



MEETING Thursday 7th March 2019 at 3pm

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

Item	<u>Notes</u>
FdRP CG SM KO SP CS JT TW RW	<p style="text-align: center;">Attending</p> <p>Cllr Fleur de Rhé Philipe (Chairman) Colin Goodhind Melksham Community Area Partnership Stuart Malaure Environment Agency Ken Oliver Wiltshire Council Steve Petty Berryfield Residents Melksham Chamber Chris Sims K&A Canal Trust Jonathan Till Wilts & Berks Canal Trust Tim Wheeldon IWA Russell Weymouth Swindon BC</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">1</p>	<p>Apologies: Gavin Champion Cooper Tires; Cllr Chris Hodgson Cricklade TC; Chris Brown OCC; Cllr Roger Cox VWHDC; Peter Challis Sustrans; Cllr Yvonne Constance OCC; Paul Harris OCC; Richard Broadhead Wiltshire Council ; Cllr Gary Sumner Swindon BC, Cllr Richard Wiltshire Melksham TC; John Allan Cotswold Canals Trust</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p>Notes from the last meeting Thursday 6th December 2018 (pre-circulated) were agreed.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p>Chairman's Announcements The 2019 Annual Restoration Conference, jointly run by The Inland Waterways Association and Canal & River Trust, is taking place on Saturday 30th March at South Wolverhampton and Bilston Academy. This year's theme is 'Relining your Pockets' which will focus on funding and how to make sure your project is relevant to funders. It will look at how added extras, alongside the physical restoration of your canal, can be crucial to bringing in the necessary funding. This year, in order to encourage more new faces, spaces are not limited for each restoration group. Details and bookings: https://bit.ly/2tjCPFQ</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	<p>Appointment of new President for the Partnership Lord Lansdowne stood down at the previous meeting. At this stage FdRP thought that an excellent candidate would be John Laverick. John was the project manager for the successful K&A restoration programme, and was Chairman of the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust for a number of years and is hugely respected in the industry and is someone that everyone could have confidence in. FdRP said that she would be pleased to accept any other suggestions. The unanimous view of the meeting was to endorse approaching John to ask him to accept the position.</p>

5

Project Officer Report-

A Restoration Strategy for the Completion and Future Development of the

Wilts & Berks Canal- March 2019 revised document was pre-circulated . **KO** noted that this version had information that was omitted from the first draft circulated last September. This information is the five year project plan to deliver the two key priority schemes at Melksham and the connection of Royal Wootton Bassett to Swindon.

The meeting approved publishing of this version of the document (subject to any further amendments to be made by Friday March 15th) **KO** noted that an abridged version of the Strategy would be published on the Partnership web site .

M4 Crossing update- with thanks to Canal & River Trust **KO** reported that he had met (with WBCT) Highways England to discuss how the separate canal crossing of the M4 could be delivered.

