



# NOTES MANCHESTER AND PENNINE CUSTOMER FORUM(NORTH) MEETING

**Date** 19<sup>th</sup> November 2014

**Venue** Rochdale Town Hall

**Staff Attendees:** David Baldacchino, Waterway Manager. Steve O'Sullivan, Volunteer Development Co-Ordinator. Steve Ballard, Customer Operations Manager. Tracey Jackson, Customer Support Co-Ordinator. Paul Bowerman, Customer Operations Supervisor. Nick Atkinson, Customer Operations Supervisor. Mark Wigley Construction Supervisor (North).

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## 1. **Introductions and Updates:**

- Trust 10 year strategy
- Recent and future works – winter stoppages
- User forum, new format – your thoughts

Hand out packs were explained. Winter stoppages discussed – list in the hand out packs.

Undercroft consultation discussed – summary of the consultation in the hand out in the packs. Attendees asked that we publicise the consultation more widely. Meetings have taken place without the knowledge of the local residents.

Volunteering Newsletter – Diana Monahan asked how they go about getting input into. Any items that people want to see publicised should be sent to Steve O'Sullivan or Tracey Jackson.

Rochdale canal additional stoppages consultation process – consultation to be uploaded to stoppage website page 20<sup>th</sup> November.

Presentation on the 10 year strategy and the new waterway structure. Walter Menzies, Waterway Partnership Chair, introduced to the group, spoke about the role of the partnership, the partnership vision and our aim to gain green flag status for the Macclesfield Canal.

At our previous meeting we discussed dedicate piling teams – MW confirmed that we are currently working in 3 sections of the Rochdale Canal in Mytholmroyd with another 7 – 8 sections planned. Post works we will be using machine operated clam bucket to remove any leftover stones. After these 11 sites are completed we end at lock 30 and with this new kit, we can rebuild the lock landing there.

100+ meters has been completed around Wheelock on the Trent & Mersey.

Diana Monahan asked if we could put in mooring bollards when concreting. DB we can start looking at developing informal mooring spots.

Are there plans to do washwall repairs in Huddersfield. DB yes at Greenfield. However, a volume of dredging is required here which is unfortunately prohibitively expensive. The local volunteers will be taking this on.

**SO'S**

Our Angling and Fisheries customers will have a separate meeting.

Stepping stones at Uppermill – copings have been loosened. DB this would be a good volunteering event and something we could look at.

**SO'S**

Barry Greenhough – will the Trust profit from the development happening around Deansgate. DB yes and our property team are currently in negotiations over this.

Bob Weatherley asked if we have had any specific feedback with the changes to the Rochdale booking systems regarding water management. PB we have had a lot less water this year on the summit flight which is why we have been locking the flight up at night. Customer use can influence this greatly. DB we won't be changing the overnight locking of the summit at night for the foreseeable future. Nigel Stevens suggested that it would be better to lock 35 – 37 rather than 36 – 37. Paul Monahan suggested locking it at the Swing Bridge. PB will look into the options.

**PB**

Diana Monahan asked when the boat movement numbers will be available. DB Usually around April time.

Bob Weatherley asked if there were any plans to upgrade the service station at Durn. DB not at the moment.

There are no linear permanent moorings between West Yorkshire and Manchester. DB all permanent moorings are online.

Littleborough Society would like a Marina at Durn. DB if a developer came forward with plans we would look at it. The Trust do not have plans to do any development.

There are no facilities, not even a tap.

DB we are not a marina operator. We are developing our services and want to discuss this around our syndicate tables this evening.

Diana Monahan asked why Durn has stopped as a linear mooring. Durn is still down as a linear mooring but has not vacancies. DB will take up with our moorings team.

**DB**

Brian Holden received a complaint letter which had been sent to the local authority in Rochdale asking for safe moorings.

Apparently John Dodwell agrees that we need more linear moorings. But we talk too much about congestion. Urban Splash Marina in Manchester is ideal. Can we get them to invest in Rochdale, around 49 – 50 is a place where customers would like to moor.

Facilities cards – Is it possible to push forward for a change to the system. Get rid of the current cards and card readers and use a rechargeable card / debit card type system. Similar systems are already in use on some car parks – insert your debit card and the fee is directly deducted. DB – any decision to change from the use of the cards would be done nationally, while they are simple it is acknowledged that they are not always reliable. The feedback will be passed on.

## 2. **Syndicate Table Discussions – Customer Service Improvements:**

What do you think our priorities should be to improve facilities for customers – either at service sites, visitor moorings, anything else?

Where and why?:

- Online moorings for Rochdale.
- Upgrade Durn moorings.
- Durn moorings – no boats – occupancy available?
- Mooring available at locks 49 – 50 to access town facilities.
- Moorings between Barton and Saltersford.
- Moorings at Dutton and Acton Bridge.
- Private BW moorings at Acton – needs checking.
- Salt Barge mooring – check site, is it private?
- Middlewich services are poor.
- Buying cards – moor facilities needed?
- Can only use cards once – look at rechargeable.
- Canoeing – team talk briefing needed.
- Spraying of aquatic weed north of Preston Brook.
- Operations – none powered boats through the tunnels on T&M.
- Good overview from the canal observers reports.
- Mooring rings below Scout tunnel, Mossley.
- Would like to see washing machines at varied locations on the Huddersfield.
- Elsan disposal at Standedge.
- Water point at Lock 42E
- More facilities at Stalybridge.

What would you rate our current facilities for customers out of 10 and why (1 being poor, 10 being excellent):

- Anderton Services – 10/10, 9/10
- Red Bull Services – 9/10
- Harecastle Services – 7/10
- Wheelock Services – 3/10
- Middlewich – Not scored, nothing there
- Bosley Top Lock Services – Not known
- Marple Yard Services – Nothing there?
- Whaleybridge – 7/10
- Bugsworth – 7/10

- Ashton/Fairfield – Closed?
- Slaithwaite – 9/10
- Grove Road – 6/10
- Wool Road – 7/10
- Hebden Bridge 5/10
- Todmorden – 9/10
- Lock 47 Durn – 5/10
- Missing from our list of facilities – tap at Lock 28 Rochdale Canal and water point at Uppermill HNC.
- Need more guidance on recycling – what/where. Currently our volunteer administrator at our Rochdale office is working on a comprehensive list of recycling sites around our network and we will be publishing this in the next few weeks.

**3. Closing Comments:**

- Brief discussion of the syndicate table findings
- No date yet set for the spring forum. Everybody happy with the format of having separate North/South meetings. Happy with venue. No preference to day/evening timings.
- Look at updating our navigational notes – did you know that you can moor at.....

**TJ**