



NOTES

Title	North East Waterway Partnership Meeting
Date	26 th January 2017
Venue	Town Hall, Leeds
Attendees	Partnership: Mark Penny (MP) Hilary Brooke (HB) Peter Scott (PS) Chris Hawkesworth (CH) David Lowe (DL) Caroline Thorogood (CT) Trevor Roberts (TR) Kara Hazelgrave (KH) Adrian Curtis (AC) CRT: Jon Horsfall (JH) Tom Wright (TW) Joy Van Rensburg (JVR) Stephen Hardy (SH) Catherine Kirkland (CK) Richard Dennis (RD) Ben Cox (BC)
Apologies	Jon Kendall, Jane Thomson

1. Introduction & Welcome - MP

MP welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Presentation on the Flood Alleviation Scheme (RD)

RD summarised the recent issues with flooding, highlighting the fact that there were two near misses in November 2015 and then the devastating boxing day floods. Water levels were recorded as 1.2m higher than previously in Armley and there have been 7 events in the last 15 years. The original flood defence scheme proposed by the EA from Newlay Locks to Knostrop was poorly supported due to the high walls that were suggested and the large financial cost. In February 2012 the Council came up with a revised strategy for a phased approach. The proposed works of phase 1 would allow for a 1:75 year protection through the city centre and 1:200 in Woodlesford. Phase 1 will create 150 new jobs and safeguard many more over the next ten years, it will also unlock large amounts of land adding to the growth in the development around the South Bank.

At Knostrop weir a moveable weir and fish pass is being installed, a major positive has been the site of salmon upstream for the first time in 200 years. The removal of the island will move the trail and the new bridge is 80% complete.

CH asked why more thought had not been given to rowers and kayakers about how to get around the weir and potentially using the fish pass. RD explained that getting the fish pass approved had been a very complicated process and adding further provisions would have added considerable delay. RD highlighted that this had been the first time this technology has been used in this country for flood defence strategy. So far at

Knothrop 180,000 tonnes of material have been removed from the site and the river and canal merged.

At Crown point weir another moveable weir has been installed along with a fish and eel pass and a short section of heritage weir remains. Through the city centre glazed panels have been used in section instead of walls in order to keep the connection to the water space and be sensitive to the landscape.

The Council is now proud to state that rather than the predicted 1:75 year protection, phase 1 now offers 1:100 year protection. Phase 1 will be complete by summer 2017. At present the navigation closure at Crown point has no confirmed date though attempts are being made to work around the Water Front Festival. JH confirmed that information would be communicated to customers as soon as it was available and reliable. PS argued that there should be no navigational closure and the whole point, and fundamental purpose of the Canal and River Trust, is to discharge its responsibilities bestowed by Government, as a national navigation authority of our network of navigable waterways. JH confirmed the Trust, Customers, Council and its contractors had worked hard to minimise disruption and reiterated that the outcome needed to provide a balance for all the Trusts customers and the communities and businesses in Leeds.

RD explained that the Leeds Waterfront Festival was being minimally affected by the closure at Crown Point that would fall within the period of peak demand for users of the navigation PS questioned whether this was a reasonable assumption based on proposed stoppage

Phase 2 will begin to look at the Kirkstall area and is at the beginning of the feasibility stage with an information centre being set up in Kirkstall. CT discussed the natural flood risk management of Phase 2 and the hope she could discuss further after the meeting.

RD highlighted that the biggest difference between initial plans and the Councils plans is innovation and the fact there is no 'Berlin wall'. The project has been a collaboration with lots of organisations working closely together. MP asked who was operating and maintaining the work, RD answered that for now it is the Council. DL asked about the depth of the channel and RD responded that it was full depth and dredging has taken place already.

3. Introductions for new members of the Partnership

Adrian Curtis – Executive Director, Groundwork North, East and West Yorkshire.

AC stated that his keen interest was the possibilities that open up when power was given back to communities. He hopes to support the development of the waterways in Yorkshire.

Kara Hazelgrave – water@leeds Research & Innovation Development Manager, University of Leeds.

KH recently joined water@leeds. KH stated that: the team have over 150 affiliated researchers from across all eight UoL faculties, working on local and global water challenges.

4. **Equality and Diversity at the Trust (CK)**

CK went through the objectives of her presentation:

- Raise awareness of Diversity and Inclusion
- The Context
- What the Trust aims to do to become a more diverse employer
- How we can work together to achieve this

CK then asked a series of questions, demonstrating that although the Partnership all have one thing in common and could on the face of it appear not that diverse, there are differences between them. She also showed a card that has been produced to help people consider whether comments are “in the safe zone” or could be construed as offensive. It is all part of a wider strategy of making the Trust a more inclusive and inviting place to work.

