



MEETING Thursday 6th June 2019 at 3pm

Wiltshire Council Offices Monkton Park Chippenham SN15 1ER Committee Rooms C&D

Item	Notes	
	<p>Attending</p> <p>FdRP Cllr Fleur de Rhé Philipe (Chairman) JL John Laverick (President) JA John Allan Cotswold Canals Trust RB Richard Broadhead Wiltshire Council KO Ken Oliver Wiltshire Council SP Steve Petty Berryfield Residents Melksham Chamber AM Andrew Matters WBCT TW Tim Wheeldon IWA RW Cllr Richard Wiltshire</p>	
1	<p>Apologies Stuart Malaure Environment Agency, Colin Goodhind Melksham Community Area Partnership, Russell Weymouth Swindon BC, Cllr Gary Sumner Swindon BC; David Morgan CRT, Peter Walker CRT, Cllr Emily Smith VWHDC , Peter Challis Sustrans.</p>	
2	<p>Notes from the last meeting Thursday 7th March 2019 (pre-circulated) were agreed</p>	
3	<p>Chairman's Announcements FdRP welcomed the newly appointed President of the Partnership John Laverick. JL reported on the handover meeting with Lord Lansdowne at which JL raised, at the request of the WBCT Land Team and MCC Branch, the issue of the non renewal of the WBCT lease with the Bowood Estate. JL reported that for various estate management considerations Bowood is reviewing all land leases, but Lord Lansdowne's had given his personal assurance that this review will not in any way affect the restoration of the canal across his property. He remains fully supportive of the project and suggested that a new five year lease could be in place as early as August this year.</p>	
4	<p>Partnership Officer Report- Canal & River Trust Reorganisation KO reported that as part of the move from ten waterway units to six regions, the post of national restoration manager had been removed and that the role had been devolved to the new regions. For the Wilts & Berks restoration, David Morgan Strategic Programme Manager Wales & South West Region has restoration as part of his job role. David has been invited to visit the Wilts & Berks at the earliest opportunity Inland Waterways Association-Waterways in Progress Report The Video made in association with recently published report (previously circulated to Partners) was shown https://www.waterways.org.uk/waterways/restoration/waterways_progress/waterways_progress AM said that the strategic aim of the WBCT team is to deliver stand alone sections of canal shown as illustrated in the report. Canalside in Wichelstowe is one of these schemes delivering immediate benefit. KO said that he hoped to include Canalside as a future case study. KO agreed to obtain some printed copies of the report from IWA KO Change of role – continued support for Wilts & Berks project.</p>	<p>KO</p>

RB said that in analysing the function of the team there were several single points of failure with specialist knowledge held by individuals. This opportunity to reorganise the team came about following his appointment as Head of Service. KO has taken on the role of Team Leader with the former Rights of Way Wardens and Countryside Officers (now Countryside Access Officers) and Tree Officers reporting to him. In this new set up two of the CAO's looking after North Wiltshire will deal with canals as part of their role (with KO continuing to work on the canal projects but for less time). RW noted that this is a very new structure and any feedback would be appreciated. This is part of wider reorganisation including the work of looking after the legal records of the rights of way. **FdRP** noted that imbedding the canal work could be important as there were bound to be changes following the appointment of a new Leader of the Council in July.

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Projects update –

Melksham Link- planning application KO said that WBCT consultants had now completed a response to the latest EA objections and this had been resubmitted to the planning system. **AM** noted that WBCT had also submitted a formal complaint to EA about the way this application had been dealt with. **FdRP** wondered how long the latest submission would take to get a further EA response. **KO** said it usually took about 12 weeks.

Swindon Wichelstowe

Canalside KO reported that the canal is completed at Canalside but during stilling tests there appeared to be an issue with a high level leak around some drainage pipes and therefore the canal had not yet reopened. There is a canal centred event planned around the Hall & Woodhouse pub on the 24th August.

JL asked what progress was being made with Highways England on the M4 crossing.

KO said he was working with WBCT on a business plan to be submitted by September.

East Wichel- canal leak KO reported that contractors had now started work on installing bunds and that when this is shortly completed each section will be filled with water and the leakage monitored.



Swindon New Eastern Villages- KO reported that there had been a local consultation carried out by WBCT on the canal route in relation to the proposed southern connector road. Full details of the consultation are in a separate document circulated with these

	<p>notes. The result of the consultation overwhelmingly supported the most eastern option and this will now be fully assessed from a technical perspective.</p> <p>Swindon Moredon Sports Hub Russell Weymouth submitted a written summary:- <i>We have now moved from the post planning approval stage to negotiating the grant bids that provide substantial funding for the main sports offer. We are talking to British Cycling and the Football Association as principal funders but are considering other options that have been identified in a consultants option report. These add different uses to the site and in particular, additions to the pavilion. Our consultant has been testing the water with a new management team at British Cycling and interestingly for the link path from the Moredon site to the 'Western Flyer' route near Shaw Forest, British Cycling are saying that they are shifting emphasis more to incidental 'family friendly' routes rather than facilities that provide for established clubs and individuals. They are clearly targeting getting people into the site and around the major part of the site as well. Whether that brings extra funds will be key to the negotiations but the potential support for this link path has gathered traction. We will work with an ecologist next to define the best route for the path that will inevitably follow part of the canal route at least. We will also talk to Highways to see whether an extension to the 'Western Flyer' is something that may attract strategic network funding. Once we have plotted this we will discuss with SBC property and with W&BCT the designs, implementation and management.</i></p> <p>Pewsham Locks AM said that small scale works are continuing on the site and WBCT is reviewing the whole situation to see how works might be restarted at Top Lock. This work would include a vehicular access bridge. Proposals for activities around the site (with Wiltshire Outdoor Learning Team WOLT) have been put on hold as there were likely to be conflicts between the proposed activities and construction on the site.</p> <p>Questions and updates RW asked if there still plans to use the River Avon in Chippenham for navigation. AM confirmed this but it was one of the longer term aims.</p>	
6	<p>Wessex Waterways Restoration Trust KO said that WWRT had appointed Vaughan Welch as Chairman and that he was waiting to set up a meeting. TW noted that WWRT had received grant of £10k from Awards for All.</p>	KO
7	<p>Partners Reports and Issues FdRP noted the change of Leader of Wiltshire Council in July. Baroness Scott had been a great supporter of the canal project and hopefully this would continue under the new Leader. FdRP noted that it was not guaranteed that she would continue to hold the areas of responsibility she currently has. AM noted that his role was as acting CEO and that he was working hard to deal with a number of issues including reconciling two factions (biodiversity/community engagement and physical restoration). AM noted the biodiversity plans for the 'Pocket Park' at Shrivenham and said his vision for the project could not avoid that things had to start from a construction aspect and that would lead to a canal. It is the canal features that the walkers and cyclists and other users came to see and it was the core of any biodiversity project. RW reminded partners of the Melksham Food & River Festival on 31st August 1st September https://www.melkshamfoodandriverfestival.co.uk/ RW asked if it would be helpful in Melksham Town Council spoke to the local MP concerning the continuing difficulties with the EA. AM said he would check with the WBCT Chairman. RW reminded KO that he was going to contact Semington PC KO reported that he and JL had attended the IWA Parliamentarian of the Year awards at the House of Commons . This Partnership had nominated Robert Buckland MP who was short listed . The award went to Andrew Brigden MP https://www.waterways.org.uk/news/view?id=391&x[0]=news/list</p>	KO

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Date and time and location of next meetings :

5th September venue to be confirmed

5th December at Wiltshire Council Offices Monkton Park Chippenham