



## NOTES - NORTH WALES & BORDERS PARTNERSHIP MEETING

<b>Date</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> March 2014
<b>Venue</b>	Northwich
<b>Attendees</b>	Jim Forrester, Wendy Capelle, Helen Paterson, Steve Stamp, Jane Staley, Alan Platt, Gillian Edwards, Chris Koral, Belinda Davenport.
<b>Other Attendees</b>	Julie Sharman, Ian Easby, Sarah Lalieu, Nicola Lewis-Smith, Lesley Beard, Roger Hanbury.
<b>Apologies</b>	Bill Furniss, Andrew Stumpf, Helen Hall

	Action
<p><b>1. Notes of previous meeting/matters arising (Jim Forrester)</b> These were agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Ian Easby to set up a sub-group with Nicky Lister, Gillian Edwards &amp; Belinda Davenport to discuss marketing strategy. IE</li> <li>➢ Wendy to arrange for Nicky Lister to attend meeting in May to provide overview of marketing strategy. WC</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Northwich Town Council – Wendy Capelle to arrange a meeting with David Roberts, Jim Forrester &amp; Jane Staley to discuss town plan. WC</li> <li>• Environment Agency – Wendy met with Simon Bamford (Head of Water, Environment &amp; Project Delivery) to discuss EA proposal of Weaver Navigation being used as part of flood alleviation. No definite proposals have been put forward to date. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Ian Easby to set up a task group with Chris Koral &amp; Nicola Lewis-Smith to discuss development of Weaver Navigation. IE</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Strategic Waterway Plan – this is now close to its last iteration. Draft copies were shown to everyone at meeting. E-copies to be sent to sub-group for final comment by 22 April. WC/SL/NL-S</li> </ul>	
<p><b>2. Declarations of Interest (All)</b> None</p>	
<p><b>3. Interim Waterway Arrangements (Wendy Capelle)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ian Easby will take over as waterway manager from 17<sup>th</sup> April for up to 6 months while Wendy Capelle is seconded to Museums &amp; Attractions. Duncan Davenport will act for Wendy from now until mid-April.</li> <li>• Enterprise team will support Partnership while Wendy is away.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Our Vision &amp; Values (Wendy Capelle)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Our Vision &amp; Values' video was shown to everyone. Julie Sharman to find out if this video can be shown to some external groups. JS</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• C&amp;RT promotional video watched by everyone. It was suggested that it may be beneficial for this to be shown in local cinemas &amp; also that a briefing sheet would be useful to go with the video. Julie Sharman to look into this.</li> <li>• Wendy Capelle to send Helen Paterson a copy of the presentation and internal video on Values</li> </ul>	<p>JS WC</p>
<p><b>5. Operational Update (Wendy Capelle)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health &amp; Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Safety performance continues to be maintained at a good level with over 1000 days without a Riddor/lost time incident.</li> <li>➢ Vehicle trackers – there continues to be a marginal improvement on our speed related performance.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Financial performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Year to date in line with budget.</li> <li>➢ Vehicle costs are higher than expected due to a number of costly repairs.</li> <li>➢ Weaver Bridges maintenance costs are lower than planned this year. This will have a knock on effect on the amount that the waterway can reclaim from Cheshire West &amp; Chester Council. Maintenance agreement payment could therefore be £15k less than planned.</li> <li>➢ Overtime costs will almost certainly exceed forecast due to the amount of flood running that was still required in February and the number of wind- blown trees.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Volunteering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ 14,811 volunteer hours worked since this time last year, which is an increase of over 3000 hours since the last report.</li> <li>➢ Towpath task-forces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chester will focus on works to prepare for the IWA boat festival in June with focus on moorings, painting of welfare facilities &amp; painting of Northgate flight.</li> <li>▪ Audlem will focus on removing leaf litter along the flight &amp; weeding lock quadrants &amp; bridge holes.</li> <li>▪ Ellesmere group focusing on volunteer recruitment over next few months; this should be assisted through a closer partnership with the Meres &amp; Mosses project.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Mid-week groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Adverse weather has resulted in reduced numbers throughout February.</li> <li>➢ Planned work for March includes wash-wall trees @ Stoak, hedge-laying @ Ardleen, hedge planting near Berriew &amp; Wrenbury.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Adoptions – numbers have increased. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Burland PC adoption is active with plans in place to extend activities beyond litter picking.</li> <li>➢ Wirral Autistic Society is also keen to expand the scope of their works.</li> <li>➢ Potential adoptions are being discussed with Alpraham PC and a boaters' community group on the Middlewich Branch.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Partner Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ IWA are undertaking work parties @ Chester in preparation for the Chester boat festival, and also 3 work days are planned @ Wardle Lock in Middlewich to improve the lock side area.</li> <li>➢ Chester Zoo will be providing plants &amp; volunteers to continue the Barberry carpet moth project in April.</li> <li>➢ University of Chester partnership working is improving, with good attendance @ a recent work party.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Training is underway for workboat handling.</li> </ul>	

