



MEETING NOTES

Title	South East Boating Sub-Group
Date	5:30pm, 14 July 2014
Venue	Canal & River Trust offices, First Floor North, Station House, 500 Elder Gate, Milton Keynes, MK9 1BB (Rooms 1 & 2)
Attendees	Members – John Best (JB), Ann Davies (AD), Lynda Payton (LP), James Griffin (JG), Alan Wildman (AW), Alan Fincher (AF), Sally Miller (SM), David Daines (DD) CRT Staff - Matthew Symonds (MS), Hannah Roe (HR) , Neil Owen (NRO), Julia Moore (JM)
Apologies	Judy Clegg (JC)

Action

1. Notes of previous meeting/matters arising

The group acknowledged that Judy was not able to attend the meeting and Sally Miller conference called into the meeting.

Locks to be left empty - As agreed from the meeting notes for 28th April 2014, NRO updated the group about the recent work that has taken place on some of the locks that were previously sign posted “to be left empty” and that the South East Waterway team have also brought in a review process for signage at locks. NRO advised that CRT are currently reviewing all of the remaining “to be left empty locks” within the South East Waterway and that once we have completed that process the current signage would be removed and will either be replaced with more permanent signage, detailing the reason why the locks need to be left empty or that the locks could now be able to have the water left in them.

Canoeing Representative – MS confirmed that the advert for new members is currently live on the Canal & River Trust Website.

Terms of Reference – AD advised the group that this has been deferred, however Richard Parry does value the input that this group gives to the Canal & River Trust.

2. Declarations of Interest

No new declarations of interest within the group.

3. Update on Canal & River Trust review

NRO gave the group a brief overview of the new 10 year strategy and discussed how the Canal & River Trust is looking at increasing its volunteering and improved customer relationships. NRO also confirmed that the Waterway would remain the primary point of contact for customers.

4. Water bus proposal for Oxford

JM introduced the proposal which has been received by Canal & River Trust for a water bus to be trialled for 6 weeks from 1st September until 12th October in Oxford. The group felt that this would be a good idea and wished the organisers all the best.

5. Visitor Mooring

MS introduced to the group an update for the South East Visitor Moorings. This included boat sighting data and ranked the top 35 sites, there was also additional sighting analysis for the following sites, Braunston, Banbury, Batchworth, Cosgrove & Old Wolverton, Oxford and Marsworth. MS has advised that he will gain confirmation as to how the average boats per day had been created.

MS confirmed that the Volunteer Rangers have given him feedback that boaters do generally like to have them around as a good source of local information and guidance for the new visitor mooring terms and conditions.

MS

MS also confirmed that at Foxton, Thrupp and Stoke Bruerne that Volunteer Rangers are no longer delivering overstaying letters and that this is now being completed by Canal & River Trust staff. The group welcomed this decision.

MS advised that the Oxford visitor mooring area will be shortened and the Banbury visitor mooring area will be extended. Berkhamsted will stop being monitored. Batchworth, Marsworth, Cosgrove and Cowroast will continue to have visitor mooring monitoring.

SM questioned the need for monitoring at Banbury. AD suggested that the information collected could be used to better inform Cherwell DC about visitors and to work with them to improve the boat visitor experience.

There will be a short trial period of monitoring at the Three Locks

Pub in Stoke Hammond, with the aid of the publican. AF advised that he did not feel that this is necessary, but MS confirmed that it was only for a short trial period.

The group would like to see additional data showing instead of sightings, but how the capacity of a location is affected and should therefore show how much space is still available at sites.

MS has confirmed that he will look at gathering the additional data and will supply this at the meeting in October.

LP would like to see the visitor mooring data for Stoke Bruerne & Thrupp, MS confirmed that he will provide this to LP.

LP confirmed that after visitor the Stoke Bruerne Visitor Mooring site that the new terms and conditions are working well with the bottom and long pound full of boats and that the top pound with the shorter stay time was half full and she has also seen an increase in the number of boats visiting the site.

Canal & River Trust have found that the Visitor Mooring project has been very well received by most boaters at the site it has been introduced and is being implemented selectively in other waterways.

6. Aylesbury Basin

The group reviewed the map detailing the mooring zones at the Aylesbury Basin. Currently the pontoons are free for 7 days as there is currently no electricity hook-ups. Once the electricity is available it will be decided who will run the site, currently we are looking at APCO or AVDC.

7. Winter Moorings

MS advised that there was not an update as yet. Feedback from last year is that they are very popular. An update will be given during the October meeting.

8. AOB

Vegetation/Towpaths – DD raised his concerns over how much he feels the vegetation is overgrowing and blocking the towpaths. NRO confirmed that we are aware of this, however the growing season has been very extreme this year and that we are working on our vegetation cutting plans for commencement in September. Art on the Waterways -JB introduced to the group the upcoming events going on in Milton Keynes organised by IF Milton Keynes,

including the work of Kaffe Matthews.

Cropredy Festival – AD would like the visitor mooring to be looked at for next year's festival. MS has confirmed that we will look into it.

- 9. Dates for future meetings:**
20th October 2014