



MEETING Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December at 3pm

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

Item	<u>Notes</u>	
<b>LL</b> <b>FdRP</b> <b>RWi</b> <b>S-AB</b> <b>JA</b> <b>KO</b> <b>CS</b> <b>JT</b> <b>TW</b> <b>RW</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">Attending</p> <p>Lord Lansdowne (President)            Cllr Fleur de Rhé Philipe (Chairman)            Cllr Richard Wiltshire Melksham Town Council            Sam Anderson Brown Canal River Trust            John Allen Cotswold Canals Trust            Ken Oliver Wiltshire Council            Chris Sims K&amp;A Canal Trust            Jonathan Till Wilts &amp; Berks Canal Trust            Tim Wheeldon IWA            Russell Weymouth Swindon BC</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">1</p>	<p><b>Apologies:</b> Cllr Gary Sumner Swindon BC; Richard Broadhead Wiltshire Council; Steve Petty Berryfield Residents Association ; Stuart Malaure Environment Agency; Cllr Roger Cox VWHDC; Colin Goodhind Melksham CAP;</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p><b>Notes from the last meeting</b> Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September (pre-circulated) were <b>approved</b>.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p><b>Chairman's Announcements</b> <b>FdRP</b> welcomed new members and thanked Rob Dean (who has now stood down as Chairman KACT) for his support over many years.</p> <p><b>FdRP</b> also announced that after 17 years Lord Lansdowne is retiring as President of the Partnership and is 'irreplaceable'. <b>FdRP</b> Thanked Lord Lansdowne for all the work he had done over the years and in particular for hosting wonderful events at Bowood House.</p> <p><b>LL</b> thanked Fleur for her kind words and said he had done what he could to help since 2001 and was pleased to have seen the progress made in that time. He said he is a keen supporter of the project because the restored canal opened up public access particularly via the towpath to a green space which is so important in this 'crowded island' to give all communities a sense of well being. As a parting thought <b>LL</b> said that he thought the most challenging part of the project is to deal with the issue of the historic route that directly affected the current owner's land and homes. <b>LL</b> was not in favour of compulsory purchase and therefore having a plan for contentious sections of the canal is essential. He went on to say it had been a pleasure to meet so many interesting people from the project over the years and wanted to thank John Laverick in particular for his kind wishes. <b>TW</b> said that he would like to respond by looking at the example of the Somerset Coal Canal where as a landowner he could confirm that by the right attitude during negotiations it was unusual if a deal could not be made that was satisfactory to both parties. <b>LL</b> said he was particularly concerned about areas where the historic line directly affected people's</p>	