- Following CAATS assessments of volunteer helmsmen, the volunteers will participate in the annual inspections starting in March.
- It is important that training is consistent for all volunteers.
- Volunteer Co-ordinator post – Glenn Young has been appointed. Team Leader post to be advertised.
- Risk Management
  - Millars embankment on the Llangollen canal showed signs of cracking along the rear of the towpath, 15 metres in length, 50mm in width and settled 100mm, during the heavy rain. The earth structures team have attended site and have recommended continued monitoring and to be notified if any change. This has been entered on to the schedule and is being monitored on a weekly basis.
  - High Bridge 39, Shropshire Union Canal, CRISP Contract – a cheque for settlement of £49,767.58 has now been received following intervention by the CRT legal team.
  - Golden Nook Bridge 115, Shropshire Union Canal, CRISP Contract – following a bridge strike insurers have been contacted and are requesting repair costs. Before the works can be costed Kier / May Gurney are awaiting Heritage Advisor’s approval of the proposed repairs. Until the insurance company agrees to the cost of the repairs there is a risk the full amount may not be recovered.
- Reactive Works
  - High priority notifications – 79% of those submitted are completed.
  - During January the North Customer Ops team spent a lot of time flood running on the Weaver navigation. The West and South customer ops have also had to deal with a large number of windblown trees following the stormy weather. This has had an impact on the high priority notification delivery programme.
  - During January / February our customer operations teams have closed out 90 reactive notifications; the majority being tree works following the recent storms (43).
  - In addition, our M&E team have completed another 27 reactive repairs including works to Anderton Boat Lift, workboats, moving bridges and locks.
- Annualised Hours Update
  - All the rotas for 2014 have now been completed following discussion with the local teams and reviewing the business needs after one year of the implementation. A number of changes have been made to the start and finish times for some teams based on the experience of the last year.
- Storm Damage
  - During February the west of our area on the Llangollen and Montgomery canals in particular suffered extensive damage from gale force winds. In one day alone over 50 trees were blown over resulting in many sections of the waterway being unpassable. Our local teams and contractors’ teams worked throughout the weekend and through many long days to reopen the network.
- Tree Works
  - These had to be stopped 2 weeks early owing to birds nesting starting early therefore funding has been deferred.
- Operational report to be issued one week before Partnership meeting