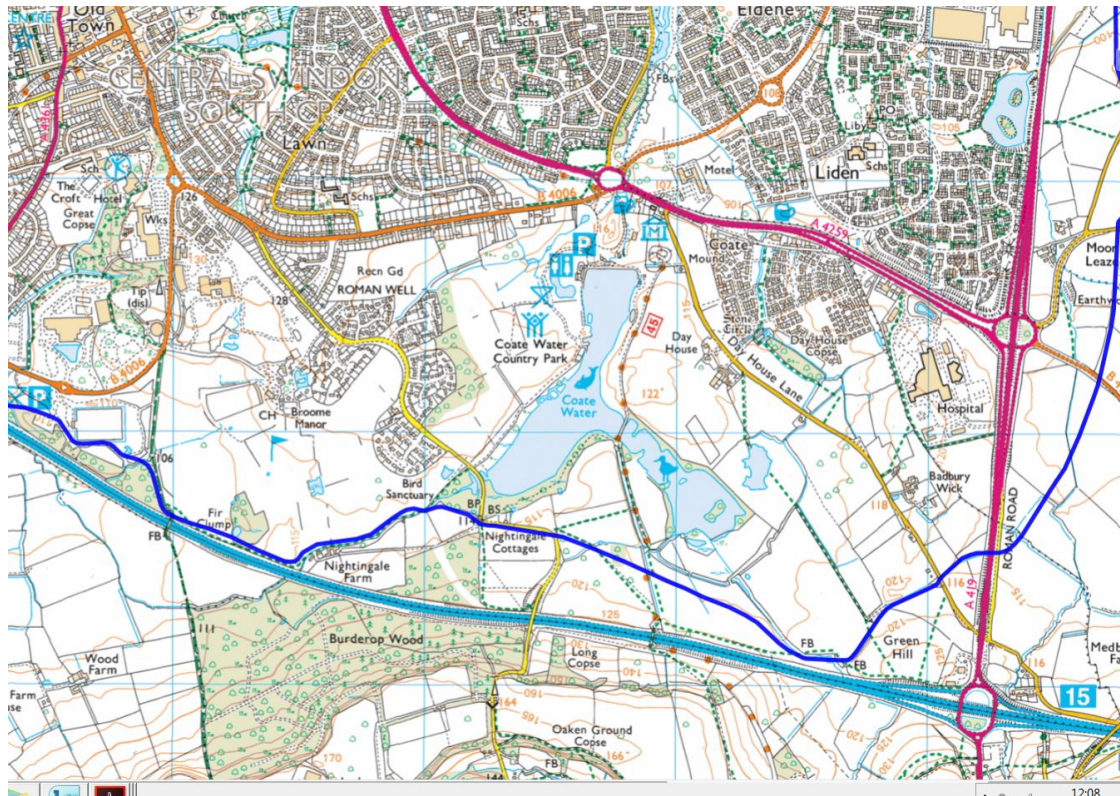
LD&A DESIGN



Highways England had confirmed that the canal restoration would conform to the criteria for applying to their Designated Fund programme. Funding would be subject to approval of a business plan which is currently being written to deliver the Royal Wootton Bassett to Swindon connection programme. **KO** noted that the current plans for the Cotswold Canals crossing of the M5 (part of the Missing Mile project) had just been approved for funding from Designated Funds . Subject to fulfilling the requirements for the funding application, Highways England would design and build the required structure. **RW** said this was very timely as the S106 agreements for Wichelstowe construction have agreed environmental mitigation on the land south of the motorway. Delivery of the canal between the motorway and Hay Lane will provide an opportunity to put together plans for some of this mitigation (habitat creation- tree planting etc). There were a number of issues to be resolved with tenant farmers however **RW** was keen to start work soon on a project in this area. **KO** noted discussions had just started with SBC highways on the required culvert under the re-aligned Wharf Road. **RW** said that there would also need to be

discussion with the Wichelstowe joint venture company (Swindon BC/ Barratt Homes). **RW** said that having firm proposals for this area will be very helpful in giving credence to the whole project. **SM** asked if there were any river connections here. **KO** said there were no connections.

Coate Water Swindon update



KO outlined recent discussions with Natural England regarding how Coate Water could be returned to use as a reservoir to supply the restored canal despite its designation as a SSSI. The NE scoping assessment suggests that this could be done if suitable mitigation is put in place. More data is required particularly on watercourse input and output flows. **KO** agreed to share the NE scoping response with EA. **KO** noted that the proximity of the route of the canal (new route) made the use of Coate Water an inviting proposition (although the highest sections of the canal are above reservoir level and would require pumping) **TW** asked how the reservoir fed the original canal route **KO** said there was a mile long feeder channel going northwards to join near Greenbridge.

Oxfordshire Plan 2050

There is a currently a consultation being carried out by Oxfordshire CC.

<https://oxfordshireplan.org>

KO said that he responded noting that canals were not mentioned anywhere in the Plan. Canal & River Trust had been informed and were also going to comment on this issue.

It was suggested that IWA might also want to comment. **KO** to contact IWA.

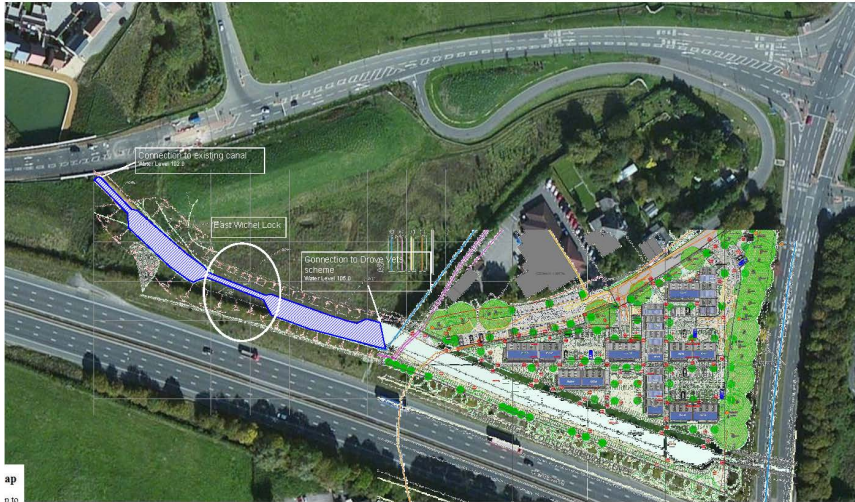
KO

KO

Wiltshire/ Swindon Local Plan Review – Canal Policy

KO reported that Swindon BC would shortly be hosting a workshop to discuss the Canal Policy for the forthcoming Local Plan review. WBCT and Wiltshire Council Spatial planning team have been invited to attend. **KO** said that in reviewing the policy more emphasis would be put on delivery of the canal. A sound evidence base will be required.

