



MEETING Thursday 17th September 2pm
On line via Teams

Item	<u>Draft Notes</u>	
	Attending	
JL	John Laverick (President)	
FdRP	Cllr Fleur de Rhe Philippe (retiring Chairman) Wiltshire Council	
CW	Cllr Chris Williams (Chairman)	
SB	Cllr Sue Brown Melksham TC	
JA	John Allan Cotswold Canals Trust`	
RB	Richard Broadhead Wiltshire Council	
DD	David Dewart Swindon BC	
DL	Dominic Lamb VWHDC	
KO	Ken Oliver Wiltshire Council Partnership	
GO	Gordon Olson WBCT	
SP	Steve Petty Berryfield residents & Melksham Chamber	
WS	Cllr William (Bill) Scott Semington PC (first part of meeting)	
1	Apologies Paul Harris Oxfordshire CC, Cllr Yvonne Constance Oxfordshire CC; Cllr Gary Sumner Swindon BC, Brian Stovold WBCT , Mark Evans CRT, Brian Stovold WBCT, Tim Wheeldon Inland Waterways Association, Stuart Maluare EA, Richard Wiltshire Melksham Trust	
2	Notes from the last meeting Thursday 5 th March 2020 were pre-circulated and will be formally approved at the next meeting.	
3	Chairman's Announcements FdRP announced that this was her last meeting as Chairman and thanked officers and members for all their support over the years . JL on behalf of the project team and partners sincerely thanked Fleur for her work over the years and said that the project could not have advanced without all her hard work. FdRP nominated Cllr Chris Williams as the new Chairman and this was approved by the meeting. CW reiterated the thanks to Fleur gave a short background description noting that he is the Member for Ludgershall and that he is the Portfolio Holder for Military-Civilian Integration, Communications, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, European Structural Investment Fund and Canals.	
4	Partnership Officer Report- M4 Crossing Highways England Designated Fund Application. The proposal for a feasibility study for the M4 canal crossing was due for consideration the following day by the Highways England funding team. Post meeting note. Highways England have deferred a decision seeking further clarification of scheme benefits	

	<p>Melksham Link- planning application. KO reported a further meeting with Canal and River Trust, WBCT and Melksham Link Ltd to discuss first phase of development proposals. A proposal is to be submitted to Canal & River Trust to see if the issue of connection to their network can be agreed with normal fee being allocated to the construction of the Melksham Link. The WBCT Planning application has once again stalled due to no response from the Environment Agency (EA) since February. GO noted that Robert Buckland MP (South Swindon) was intending to hold a meeting at Westminster to try to resolve the ongoing problems with EA.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Projects update – Swindon Wichelstowe . KO introduced David Dewart who has taken over the work previously carried out by Russell Weymouth. Canalside – House building is progressing well and first dwellings are occupied. KO noted that there was an issue with an adjacent landowner who had temporarily closed the canal. Discussions were taking place to try to resolve the problem East Wichel- canal leak- KO said that it appeared that the sections in front of the houses were not leaking so the investigations were now moving westwards Swindon New Eastern Villages- KO outlined the 8000 homes scheme noting that unlike Wichelstowe the canal would not currently be built as part of the scheme infrastructure. During the planning process the aim is to fully integrate the canal design into the development plans so there would be no major issues with subsequent construction. WBCT still believes there would be significant flood defence potential in building the canal as part of the infrastructure Work was about to start on southern connector road and WBCT were about to submit a pre-app for the adjacent canal design. Pewsham Locks GO reported that WBCT are planning to restart work on the top lock.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Partners Reports and Issues SB asked about the current issues surrounding the Melksham Link project . KO responded that the single issue that causes delay is the continuing position of EA wishing to charge for officer time unless they are carrying out their statutory duties as part of the planning process. This is a cumbersome way of dealing with technical issues that could probably be resolved with a meeting of the relevant officers, however WBCT simply does not have sufficient funding to facilitate further meetings beyond the one that held 2 years ago to “finally define all the outstanding issues” (which it did not !). KO noted Wiltshire Council’s reluctance to grant consent while a statutory consultee had an objection. The Melksham link scheme will be delivered by a third-party developer and they are in discussion with any relevant landowners, some of whom are more enthusiast than others. JA reported good progress on the Highways England funded A38 crossing for the Cotswold Canals project which is nearing completion. DL outlined his role within the planning team at VWHDC and that the Local Plan Part 2 protected the route of the canal and that the Council were now looking at the next local plan and was mindful of the canal requirements in any new development</p>	

	<p>GO reported that WBCT finances were stable despite loss of income due restriction of activities during the Covid 19 situation . WBCT is trying to recruit as many members as possible.</p> <p>JL (the meeting was unable to hear Johns final remarks due to technical issues) Subsequently JL said “What participants would have heard was my welcome, as president, of Chris Williams to the Partnership and more particularly my thanks for his agreeing to accept the role of chairman. I said that I look forward to the combination of his military can-do attitude together with Gordon Olson's super charged initiatives at the Trust, which should see restoration move forward 'at pace', to quote a well-used government phrase.”</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Date and time and location of next meeting : 3rd December 2pm online Teams meeting</p>	

DRAFT