



EAST MIDLANDS ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING

Notes from the Annual Public Meeting held on Thursday 27th October 2016, at the Clumber Park Hotel.

1. Presentations

A pdf containing all presentations from the meeting can be downloaded from the Canal & River Trust website: <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/our-regions/east-midlands-waterways>

Overview - Danny Brennan, East Midlands Waterway Partnership Chair

Progress to date and plans for the future

The East Midlands Waterway – Sean McGinley, East Midlands Waterway Manager

Recent boundary changes and volunteering

Partnerships with Higher Education – Angela Scott, Nottingham Trent University

Canal & River Trust work with Nottingham Trent University

Youth Participation – Liz Fleuty, Development & Engagement Manager and Claire Cavendish, Education Coordinator

Our work to raise awareness, increase activity, support learning and social action

HS2 and the Chesterfield Canal – Robin Stonebridge, East Midlands Waterway Partnership & Chair of the Chesterfield Canal Trust

Impacts, challenges and opportunities

2. Q & A session

The following questions were raised as part of the Q & A session:

Question	Response
Last year we discussed the need for additional moorings along the River Trent. Has any progress be made on this?	There have been many attempts over the years to try to install additional moorings along the River Trent. The main issue preventing this is a lack of land owned by the Trust and so we are reliant on other landowners to give permission. We have held many meetings over the years with landowners and consistently encourage developers to consider moorings, including a recent one at Trent Basin, but as yet we have had little success. We are happy to follow any lead that we are made aware of.
Can boat clubs from Boston, Bardney and Lincoln work together to improve the towpath along the River Witham?	Yes, all organisations in any area can come together to help maintain or improve an area. The route alongside the Witham (the Water Rail Way) is not actually owned by the Trust, but I am sure the owner would be delighted to receive such support.

Cyclists in the Nottingham area are increasingly frustrated by the number of barriers along the canal towpaths. In the West Midlands, removal of barriers has been trialled – could this be considered on a trial stretch in this area?	We maintain the barriers in many locations primarily to prevent access onto the towpath by motorcycles. We would be reluctant to remove all such barriers as we may only end up solving one problem and creating another, bigger one. We are happy to alter the barriers to make access by those allowed on the towpath easier, and have carried out trials on the Erewash Canal leaving some barriers open. We're happy to consider other trials.
The Tidal Trent app was mentioned in the Nottingham Trent University presentation – will it ever see the light of day?	Hopefully one day yes. We gave the work by NTU to a team at Lincoln University, who were trying to develop an app, but as yet have not heard back from them. This option may therefore be a dead end but we will aim to seek other solutions.
What can be done to improve views of the landscape from the River Soar (around Watermead Country Park) and around Foxton Locks? It seems that hedgerows are being left to grow unchecked and we are losing the link to the wider landscape.	Although as a team we are just re-familiarising ourselves with this area, including Watermead, it sounds like a conversation with the park may be the first step and then maybe better hedge management is the next step. We will look into this.
What support could the Canal & River Trust offer to the Louth Navigation Trust with regard to youth participation?	We're happy to share best practice and offer support where our resources allow. Liz Fleuty will contact the group to discuss this in more detail.

Following the Q and A session, Seán McGinley gave a brief summary of the current position of the transfer of Environment Agency navigations to the Canal & River Trust. The Trust are currently number crunching to ensure that the costs and liabilities associated with taking on with 600 miles of EA navigation are fully understood. This has included a review of operations taking place at each site, identifying those relating to navigation. It was complicated by the fact that, for example, sluices are operated to provide a constant level for navigation and to control flood water, so there is a need to decide who will do what at each site in future.

3. New ideas for the Waterway to work on

A number of opportunities were identified during the networking sessions before and after the main meeting. These included:

- Development of a canoe trail for the Chesterfield Canal
- Joint working with CPRE
- Joint working with Derby City Council
- Support for the Green Flag application for the Chesterfield Canal SSSI (Derbyshire County Council)
- Local FE colleges require students to carry out volunteering as part of their courses - the number of hours depends on the qualification. This could include media, arts etc which could support the development of apps, guides etc identified in the presentations
- Angling activities in Leicester and IWA Festival of Water (Ilkeston 2017)
- Provision of visitor moorings at Attenborough Nature Centre

Date of next meeting: The 2017 Annual Public Meeting will be held in October 2017 (venue / location tbc).

Organisations represented at the meeting

Bardney Boat Club
Boston Motor Yacht Club
British Canoeing
Campaign to Protect Rural England
Chesterfield Canal Trust
Derby City Council
Derbyshire County Council
Environment Agency
Grantham Canal Society
Heritage Lottery Fund
IWA – Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire Branch
IWA – South Yorkshire & Dukeries Branch
Leicester Outdoor Pursuits Centre
Louth Navigation Trust
Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust
Pedals (Nottingham)
Residential Boat Owners Association
Sleaford Navigation Trust / Northern Canals Association
Sustrans