

Scottish Waterways for All
Minutes of Meeting - Wednesday 2nd December 2020 at 11am
Held virtually using Zoom

Attendees: Patricia Bowie (Vice Chair), Graeme Harvey (Treasurer), Sue Bedford-Visser (Secretary), Stuart Rennie, Richard Millar, Don Williams, Neil Kitchener, Sandra Purves, Richard Davies, Josie Saunders, Gordon Daly, Mark Smith, Jonathan Mosse, Paul Gunning,

Apologies: No apologies

Everyone present agreed to the meeting being recorded.

<p>1</p>	<p>Ronnie Rusack, MBE</p> <p>PB welcomed the group to the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RM paid tribute to Ronnie Rusack who has left an enormous legacy on the canals. He said that Ronnie was engaged in SWfA until his last days and was meeting people until a few days before his passing. He also said that Ronnie was central to the creation of SWfA and that it was important to continue its good work. • PB said Ronnie’s passing needs to be marked in some way, e.g. renaming the work boat or an installation somewhere on the canal to commemorate canal volunteers, something that Ronnie was very enthusiastic about. <p>A short discussion on the funeral arrangements. RM has been asked to speak. Disappointment that many of those who would have liked to attend could not due to Covid restrictions.</p>	
<p>2</p>	<p>Minutes of Last Meeting</p> <p>Thanks to SBV for the minutes. Two small amendments were requested. Revised minutes will be issued.</p>	<p>SBV</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Action Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Blair will attend the next SWfA meeting on 27th Jan 2021 • MS will share volunteering days with Sue for inclusion in next minutes • RM is still to brief Forth Yacht Clubs about next summer’s stoppages. RM said that the methodology for Stockingfield has now changed, and that much shorter stoppages – 24 to 48 hours – are more likely (if there are any at all). TBC by the contractor but a significant piece of temporary work aims to avoid closure. MS said that the boat movement scheme would operate during any temporary closures to minimise the impact. • RM has liaised with CS setting out the opportunity discussed for Highland College. • MS reported that he is looking for a date to test with an empty vessel the viability of Clyde Marine Cruises offering passenger services in the upper Clyde – potential height barrier at Garscube Bridge. • RD said that he had received an email from Hamish to say that he had not had a reply from MS about the height of the railway bridge, also to his question about lock 37 • JS said that the link for online bookings would be circulated: https://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/ycw2020/book/ 	<p>MS RM MS</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Review and Refresh sub-group report – circulated – Pat Bowie</p> <p>PB had circulated a short report in advance of the meeting.</p>	

	<p>It is hoped that each sub-group would identify some specific tasks that they could aim to achieve in 2021. These could be transferred to a sheet so that they could be tracked and outcomes easily identified.</p> <p>How best to encourage other members to be involved in sub groups?</p> <p>Also, are there others that should be co-opted onto the main group?</p> <p>RM proposed pairing volunteers with Scottish Canals employees to increase the level of volunteering on the canals. This could readily be done in areas such as regular inspections of the waterways, reservoirs etc which are inspected on a 2-year cycle. Although 2 people are required for inspections, one can be a lay person which helps to bring a fresh pair of eyes to situations. SBV said a number of her group would likely be interested in getting involved, as would SP who is an engineer. GD suggested some inspections take place from a boat and offered the use of his vessel. RD and NK also offered to get involved.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Scottish Canals Update including stoppages – Richard Millar</p> <p>JS was asked to share the presentation from the recent User Group meeting</p> <p>RM’s update included recent lock inspections, dredging on the Union, the breach at Muiravonside (continuous embankment now back in place and the aim is to be back open in time for Easter); Clay Pits – no stoppages; £6M of investment at Bowling (not SC money); NCR up to Loch Lomond – launch event next summer; developments at the new hub at lock 16 on the F&C (the former Barr’s Irn Bru factory); Applecross Bridge, Speirs Wharf and Leamington Lift Bridge – all to be user operable by next season; massive winter works programme.</p> <p>Post Covid - speaking to ScotGov about how to kickstart the economy with investment.</p> <p>GD suggested that the group send a formal letter of thanks to Michael Matheson, MSP. This was endorsed by RM. PB to action.</p>	<p>JS</p> <p>PB</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Volunteering / Training Activity update – Jonathan Mosse</p> <p>JM and RM would now take on the Volunteering and Training sub group.</p> <p>JM gave a volunteering update. The sub-group had had a very useful meeting with CB and KB. They had looked at assessments and how to tie to areas of SVQs that can’t be met through practical training.</p> <p>JM said a training co-ordinator was still needed, and this would be the thrust of the next meeting as they had identified a way to make this happen. Discussion on how to fund this post. There may be opportunities by partnering with other groups such as KSB, TCV etc. Richard said SC would consider part-funding this post (which need not be F/T) but as revenue will continue to be a challenge next year it would need to be a partnership with SWfA.</p> <p>RM also spoke of the wider opportunities for volunteering, citing the recent use of a volunteer engineer at Stockingfield. Covid may in fact provide more opportunities as volunteers seek to enhance their CVs.</p>	

