	
David	<p><b>How do you see the next 12 months.</b></p>	



Fletcher

Richard Parry The last 12 months has been about strategy, transforming places, enriching peoples lives. We need to spend the money where it matters.

We will be thinking about how we work towards the 10 year goal. Make arguments why people should fund us and building on funding.

Prove to the government how we are enriching people, wildlife and the environment.

David Fletcher

**We struggle as boaters. With sharing towpath schemes, poetry carvings etc. There has to be a balance.**

Richard Parry

We strive to listen to the aspirations of boaters. Understand at the poetry is not for everybody but its about trying new things and unlocking new opportunities.

Intrigued that the towpath consultation is not for you.

David Fletcher

**Holes in towpath – no money. Understandably some things don't get to the top of the pile but just to say sorry no money is not good enough. Trying to grow volunteers should be done. If the work is needed the Trust should be able to find the money.**

Richard Parry

This is a problem we do have to solve. With a 200+ year old infrastructure we do have failures. Sometimes we get it wrong, sometimes it's an act of god that we can't help. We can't use the excuse of money but we do have a large volume of work.

The vast majority is looking after the waterway. Through involvement we have the opportunity to change our relationships with people around.

Simon Greer

**It is impossible for the Trust to be friends with everyone. Put boating interests first and everything else will fall into place.**

Richard Parry

I believe we can find a way and we can do that. The canal was created to move boats, but boaters needs don't take priority. We have to offer improvements elsewhere.

We don't lose sight that boaters have the emphasis.

Rob Ward Dutton

**Over the last few years there has been an increase in mink – who do we report this to?**

Richard Parry

We have a dedicate environmental team. Call the national number and report it to our customer services team.



- Attendee **Fishermen, not only here but all over, think the canal was built for them. The Trust encourage them.**
- Richard Parry Anglers have a role to play on the waterways for example they slow down speeding cyclists. Agreed that they do need to share the space when a boat comes along and pull in their rod.
- Attendee **We are the number one users of the waterways. Hire boats struggle with anglers because they can't back up. Anglers are visitors to our environment.**
- Richard Parry The future is about getting communities to come together and use the waterways together.
- We hope that angling clubs would be more responsible.
- Attendee **The Trust don't seem to have many boaters in the organisation so they don't see the problems. If you go up and down the canal you would see the problems. You can't see them sat behind a desk.**
- Richard Parry 120 of our staff have their own boats and many others live canalside. Staff have a job to do but are encouraged to take the time to go boating, either with customers or through other work related issues.
- Attendee **When you phone up they don't understand the problem. How then are they expected to fix it.**
- Attendee **4 times we telephoned them out over a weekend. Within ½ hour they were out and the problem was sorted.**
- Dredging needs to be looked at lock side – stretches of reed beds. How do the Trust prioritise this?**
- Richard Parry We value your feedback. We put these notifications on a priority list. Let us know of problem areas and we can add these to our list. If we don't know, we can't factor it in.
- Tim Leach **Do the Trust publish priority dredging.**
- Richard Parry We should publish these more. We are happy to share this information. We will look at the possibility of creating a boaters update. **RP**
- Attendee **At the Liverpool link there are gangs, it's frightening. Is there any chance of security in the dock?**
- Richard Parry I had not heard of problems here. But will take it away and think about what measures we can look at. **RP**

RP thanked everyone for their time and their feedback and closed the meeting at c.1800.