CK then discussed:

- What is Diversity?
- Diversity is about developing an environment that works for ALL employees. Having a diverse culture will enable and encourage everyone to reach their full potential. Diversity refers to the differences between individuals on all kinds of aspects visible and invisible. Examples of differences are gender, age, race, disability, ethnicity, religion, belief, sexual orientation, skills, tenure, learning styles etc.
- What is Inclusion?
- This is central to diversity. It addresses workplace behaviour and focuses on our culture and understanding differences. It is simply about thinking about your actions and understanding whether they could be excluding people, either consciously or unconsciously.

Our Vision

- To create a culture where diversity is valued, every employee is a respected member of the team and our workforce is a reflection of the communities in which we operate
- Integrating diversity within the Trust is not just about having policies, processes, goals and objectives on diversity in place, it is about changing the way people think about diversity.
- Inclusion cuts through everything we want to achieve in terms of our ambitions: brand recognition, communities, volunteering, sustainability, talent attraction, retention.....

CK then went through some statistics and facts around diversity in the UK population and looked at what the Trust has done so far:

- Statement of Commitment
- Policies
- Recruitment

- Training
- Networks
- Strategic Project
- Communication

CK then asked the Partnership how they could help promote these strategies:

- Ethnic breakdown within 1km of the North East Waterways = 13.4%
- How do we reach out to our communities?
- What more could we do to raise awareness of the Trust as diverse & inclusive employer and great place to work?
- What messages can we send out?
- How do we all promote our appetite for change?

AC discussed how his organisation has also wrestled with these issues. He suggested that 'environmental' can have culturally negative connotations. Many of the jobs available may not be viewed as a career. He highlighted the importance of changing people's perception. JH argued that for the Trust to reach its ambition of being a household name, it needs to connect more with the country. HB suggested that the Trust should look internally at problems. CH then argued that it does work both ways and at his organisation a lot of work was done to change the physical environment to be more welcoming to minority groups yet it did not succeed. AC suggested that at times it was easier to deal with the facilities than the necessary community outreach. KH asked if we are possibly advertising in only mainstream spaces and this was halting recruitment of minority groups. CK also highlighted that another difficulty is the low level of staff turnover, which is currently only about 10%. JH said we should work more closely with people who are already experienced in changing organisations. PS asked about the Trust policies with ex-offenders and CK responded that the Trust must be cautious due to safeguarding issues. TW highlighted the importance of apprentices in changing the face of the organisation.

5. City Centre Rowing Competition (BC)

BC – Director of Row Leeds gave an overview of the organisation. He said that the focus was on high standards in order to draw in talent and about using sport learning to translate to life skills. The aim is to replicate the techniques used in private schools, within under privileged schools instead. Best practice mode of school sport is being used. BC highlighted how visible success such as a competition will make it easier to draw funding.

The Row UK Leeds Regatta is designed to create independent revenue streams and seed money for Row Leeds. It would be a 250m competition through Leeds City Centre. The pilot event will be on the 22nd April 2017 in order to fit around the other competitions and rowing season. It will be from Crown Point Bridge to Centenary Bridge with a pop up festival atmosphere. They are hopeful that they can grow it from this point and it will bring both interest to the sport and possible funding for the organisation.

6. Community Fund (HB)

HB explained about the new Community Fund being set up by the Trust. She argued that it is all very well getting people engaged in the work of the Trust but many would not know where to go for funding. It is a pilot scheme of £10,000 with an aim of reaching grass roots organisations. It will launch in March 2017 and be reviewed in the Autumn. People will be able to apply for funds between £250 and £2000 for works that enhance the waterway and community. TW highlighted that they are keen that the money is spread around the NE region rather than all used for one area. HB pointed out that they have taken away a lot of the barriers often in place with other funders such as the group needing to be a charity. Rather than just hand out cash for groups it can be used to purchase things that are then given.

7. Community Engagement and Waterway (TW & JH)

TW explained that the Idle Women Project will be at Shepley Bridge Marina in March. They have been successful in other areas. It is an artistic engagement project run by two women with an artist on a boat.

JH mentioned that the Don't drink and drown campaign has been very successful and meetings have taken place around the Kick the Dust funding. TW and JH also discussed the date for the Sheffield Water Festival which has been set as the 23rd of September 2017. JH also highlighted that the Freight Tariffs were being reviewed.