	<p>homes. <b>FdRP</b> thought that the slow approach would eventually win hearts and minds. <b>CS</b> said that although purists might object, the aim was to get from Semington to Abingdon and really all that was required was a technically feasible route, which may need to deviate from the historic line. <b>LL</b> said the canal was a different proposition to Sustrans projects for example, as the canal was constrained by topography. <b>LL</b> said despite this issue he was fully behind the project. <b>FdRP</b> then once again thanked Lord Lansdowne and presented him with a frame containing a collection of pictures of key projects over the years that he has been President.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p><b>Project Officer Report-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on Thames Water proposals for Abingdon reservoir  <b>KO</b> reported that Thames Water had revised their latest Water Resources Management Plan and for a number of reasons a major change is the inclusion of the reservoir at Abingdon. A meeting had been held recently with Thames Water and they had confirmed that the proposal at present was likely to be the scheme 'moth balled' in 2010. A layout of the proposed reservoir is shown at the end of these notes and this shows the significant impact on the canal project by delivery of a large amount of the eastern section of the Wilts &amp; Berks Canal. To meet the requirements of the WRMP the reservoir needs to be completed by 2037. Building time is 10 years and with a 5 year design and pre construction period, work will need to commence in the next few years. To progress, the WRMP will probably have to be examined at a public enquiry and then needs to be approved by the Secretary of State- this process could take 2 or more years from now.</li> <li>Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership  <b>KO</b> noted that he had been in discussion with the BACP as the restoration of the Wilts &amp; Berks canal and in particular the Melksham Link would have a major impact in the catchment. A article about the Melksham Link will be submitted for their March 2019 newsletter and hopefully with this new connection with the BACP further support can be gained for the river improvement works.  Further information at <a href="https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/bristolavon/">https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/bristolavon/</a></li> <li><i>A Restoration Strategy for the Completion and Future Development of the Wilts &amp; Berks Canal-</i>  Discussion and approval is deferred to March 2019 meeting</li> </ul>	
<p>5</p>	<p><b>Projects update –</b></p> <p><b>Melksham Link- Planning application.</b> <b>KO</b> reported that work by consultants had been authorised by WBCT and the further information requires by EA would be submitted to planners in January. <b>KO</b> had continued discussion with senior directors at Wiltshire to see if the Authority could find any further ways to assist progress.</p> <p><b>Pewsham</b>  <b>JT</b> said WBCT while continuing restoration plans was looking at making the site a visitor destination and is currently working with landowners and Wiltshire Outdoor Learning Team (WOLT) to create activities on the site. Ways of creating access and parking are currently being discussed to allow for more immediate use of the area above Top Lock.</p>	

	<p><b>Swindon Wichelstowe</b></p> <p><b>Canalside- KO</b> outlined progress with the canal and new public house which is due to open in February. <b>RW</b> described the further design of the centre and said this would be a showcase for canal restoration in Swindon.</p> <p><b>East Wichel-</b> A technical plan for investigation of the canal leak is about to be approved and work is hope to start early in 2019. One of the crucial lessons learnt is that there was no ‘stilling test’ requirement for the canal construction and this now being included in all current works. As a first step to the investigation the fish are be remove and relocated.</p> <p><b>M4 Crossing KO</b> is still trying set up a meeting with Highways England to discuss next steps if a separate canal culvert is the only likely solution.</p> <p><b>Swindon New Eastern Villages-</b> WBCT engineers are working with SBC and there consultants (Atkins) to try to evolve an integrated design for the canal and the southern connector road. WBCT intend to submit a planning application for the canal as a parallel process to the SCR application.</p> <p><b>Dauntsey Lock Visitor Centre (Peterborough Arms) JT</b> was delighted to announce that the Peterborough Arms was now open and is being run by tenants. Office accommodation for WBCT is being moved to temporary buildings at the rear of the pub.</p> <p>Questions and updates</p> <p><b>Canal &amp; River Trust SA-B</b> outlined the continuing re-alignment of management to reflect changes from ten waterway units to six regional teams. <b>KO</b> asked if the CRT restoration strategy document had been approved. <b>S A-B</b> said it was currently waiting for approval for CRT Executive. He noted that when approved this would not be a public document and essentially focussed on CRT restoration projects. Where 3<sup>rd</sup> party waterways were involved the strategy would be shared with relevant restoration groups. The document sets out the strategy in each regional area and will advises the Regional Director of what resources could be made available. The document is obviously a snapshot in time and the intention was to revisit the strategy if local situations changed – ie funding etc. <b>RWi</b> asked if the strategy took account of the leisure benefits of the restoration, <b>S A-B</b> said it fully reflected Canal &amp; River Trust health and well being agenda</p> <p><b>KO</b> asked if there had been any progress with developing an agreement for connection of the Wilts &amp; Berks (Melksham Link) to the Kennet &amp; Avon. After discussion it was agreed that it would be better progressed outside the meeting.</p>	
6	<p><b>Wessex Waterways Restoration Trust</b></p> <p>The notes of the meeting held with Chairman of WWRT had been circulated to Partnership members and are appended to these notes. After much discussion it was <b>Agreed</b> that <b>KO</b> would approach WWRT to invite them to send a representative to attend the next Partnership meeting in March before deciding whether to formally invite WWRT to join.</p>	
7	<p><b>Partners Reports and Issues</b></p> <p><b>RWi</b> asked if Semington Parish Council had indicated if they wish to join responded. <b>KO</b> apologised that this was an outstanding action.</p>	