Swindon Croft Road Business Park



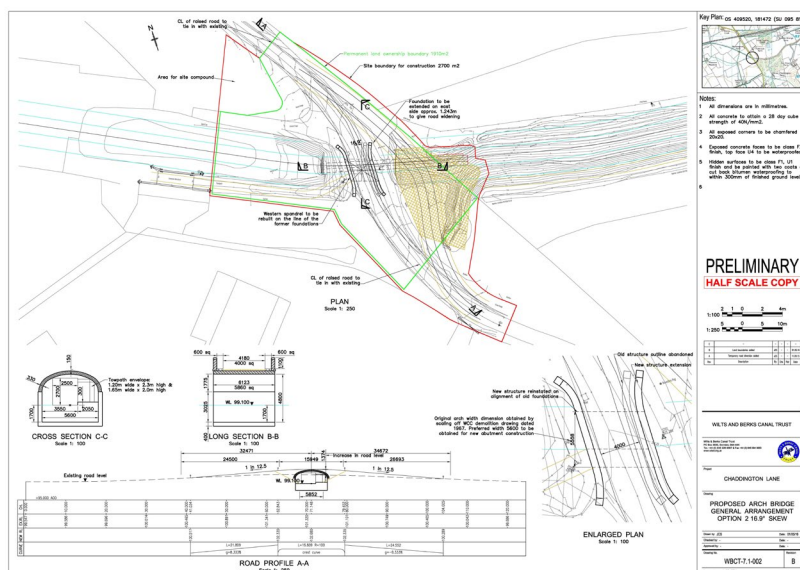
The Partnership has facilitated successful discussions between the developer and Swindon BC to find suitable sites for habitat mitigation for this development.

Bincknoll Lane Bridge

This will allow the two sections of canal at Studley Grange and Morningside Farm to be fully connected. The scheme will replace the original demolished bridge with a new design which is currently being assessed by Wiltshire Council's bridge team. The intention is to use a Macrete flexiarch bridge for this location.

<http://www.macrete.com/flexiarch-flexiarch-projects/>

Following design approval a funding plan will be implemented by WBCT.



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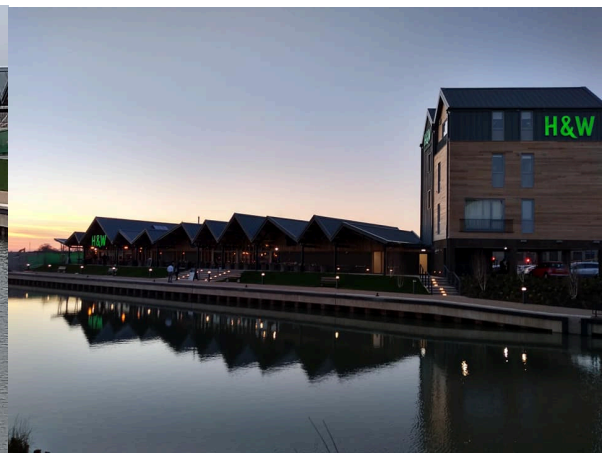
Projects update –

Melksham Link- planning application.

KO reported that the revised information from consultants is now being reviewed by EA as part of the planning process. The case is now being dealt with by Wiltshire Council's Head of Planning. **CG** asked what the expected time scale is and whether there are any anticipated problems. **KO** said that the expected time for a response is about 8 weeks and as ever the consultants had aimed to answer all outstanding issues. **CG** noted that the continuing uncertainty was impacting production of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan.

**Swindon Wichelstowe
Canalside**

Work is progressing on completion of the canal works with the aim to open for navigation before the start of May. The new Hall & Woodhouse pub opened in February and the connecting bridge is due for installation shortly.



