



Glandŵr  
Cymru

The Canal & River Trust in Wales

## MEETING OF THE BWRDD

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Minutes of a meeting of the Bwrdd Glandŵr Cymru of Canal & River Trust (*the Trust*) held at Oak Room, Bryn Howel Hotel, Trevor, Llangollen, Denbighshire. LL20 7UW on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at 11.30a.m.

### Present :

Lynne Berry	Chair
Ruth Hall	Member
Carys Howell	Member
Phillip Thomas	Member
Peter Ogden	Member
Paul Thomas	Member (joined by Skype for Introduction and Welcome only)

### Apologies:

Helen Paterson	Member
Duncan Smith	Member
Laura Lewis	Public Affairs Wales

### In attendance

Roger Hanbury	Head of Governance
Stuart Mills	Property Director
Heather Clarke	Head of Strategy and Planning
Andrew Stumpf	Head of Wales
Yetunde Salami	Assistant Company Secretary
Jacqueline Humphries	Enterprise Officer Wales

## Action

### 15/001 APOLOGIES & INTRODUCTIONS

As noted above.

### CHAIR'S WELCOME & REMARKS

Lynne Berry welcomed members to the first Bwrdd Glandŵr Cymru meeting. All present gave a brief introduction of themselves and their backgrounds.

LB explained that the remit of Bwrdd Glandŵr Cymru is to support the development of the work of the Trust through engagement in the social, economic, political and cultural life of Wales and to bring to the Trust knowledge of Wales, its culture, people, and needs to the Trust.

It will work at a political/governmental level and with other key bodies in Wales to influence Wales' strategies and plans as they relate to waterways. It will also advise the Trust on Welsh Government policy and priorities, and act as a support and sounding board for the trustees, executive and senior

management on Welsh matters. Members of Bwrdd Glandŵr Cymru will be ambassadors for the Trust in Wales.

LD further explained that as a Trustee she will be the link between the Trust's board and Bwrdd Glandŵr Cymru.

Roger Hanbury gave a brief summary of the history of the Trust and the governance structure, explained the roles of the Council, the Trustees and the Partnerships and made reference to the Governance Handbook. [ <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/original/9295-governance-handbook-30-march-2015.pdf> ]

RH

In discussion it was noted that:

- Members of the Waterway Partnerships are not trustees but are to act in the best interests of the Trust rather than to represent a particular interest group. They give voice to the local communities and their chairs are members of the Trust's Council. The chairs as council members are accountable to the Trust's Council Chair
- The Trust is a charity and independent of government but it has 15 year funding contract with Defra to maintain the waterways
- The Chairs of the North Wales and Borders and South Wales and Severn Partnerships will be invited to attend future meetings

## **15/002 CRT STRATEGY AND VALUES**

Stuart Mills introduced his presentation summarising the Trust's commercial strategy and business activities as well as opportunities and challenges within Wales.

Heather Clarke explained the 10 year Strategy, the vision of the Trust for living waterways that transform places and enrich lives (dyfrffyrdd bywiol i harddu ein byd ac i lonni'r enaid), the six strategic goals and the scale of ambition. The strategic priorities for the next three years include volunteering expansion, effective and efficient asset management, strong investment return and commercial income, growth in visits, use and associated income, growth in brand, reputation and engagement.

It was noted that the Trust is concurrently working with Cardiff University to build a robust evidence base in order to measure the public policy outcomes of its work on the waterways including the economic, social and environmental benefits delivered for local communities and in England and Wales. In discussion it was noted that the 10 year plan is designed to put the Trust in a strong position when it enters contract negotiations with the UK Government which will begin in earnest in 2022.

Members extensively discussed and noted the report.

## **15/003 CRT COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES AND PRINCIPLES**

Stuart Mills explained that about £180million is required to run and maintain the waterways, of which about half is generated from commercial activities, including property and non-property investments and utilities.

On transfer from BW the Trust were gifted a portfolio of properties which were owned by BW and which provided an endowment to help fund the waterways. The Trust is required to manage the properties commercially and uses the annual income to maintain the waterways. Subsequently, the Trustees had agreed an investment strategy which provided for the portfolio to be diversified over time to include other investment assets such as equities, credit and private equity. This process was underway. Further income is also generated from utilities (using the waterways for running fibre optics, cables, pipes and suchlike, water sales, sustainable energy generation, etc.).

Stuart Mills explained that the Trust is looking to grow the capital value of its investment portfolio above inflation so that, at a consistent rate of return, the Trust's income will grow similarly, allowing it to increase spend on its charitable objectives. He noted that investment performance since formation of the Trust had been strong.

Stuart Mills continued with a presentation on developing the Trust's strategy and its proposition for the Welsh Government. The key strategic opportunities and challenges in Wales are:

- Monmouthshire & Brecon canal project
- Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and canal World Heritage Site and particularly Trevor Basin
- Restoration of redundant canals

The first 2 of these were then considered in further detail as below

#### **15/004 MONMOUTHSHIRE & BRECON CANAL PROJECT OVERVIEW**

Andrew Stumpf gave details of the transformational Monmouthshire & Brecon canal project. The canal is already the most popular visitor destination in the Brecon Beacons National Park and is part of the Blaenavon World Heritage Site. However it carries risks with respect to its embankments and water supply which need to be addressed for the long term security of the canal. Andrew Stumpf showed that the combination of navigable and unrestored sections of the canal fitted well with Welsh Government policy particularly its definition of sustainable development and the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. It would contribute to a range of policy areas not least growth and jobs, the health and well-being agenda, active travel, national tourism and regeneration strategies and the City Region as well as a number of local and regional strategies including transport and development plans. Andrew Stumpf outlined the outputs in terms of tourism, jobs, including construction jobs, housing and gross value added which the canal can deliver. Enabling works required to provide water security and stability to the embankments were noted.