6.	<p><b>Property Development Update (Wendy Capelle) – report from Mike Coates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tower Wharf, Chester – Miller Developments have confirmed that they will be appealing the planning refusal for student accommodation at Tower wharf. They anticipate the appeal being lodged by the end of April.</li> <li>• Jalsea/Weaver Shipyard – a meeting has been held with the Planners who feel an appropriate residential scheme on the site could be acceptable. H2O are now working with the owner to finalise the Promotion Agreement and will then prepare draft plans for discussion with C&amp;RT before a wider consultation exercise. Both Mike Carter and Jim Forrester were firmly in agreement that it would be more beneficial for H2O to enter into the venture, where there would be a greater opportunity to influence the overall plan for the benefit of the boating community.</li> </ul>	
7.	<p><b>Marketing &amp; Promotions (Wendy Capelle) – graphs received from Helen Hall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total episodes of media coverage: 204 (247 Jan).</li> <li>• Top stories (frequency &amp; profile/tone). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Volunteer lock keeper appeal.</li> <li>➢ Sprotbrough Open Day.</li> <li>➢ Flood fundraising appeal.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lowest stories (profile/tone). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Call for more action on flooding in Hemel Hempstead.</li> <li>➢ Satirical criticism of flooding in Slough.</li> <li>➢ Boater eviction in Burton.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
8.	<p><b>Appeal Project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church Minshull – volunteers have started to clear access ready for steps. It was suggested that once completed, a press campaign could be done. Nicola Lewis-Smith is liaising with the Parish Council- next meeting to include Jane Staley/Gillian Edwards to discuss next stage of project</li> </ul>	NL-S
9.	<p><b>Enterprise Update (Nicola Lewis-Smith/Sarah Lalieu)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Montgomery Canal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Work completed to enhance canal towpath between Buttington Wharf &amp; pool Quay. The £245,000 project has been funded by the Welsh Government &amp; has been delivered in partnership with Powys County Council.</li> <li>➢ Additional funding of £2000 for vegetation work is secured.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Llangollen Canal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Final tranche of funding has been secured to enable the completion of the towpath within the World Heritage Site (WHS). £226,000 funding from Taith (Welsh Government Sustainable Transport funding).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Postles Bridge. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ During recent years the bridge has received adverse publicity due to the poor physical access from the bridge on to the towpath.</li> <li>➢ The project will build a new ramp to meet current DDA requirements. Funding for the project has been provided by Welsh Government (Transport funding &amp; Rural Development Programme), WREN (landfill) &amp; People's Postcode Lottery.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Hedge to Tow. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ This project has been developed to re-invigorate the canal-side hedgerows to provide better shelter &amp; food for many species, including farmland birds, such as blackbirds, thrushes &amp; tree sparrows.</li> <li>➢ Focus is on 35km section of the Shropshire Union that links to Ellesmere Port to Bunbury in Cheshire.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pontcysyllte Aqueduct &amp; WHS. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ £85,000 has been secured from Visit Wales for improvements to the visitor experience (e.g. car parking).</li> <li>➤ Signage strategy has been agreed to install directional signage to the WHS.</li> <li>➤ Suggestion that a Project Officer may be needed to help develop the site.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>10. Reports from Members (Jim Forrester)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jim Forrester <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Owen Paterson visited the Montgomery canal in January.</li> <li>➤ All Wales briefing @ House of Lords was well attended &amp; it was a well-focused event</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>11. All Wales Partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next stage of the action plan is to be released in the near future.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>12. Partnership Review (Jim Forrester)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Results from questionnaires (3 responses received) included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Positive culture within Partnership.</li> <li>➤ More direction from Trustees may be helpful.</li> <li>➤ How do we arrive at some more tangible outcomes in next year?</li> <li>➤ External relationships are moving slower than envisaged – this could be improved if more time is available from members.</li> <li>➤ Suggestion that a member with business experience may be needed.</li> <li>➤ Some people are still not clear on what the purpose of Partnerships is. Do C&amp;RT staff understand the role of Partnerships? All members to send a photo of themselves to Lesley and write a couple of sentences on why they are interested in being part of Partnership.</li> <li>➤ Training – a request has been made for the provision of online distant learning to be considered by CRT.</li> <li>➤ Notes from meetings – a request for these to be more detailed has been made. Jim Forrester to discuss with Lesley Beard.</li> <li>➤ General suggestion was made that C&amp;RT need to listen more.</li> <li>➤ More internal staff to be invited to speak at meetings about specific issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wendy to invite Katie Jackson (Education Co-ordinator) to the May meeting to discuss what is going on in the waterway in terms of education and our plans for the future.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>All</p> <p>JF/LB</p> <p>WC</p>
<p><b>13. AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TV Programmes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Concern was expressed regarding image portrayed when external agencies are filming. It was suggested that C&amp;RT should be able to influence filming.</li> <li>➤ Less promotion of the more popular sites may be needed to avoid attracting too many visitors.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Annual Partnership Meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It was agreed that because of clashes with Trustee meetings, the date will be changed to <b>2<sup>nd</sup> October from 3pm to 5pm</b> (Chester venue to be confirmed). Jim &amp; Ian to discuss venue.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Extranet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ C&amp;RT are trying to encourage wider use of extranet for storing &amp; accessing documents. Everyone to check their log-ins are working &amp; let Lesley know of any problems.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Some member's roles are up for renewal in Sept/Nov (e.g. Chairs).</li> </ul>	<p>JF/IE</p> <p>All</p>