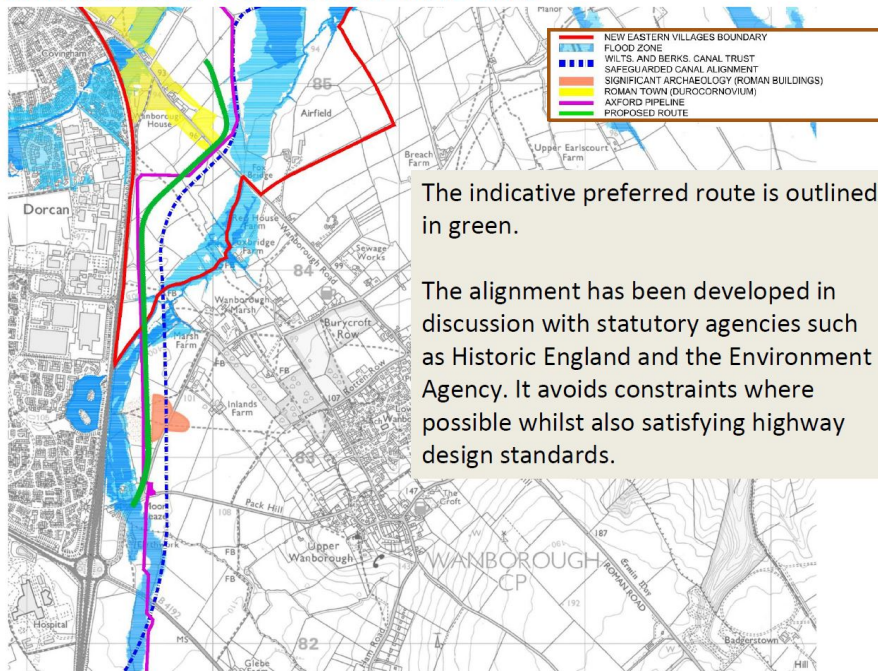
East Wichel- canal leak

Consultants expect to let a contract shortly to carry out the first phase of leak investigation work.

Swindon New Eastern Villages- southern connector road

Swindon BC expect to apply for planning consent shortly for this road scheme:

Indicative Preferred Route



WBCT engineers are currently in discussion with the NEV team to confirm the proposed canal alignment which needs to be amended to avoid significant archaeological finds.

Dautsey Lock Visitor Centre (Peterborough Arms)

JT reported that behind the Peterborough Arms WBCT has just completed installation and fit out of the temporary buildings that are going to be used as the Dautsey Lock Community and Canal Centre.



7	<p>Wessex Waterways Restoration Trust FdRP reported that Luke Walker had resigned as Chairman and that an entirely new board of Trustees had been appointed. KO had asked to attend the recent WWRT AGM but had been refused permission. In discussion with KO it had been agreed to suspend the invitation to WWRT to attend the Partnership meeting until there had been an opportunity to meet with the newly appointed Chairman.</p>	
8	<p>Partners Reports and Issues JT reported that he would be standing down as Chief Executive of WBCT at the end of March. JT outlined his work over the previous 3 years arriving not long after the major reorganisation of the Trust separating its Governance into a Board of Trustees and Executive. Dealing with project overspends had taken much more time than expected. With Rod Bluh (Chairman who recently stood down) they had stabilised the financial situation and had dealt with getting the Peterborough Arms open (with the addition of the visitor and community centre). While still being short of funds much effort is being currently being made to set budgets for the coming year. As much work as possible is being done by volunteers (over 30,000 hrs last year). JT expressed his thanks to partners for the support they had given. FdRP & KO expressed their thanks to Jonathan for his work.</p> <p>CG noted that the Melksham Food & River festival would once again be promoting the waterway this year https://www.melkshamfoodandriverfestival.co.uk/</p> <p>CS noted progress on the Crofton pumping station project and progress with CRT on using modular steel lock gates for the replacement programme on the Kennet & Avon Canal.</p> <p>KO reported latest situation regarding Thames Water Resources Management Plan (which currently plans to construct the Abingdon reservoir by 2037) with a publishing of their response to the consultation in the next few months. KO also said he was also trying to discuss whether Thames Water would be prepared to consider transfer of their reservoir at Wroughton (which it is believed is now being considered for disposal) for use for water supply for the canal. KO reported ongoing discussions with Wiltshire Council planners about the canal restoration at the depot site in Royal Wootton Bassett. RW said it is important now to consider maintenance of the canal once restoration was completed and he was preparing with KO initial proposals to take to the Swindon BC property team. RW said that while it had been agreed in principle to transfer the land to WBCT details needed to be agreed which most importantly would need to include how the asset would be managed. JT said that in a recent meeting with SBC Chief Executive this issue had been discussed and from the perspective of WBCT, the canal would need to be handed over 'in full working order'. KO also noted that usually assets of this nature would come with an endowment to cover maintenance costs. In response to a question from CS, RW said that there would also need to be discussions with the newly formed Parish Councils. KO said that all these issues should be included in a future revision of the Strategy document. SP said he hoped there would be some good news to report about the Melksham Link soon!.</p>	

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Date and time and location of next meeting :

Provisional dates for 2019 at Wiltshire Council Offices Monkton Park Chippenham
6th June (KO to investigate possibility of meeting at Hall & Woodhouse at
Canalside Swindon) : 5th September : 5th December



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.