#### **15/005 TREVOR OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

Stuart Mills explained that there is the possibility of making a difference at the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct site which already attracts over 200,000 visitors per annum but with little financial contribution locally.

Stuart Mills explained the challenges in the area which has been identified as a priority by the North Wales and Borders partnership. With the support of Brenda Harvey, Chair of the North Wales and Borders partnership, Heather Clarke and

he have begun exploring how to unlock the opportunities beyond the immediate Trevor Basin area. If the site's long term potential is to be reached there is likely to be a need for public funding which will require a joint approach by the Trust, the Council and the owners of the property.

#### **15/006 RESTORATION OF REDUNDANT CANALS**

Opportunities arising from the restoration of the Montgomery canal and canals in South Wales will be discussed in detail at a future meeting.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Lynne Berry stated that this introductory session is for members to get a feel of the strategic issues that will be discussed at this Bwrdd. Lynne Berry asked members for their views and guidance on the proposals especially on how the board can strategically influence the Welsh Government and the local councils in partnering with the Trust.

In an extensive discussion members agreed the need to be mindful of :

- The timing of the projects and the policy areas important to the government. Visible projects that support health and well-being as well as alleviation of poverty are more likely to be supported by government as these are high on the political agenda.
- The European political agenda as funds for projects may be sourced from Europe.
- Future local government reorganisation in Wales which may have a bearing on when projects should be brought forward.
- Importance of recognising and showing cross border benefits in North East Wales
- Importance of speed and building credibility
- There was concern that lining the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal didn't have as visible benefits as a building but its importance due to the immediacy of the risk issues was recognised as was its fit with policy and the underpinning of current and future investment in tourism.
- Accessibility to a whole community was important.
- Trevor may be easier politically but the longer planning and delivery timescales may be too far off for the moment.
- The members agreed that the Trust should promote the development of the World Heritage Site as tourism is high on the government's agenda, however it was felt that the Monmouthshire & Brecon canal and Trevor should be treated as two projects

The Bwrdd requested that the projects and the work with Cardiff University should be framed within the goals of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act.

It was agreed that an overarching visioning document which covers all opportunities in Wales should be prepared as a basis of discussion with government officials. It is important to know and include the impact of failure to invest in these areas on local business and the communities in the document.

**HC**

Members thanked Stuart Mills and Heather Clarke for the presentation and agreed that the presentation should be sent to members.

**AW**

(Stuart Mills and Heather Clarke left the meeting.)

Beyond the Towpath – it was noted that the document was prepared by the previous All Wales Partnership. The associated Action Plan underpinning the

Memorandum of Understanding with the Welsh Government was derived from this document. The document can be found here  
<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/library/7827-beyond-the-towpath.pdf>  
<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/library/7796-action-plan-welsh.pdf>  
The Memorandum of Understanding of Understanding to be circulated

**AW**

#### **15/007 WELSH LANGUAGE POLICY REVISIONS**

The report proposed that a small sub group from the Bwrdd examine the Trust's current Welsh Language Scheme and propose options for revisions and recommend an approach to the expected Standards Investigation. The sub group needs to make sure the Trust's response to the investigation is appropriate.

Carys Howell and Peter Ogden volunteered to review the Scheme.

**CH / PO**

#### **15/008 WELSH GOVERNMENT OUTDOOR ACCESS AND RECREATION CONSULTATION**

Andrew Stumpf explained that the report was to seek members' views to ensure that the Trust's response to the consultation is framed in an appropriate way given the sensitivities of the subject matter and clear intent of Government.

Members discussed and felt there is the opportunity to make strategic as well as technical inputs into this consultation. It was agreed that Andrew Stumpf will circulate the draft report on the current position to members and they will feedback their comments to him. It was also noted that the text will be agreed with the Legal team.

**AS**

**ALL**

(Yetunde Salami left the meeting.)

#### **15/009 APPOINTMENT TO THE COUNCIL**

Lynne Berry explained that previously the Chair of the All Wales Partnership was a Member of the Trust Council. The Trust Rules, to be agreed by Council at the September meeting would provide for a member of the Bwrdd to be nominated as a Member for a 4 year term of office.

Lynne Berry proposed the appointment of Ruth Hall as the said member. All Bwrdd members present agreed.

#### **15/010 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Members suggested the following subjects for discussion at future meetings:-

- Media strategy of the Trust
- How we engage with Welsh Government and our other partners presently and the role of the Bwrdd moving forward.
- Key messages on health & well-being & feedback on the Cardiff University research project

General facts and figures for the Trust as a whole and for Wales as well as a briefing on asset and risk management would be useful induction material alongside the presentations received on strategy

Andrew Stumpf stated we are currently preparing content intended for all party manifestos and agreed to circulate drafts.

LB confirmed that we would continue to look for further members to join the Board over the next few months.

**AS**

**15/010 DATES OF NEXT MEETING**

14<sup>th</sup> January 2016

26<sup>th</sup> May 2016

6<sup>th</sup> October 2016

**15/011 CLOSE OF MEETING**

There being no further business, the Chair closed the formal proceedings at 2.35pm.

The Bwrdd Members then left to meet the North Wales and Borders Partnership.

**Chair**