**S-AB** reminded all that the national restoration conference was taking place on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and the topic will be fundraising.  
**RW** reported that the project at Moredon is going ahead in partnership with British Cycling and would use the towpath route of the canal to connect to the wider cycle network. SBC will be bidding for funding for this project but **RW** also noted there were difficult issues to overcome with a large badger sett.  
 There is further funding being made available for Mouldon Hill and it would be sensible to put in a bid for further canal works. **FdRP** said that the Partnership would happily write a letter of support.

**KO**

**8 Date and time and location of next meeting :**  
 Dates for 2019 at Wiltshire Council Offices Monkton Park Chippenham  
 7<sup>th</sup> March: 6<sup>th</sup> June: 5<sup>th</sup> September : 5<sup>th</sup> December

Thames Water proposal for Reservoir



## **Meeting 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018 at Wiltshire Council Offices Monkton Park Chippenham**

Ken Oliver (KO) Partnership Officer for Wiltshire Swindon & Oxfordshire Canal Partnership

Luke Walker (LW) Chairman/Trustee Wessex Waterways Restoration Trust (WWRT)

### **Background**

The Partnership had been made aware of the formation of WWRT as a registered charity with aims identical to those of the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust (WBCT). Following discussion at the September meeting of the Partnership KO had been asked to meet with WWRT to get a better understanding of why a WWRT had been formed and what the intentions of WWRT are regarding canal restoration.

### **Summary of points discussed**

LW : WWRT was formed after he left WBCT as he had a fundamental disagreement with their policy of not allowing work on land where there was not an immediate written commitment from the landowner to allow public access LW had decided that a constructive thing he could do to progress the restoration of the canal was to form a separate organisation to work in a complementary and non-competitive way to the WBCT.

KO asked if LW could supply any documentation on this issue particularly related to the public benefit requirement – Luke agreed to do so (now done).

KO said that the Partners may find it confusing to have two registered Charities with the same aims working on the same restoration project .

LW said that the aim of WWRT was to complement the work of WBCT and to carry out projects where WBCT could not or would not work.

LW also confirmed that WWRT was intending to work on specific structures rather than sections of the canal.

LW said that WWRT was intending to work at:

Latton Basin

3 sites at Foxham

Dauntsey and was also interested to know if it could work at Jubilee Junction

KO noted that the change of plans by Thames Water to reconsider the Abingdon reservoir would affect the viability of any work now at Jubilee Junction and that in terms of maintenance there was specific guidance on habitat management which Martin Buckland would share. Luke agreed to follow-up with Martin.

KO also asked because of the proximity to the Peterborough Arms how WWRT would manage the relationship with WBCT when working at Dauntsey.

KO asked about the set up of WWRT

LW said that there were 3 Trustees at present and about 10-12 active officers. There were 40-50 members.

WWRT is a corporate member of IWA but as yet IWA has not appointed a Trustee as they are seeking clarity (from the respective Chairs) on how the two Trusts would work together. Luke has responded to Neil Edwards at IWA and agreed to share that response with KO. KO noted that the WSO Partnership would most likely seek similar assurances from the two parties.

LW said they were applying for A4A funding for maintenance tools and would be willing to share this resource with WBCT.

LW said that WWRT would like to join the Partnership but was not in a financial position to contribute to Officer funding.

KO said that when these meeting notes were agreed they would be forwarded to the Partnership Chairman (Cllr. Fleur de Rhe Philipe) for further consideration.

A general discussion took place about other projects including Swindon, Melksham and the Dunnington Aqueduct.