5

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

8

Date and time and location of next meetings :

5th September venue to be confirmed

5th December at Wiltshire Council Offices Monkton Park Chippenham



MEETING Thursday 5th September 2019 at 3pm

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

Item	<u>Notes</u>	
FdRP JL RWi AB RB DM KO GO TW RWe	<p align="center">Attending</p> Cllr Fleur de Rhé Philipe (Chairman) John Laverick (President) Cllr Richard Wiltshire Melksham Town Council Cllr Alan Baines Melksham Without Parish Council Richard Broadhead Wiltshire Council David Morgan Canal & River Trust Ken Oliver Wiltshire Council Gordon Olsen Tim Wheeldon IWA Russell Weymouth Swindon BC	
<p align="center">1</p>	<p>Apologies Cllr Yvonne Constance Oxfordshire CC; Steve Petty Berryfield Residents Melksham Chamber; Cllr Gary Sumner Swindon BC Cllr Tony Watts Melksham TC John Allan Cotswold Canals Trust</p>	
<p align="center">2</p>	<p>Notes from the last meeting Thursday 6th June 2019 (pre-circulated) were agreed.</p>	
<p align="center">3</p>	<p>Chairman's Announcements FdRP welcomed new members</p>	
<p align="center">4</p>	<p>Partnership Officer Report-</p> <p>CRT Reorganisation- update Wales & SW Region. DM noted the previously reported the change to CRT structure from 10 waterway units to 6 regions. This area now comes under the Wales & South West Region. The originally appointed Regional Manager Richard Thomas has left and the acting Director is Jon Horsfall. DM has the responsibility of delivering strategic programmes and noted that restoration in this region is his responsibility (having been devolved from the work of the previous national restoration manager). Peter Walker still retained responsibility nationally for infrastructure. DM said CRT would do whatever they were able to support restoration via this regional setup.</p> <p>Local Plan Reviews Swindon & Wiltshire KO made the meeting aware of a current consultation by Swindon BC prompted by a workshop held earlier in the year. The consultation is looking at three Heritage Transport options:- <i>Heritage Transport Options</i> <i>In view of the above, the LPA is seeking stakeholder views on a range of policy options. The following options have been identified:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Retain the policy in its current form</i> 2. <i>Retain the policy, but amend it to extend the protection to a 30m</i> 	

canal corridor

3. *Retain the policy, but amend it to state that it does not apply within Swindon town centre*

Post Meeting Note

At the meeting it was assumed that Option 3 was referring to the safeguarding of the 30m width and the lengthy discussion was focussed on a response on that basis. Details of that discussion are contained on the audio record of the meeting but are not included here .

Subsequent clarification from Swindon BC confirmed Option 3 was to remove the route protection altogether from the town centre.

From the Canal Partnership's perspective Option 3 is therefore unacceptable as it severs the possibility of a continuous route. **KO** has responded on behalf of the Partnership to this effect and contacted a number of Partner organisations to request that they make a similar response noting that -

Option 2 is the one suggested by WBCT and gives more certainty to delivery.

Option 1 is acceptable.

M4 Crossing Highways England Designated Fund Application

KO noted the ongoing positive discussions between WBCT and Highways England with the aim of submitting a first stage application to the Designated Funds programme for a feasibility study including costing of construction. Subject to that work, a further application for the capital works will be submitted. **JL** asked how the position of the proposed crossing compared to the original route. **KO** said it was approx ½ km to the west of the original route at the closest point westwards where there is sufficient headroom clearance under the M4. **JL** also sought clarity that the route is protected within the Wichelstowe development. **RWe** confirmed that the canal will be built according to the 2013 masterplanning consent (known as LUMP2) on the northern side of the motorway .On the land owned by Swindon BC (tenanted farm land) on the southern side there is no commitment from SBC to construct the canal. There are a number of planting and environmental mitigation schemes for the Wichelstowe development required on this land and working with the GW Community Forest Programme, specific projects are being proposed to include the canal corridor to Hay Lane. **RWe** also noted continuing discussions with SBC Highways about including the canal culvert required to get under the re-aligned Wharf Road. .

Letters of support have been received from Chief Executive at Swindon and Robert Buckland MP for South Swindon.

KO acknowledged that the delivery of this crossing was a significant 'turnkey' for advancing the whole restoration.

Creating for interest in the Partnership in Oxfordshire

In his new role as President **JL** said that in rejoining the Partnership after a gap of several years , despite the renaming of the organisation, not much progress had been made in engaging the 'eastern end' of the project . **JL** wondered therefore if some further effort should be made to try to attract support in Oxfordshire.

	<p>JL suggested consideration of:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominated officers for the canal project in both Swindon and Oxfordshire / Vale of White Horse DC to form an ‘administrative core’ for the Partnership. • Rotating the Chairmanship of the Partnership on annual basis • Rotating the venue of the Partnership meeting. <p>GO noted a number of major initiatives going on currently in Shrivenham including a major housing scheme to include the canal.</p> <p>KO said that he thought that RWe already fulfilled the role as suggested in Swindon. The change of the Partnership name to include Oxfordshire initially attracted support from the County Council but as their Members moved on, the enthusiasm had dwindled. RWe said that the emphasis in Swindon now was solely on approved capital projects (like the Moredon Sports hub) and planning matters, and that is the basis on which support continues.. RWe said that in the environment of staffing contraction it was currently a very difficult request to contemplate. KO said that in terms of Oxfordshire, the Abingdon Reservoir would be as significant as the M4 crossing in terms of major progress and maybe that would be the trigger to re-engage. RWi thought the economic success of the K&A restoration should be used to help recruit support. FdRP said that progress on the ground was likely to be the catalyst for support and both the Shrivenham and Reservoir schemes had that potential.</p> <p>JL finally said it would be useful, if not essential to have a summary of progress between meeting reviewing actions and agenda items.</p> <p>KO said that he produced a monthly report for WBCT and it would be possible to use this as a basis for filing this gap.</p>	<p>KO</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Projects update – Melksham Link-</p> <p>Planning application. KO reported that the latest round of planning consultation was complete with EA withdrawing their objection about flooding issue at Berryfield but maintaining it about mitigation of the effects of building a new weir (and a few other technical matters about the river lock). KO said that matters have been superseded by the formal complaint lodged by WBCT to EA on how the whole matter has been handled.</p> <p>Complaint to EA</p> <p>GO confirmed that the WBCT have now escalated this complaint to the second stage after receiving what the Trust thought was a fatuous response from the EA Regional Director.</p> <p>JL asked why Wiltshire Council planners are not simply granting planning consent with conditions to take account of the current EA objections.</p> <p>FdRP said that she had asked this question before at the highest level possible and had been told the Authority would be at risk of being taken to judicial review (with all the financial consequences) if the views of a statutory consultee were over-ridden. FdRP said she would take the matter again to the relevant Corporate Director but it would be helpful if WBCT could supply any planning case law to help lower the risk of judicial review.</p> <p>GO noted the comments of WBCT land team who were asking the same question as to why conditional consent could not be considered.</p> <p>GO agreed to share the EA complaint and response with FdRP as part of WBCT’s evidence of why Wiltshire Council should consider this approach.</p> <p>FdRP said clearly using the approach was a risk to the project, as failure of the process (loss for instance of a judicial review) would jeopardise future</p>	<p>GO</p>

support from the Wiltshire Council. **JL** thought that the issues now that EA are objecting on were of a minor nature and therefore conditions would be appropriate. **KO** pointed out that EA's view was that these were major works on a main river including a new weir and considered to have a major impact.

FdRP asked to be fully briefed by **KO/GO** before making a further approach to the Corporate Director.

KO further commented that in taking this step of conditioning the Authority would need substantive answers to what mitigation would be proposed (and they would need to be acceptable to EA). The whole situation would so much more be easily be resolved with one to one engineering meetings with the EA (without cost to WBCT) .

RWi noted the continuing support of Melksham Town Council and the intervention of Michelle Donelan MP to support the case.

TW asked if judicial review was common. **RB** said that the Authority is challenged from time to time on process matters and recently had lost a village common case costing £100k's

For clarity **AB** wanted to check the issues about the Berryfield brook were now cleared up. **KO** confirmed as far as EA were concerned the flooding issue was resolved.

Swindon Wichelstowe

Canalside. The canal is now reopened and current works completed. The Wichelstowe Games were very successful and raised funds to make a start on construction of a slipway at Westleaze Wharf. Planning work is now under way to extend the canal and infrastructure to what will be the new junction of the North Wilts Canal with the main line

East Wichel- canal leak- The first phase of 'stilling test' investigation has been completed. The second phase investigating the next section of the canal will start in the next few weeks. Swindon BC are spending a considerable amount on the investigation which is being helped by WBCT volunteers taking regular canal level readings.

There are initial discussions about the possibility of transfer of a redundant Thames Water reservoir at Wroughton for use for canal water storage.

Swindon New Eastern Villages- **KO** reported that Swindon BC and WBCT are close to agreeing a statement of common ground for the current planning application for the southern connector road. **RWe** said that the SPD for the New Eastern Villages was being reviewed and therefore if there are any changes to the canal plans they could be incorporated. **KO** said there are several route amendments that should be included as a result of planning application at Lotmead, the current SCR discussions and work in progress at Foxbridge. **JL** asked if there were developers for the housing in the NEV. **RW** said that the situation was very complicated but mostly it is promoters rather developers who applying for planning consent. **KO** noted that the most likely outcome at present is an agreed deliverable route, however there seemed to be little appetite to construct the canal as part of the housing scheme.

Moredon Sports Hub

GO/KO

KO/RWe

	<p>RWe said that the proposed link from the Sports Hub to the Western flyer cycleway using the canal route towpath had been shortlisted for funding from the Local Transport budget, If successful this would open the opportunity for joint working with WBCT on this section of derelict canal . It was agreed that KO/RW would develop the project if required for the next stage of project selection.</p> <p>Pewsham Locks GO reported that small projects were progressing on the site with funding allocated from Help for Heroes (Peoples Postcode Lottery)</p>	
6	<p>Wessex Waterways Restoration Trust KO noted that he was meeting with the new Chairman the following week and will report back.</p>	
7	<p>Partners Reports and Issues RWi reminded KO to write to Semington PC to invite them to join the Partnership. AB noted the possibilities of the eastern bypass for Melksham were being put forward to Dept. for Transport for possible funding. Any of the options will need to cross the canal route. KO said that Local Plan policy will require the road to have suitable culvert for the canal.</p>	KO
8	<p>Date and time and location of next meeting : 5th December 3 pm at Wichelstowe Project Offices Mill Lane Wichelstowe Swindon SN1 7BX</p>	



MEETING Thursday 5th December 2019 at 3pm
 Wichelstowe Project Offices Mill Lane Swindon SN1 7BX

Item	<u>Notes</u>	
	Attending	
JL	John Laverick (President) Meeting Chairman	
KO	Ken Oliver Wiltshire Council Partnership Officer	
GS	Cllr Gary Sumner Swindon BC	
JA	John Allen Cotswold Canals Trust	
SP	Steve Petty Berryfield residents & Melksham Chamber	
BS	Brian Stovold WBCT	
RW	Russell Weymouth Swindon BC	
1	Apologies Cllr Yvonne Constance Oxfordshire CC; Cllr Fleur de Rhe Philippe, David Morgan CRT, Chris Brown Oxfordshire CC Richard Broadhead Wiltshire Council Tim Wheeldon IWA' Cllr Richard Wiltshire Melksham Town Council, Domininc Lamb VWHDC	
2	Notes from the last meeting Thursday 5th September 2019 (pre-circulated) The notes were agreed with one minor amendment. JL noted that the action requested for further updates between meetings had not happened. KO said that had not been appropriate to circulate the information available (monthly report to WBCT) but he would have another look at how this could be used for a Partnership update. JL felt the gap of 3 months between information being given to partners was too long and it was essential if organisations at the eastern end of the project are to be encouraged to actively participate. It would have been useful for instance to note that this venue in Swindon had been secured for the meeting. KO apologised for not having achieved this aim. In response to a further matter arising from the last meeting he also apologised for not having contacted Semington Parish Council and would do so as soon as possible.	KO
3	Chairman's Announcements There were none other than apologies from Fleur who was unable to attend. JL expressed his disappointment that 'eastern end' organisations were not represented at the meeting. KO reported that Dominic Lamb had been appointed as the officer contact at Vale of White Horse DC and had been in contact to apologise for non-attendance and hoped to be a future meeting. BS said he would make further efforts in Oxfordshire to generate interest in the project.	
4	Partnership Officer Report- <u>M4 Crossing Highways England Designated Fund Application</u> KO reported that discussions are continuing between Highways England and WBCT and its consultants. The brief to the consultants is being agreed between all parties and the aim is to submit a first stage funding application for feasibility and design within the next month. The scope of the application has been changed in that HE has now confirmed that they will	

not undertake construction as originally planned. The final brief for the construction phase funding will need to include delivery by a third-party organisation. **KO** said he had informally approached Swindon BC officers to see whether there would be any possibility of Swindon BC taking on this role. **GS** confirmed that finance resource and risk would determine whether SBC could contemplate this. It was agreed that when the first stage had advanced further, it would then be more appropriate to deal with this issue. There was a brief discussion around the delays in delivering a proposed improvement scheme at J15 on the M4 (not directly related to the canal crossing)

Local Plan

KO reported that the Swindon Local Plan review had been presented to SBC Cabinet the previous evening. **GS** noted that the actual process involved a special committee of the Full Council which was meeting that evening and if agreed the Local Plan would go to full public consultation on Dec 17th. The previous Partnership meeting had been concerned about the proposed wording of the Canal Policy, particularly as it related to Swindon Town Centre. The Partnership, and some of its members and particularly WBCT had responded to SBC and it would seem that the concerns have been addressed in that the proposed Local Plan includes route protection and a desire to define the route width to 30m where possible. **JL** initiated a brief discussion on the merits of the canal restoration in the urban environment. **GS** noted the particular difficulties around encouraging land owners around the proposed route of the canal to invest in the necessary infrastructure to achieve increased land values in Swindon. The current policy proposals note the contraction of the retail area of the town centre. **GS** thought that in the longer term over 10 years this situation might resolve itself. **GS** added that the investment in the canal in Wichelstowe had probably been more than the normal infrastructure costs but had produced very worthwhile results. When developers are looking at the big picture, as in the New Eastern villages, although the canal corridor is reserved, construction is unlikely due to the likely low return on the investment. **KO** noted the recent positive engagement with the Foxbridge developers in providing a canal design fully integrated into the project (although not going to be constructed).

5

Projects update –

Melksham Link- planning application. Following further work after the last Partnership meeting, WBCT are meeting with Wiltshire Council Head of Planning to see how conditions could be written to overcome the EA objections. **KO** further noted that WC had to have a degree of caution as the EA could chose to challenge if its objections were ignored and could get the application called in to the Secretary of State. **KO** also noted that with the restructuring of Canal & River Trust, restoration was being dealt with at a regional level. **KO** had recently met with David Morgan and Rob Eaton to brief them on the project and following the recent appointment of Mark Evans as Regional Director it was hoped that CRT could review how the project is being dealt with.

Swindon Wichelstowe

Canalside **KO** invited members to walk around the recently constructed adjacent areas including the new canal bridge. The whole section is fully operational, and attention was now being focused on the

next phases of design and construction.

RW noted the recent discussions with SBC Head of Property regarding long term ownership and management of the canal. **GS** agreed that this is an ideal opportunity to use the existing work of a licence agreement between SBC and WBCT to deal with issues such as boat licencing and mooring and other potential revenue streams. This work should be done ahead of the completion of the first canal-side houses where there would naturally be an expectation of being able to use the canal. **BS** agreed that there should be an active but controlled use of the waterway. **JL** noted how CRT managed 'end of garden' moorings on their waterways. **GS** noted that the first houses would be on the off side of the canal where there would be environmentally sensitive issues regarding mooring. **RW** noted that careful asset mapping was required to define responsibilities in each section and further discussion would be required with Wichelstowe team.

East Wichel- canal leak. **KO** said that works are continuing on leak detection and the second phase of the scheme is being implemented by installing additional bunds. Monitoring work will start in January.

BS asked inf there was any progress on joining the two sections of canal **KO** said that there had been no progress on early delivery of this section. **Swindon New Eastern Villages-** The southern connector road now has planning consent subject to the CPO enquiry in January. WBCT and SBC have agreed a Statement of Common Ground.

Moredon Sports Hub **RW** was now less optimistic about further internal highways funding for the proposed linking connection to the Western Flyer cycle route using the route of the canal towpath

Pewsham Locks **BS** reported continued low-key work on the site. **KO** reported on helping WBCT in presenting the proposed Melksham to Lacock footpath/cycleway/bridleway scheme to Melksham Town Council Economic Development Committee where the proposal was fully supported. **SP** noted the current discussions about new road links in the area. **KO** said that any crossing of the canal route should conform to Local Plan Policy by providing a culvert.

Questions and updates

JA reported that Cotswold Canals Trust had received funds (£4m) from Highways England and work had just started on the A38 crossing. **KO** noted in the context of the Wilts & Berks application to HE the overall scheme is connecting Royal Wootton Bassett to Swindon with a sustainable transport route cycleway/footpath and it is one of the key deliverables. **RW** noted that there were great opportunities around the canal south of the motorway for tree planting (Community Forest) as part of the overall mitigation for the Wichelstowe development

GS reported internal SBC discussions on possible development proposals on land adjacent to the canal at Mill Lane Beavan's bridge.

BS outlined the current management structure of WBCT. The Trust is keen to recruit a civil engineer to fulfil the role of Chief Engineer and was also looking for other executive members.

BS reported that following the tragic fatality of a volunteer 3 years ago at Pewsham it had now been informed that the Crown Prosecution Service will not be pursuing criminal charges against the Trust. The incident is however still being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive.

6

Wessex Waterways Restoration Trust **KO** has met the new Chairman Vaughn Welch. After some discussion it was agreed to invite the Chairman

	to attend the next meeting of the Partnership.	
7	Partners Reports and Issues KO reported ongoing discussions with Thames Water for the possible acquisition of the Wroughton reservoir.	
8	Date and time and location of next meeting: Provisional dates for 2020 5 th March at Wichelstowe project offices (TBC) 4 th June, 3 rd September, 3 rd December location to be confirmed.	