<p>7</p>	<p>Social Media Sub Group Update – Stuart Rennie</p> <p>SR reported that the group is still reviewing the use of social media channels based on who the audiences are. He also described the draft website that he has set up for SWfA.</p> <p>The new website includes management committee, members directory, a password protected members’ area where minutes, agendas, supporting documents etc would be stored, a form for submitting information to be discussed by SWfA, projects that are being considered/carried out, future events, volunteer awards, latest news and the opportunity to sign up for a regular SWfA newsletter.</p> <p>Stuart asked members to speak to their groups to collate information for upload to the website. PB and SBV will speak about who owns the database of members and MS agreed to share a list of names.</p> <p>At the moment the website is on a free domain name, swa.co.uk. To get into search engines it was suggested that £120 would enable it to not be on a free hosted website. It was agreed that this can be taken from the existing SWfA funds.</p> <p>SR was thanked for the excellent work he has done so far. It is however up to everyone to provide information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NK will pull together a list to form the basis of a directory of members. • DW asked if this would be a vehicle for advertising? • To get people to sign up for the newsletter, canal societies etc can communicate with their members. GD suggested a news release for Towpath talk and similar. 	<p>MS</p> <p>NK</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>LCA Navigation and Safety report (including stoppages timeline - circulated) - Don Williams</p> <p>DW updated on the LCA safety committee and progress on the tracker spreadsheet which he talked through. Lots of good things are happening and good volunteer involvement.</p> <p>The tracker shows what time stoppages actually took place. This is a live document which can be reviewed in the future.</p> <p>PB, RD and others supported DW’s plan. RD suggested using colour coding to show which things have caused stoppages through lack of investment – and which closures come about through positive investment.</p> <p>GD asked that SC remove text from their website and newsletter to the effect that the boating season is finished as the canal is supposed to be open all year. JM endorsed these GD’s comments. MS said that summer/ winter season reflects operating hours and holiday hires, not a boating season as such.</p>	<p>JS</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Updates from Crinan and Caledonian Canals</p> <p>RD agreed to make contact with Jamie Hogan on the Caley and a mooring group on the Crinan to broaden SWfA’s engagement with canal users</p>	<p>RD</p>

10	<p>RYA Scotland update - Jonathan Mosse</p> <p>JM gave an RYA update. There has been a lot of work going on to keep members up to speed with the recent changes of what they can/ can't do under the current restrictions.</p>	
11	<p>IWA update - Richard Davies</p> <p>RD said there was not a great deal of news to report but spoke about a future opportunity for a summer camp for the Water Recovery Group to build by-washes on the F&C.</p>	
12	<p>Scottish Canals' Marketing & Communications Strategy - Josie Saunders</p> <p>Josie Saunders gave an update on Scottish Canals' newly approved Marketing and Communications Strategy for 2020-23. The 4 themes of the strategy are: 'Create a feelgood factor', 'Promote positive canal experiences', 'Champion responsible action' and 'Join global conversations', the latter addressing leadership, climate change, asset management, business transformation etc.</p> <p>A video will be produced which will be shared with the group before it is released.</p>	JS
13	<p>E-canal map app update - Josie Saunders</p> <p>JS gave an update on the eCanalMap app. Scottish Canals will provide the content of the Skippers Guide to River Canal Rescue as they currently have very little info for Scotland. RD said there is no need to re-invent the wheel as there is existing information I, for example, the F&C Guidebook, Nicholson's, etc.</p> <p>KB and NK are keen to be involved with identifying other points of interest, historic info and other data that will be of interest and JM willing to share info.</p> <p>JS agreed to share the details that Nicola Sturgeon in her team was collating for comment in January 2021.</p> <p>Would it be useful for LCA to co-ordinate?</p> <p>Timeline for this project is Jan/ Feb with all info to be uploaded by March 2021.</p>	JS
14	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JM raised the potential for Scottish Canals to become a leader in promoting sustainable boating by moving vessels from diesel to other fuels (biofuels). This is currently a big piece of work for the IWA. He had initiated dialogue with RM who agreed to explore further. MS said he is doing some background research into SC's own engines. He has been asked to feed back at the next SWfA meeting. SP spoke about climate change and the long-term use of the Edinburgh Boat House. Andrew Burns is on board with this. DW raised the question of how long Scottish Canals should take to respond to the ReportANav issue and was advised that if it is a safety issue, people should continue contacting SC by phone. <i>(In the event of an emergency that has the potential to cause harm to people, property or the environment only, contact 0800 072 9900)</i>. SBV said it would be useful to be notified when issues that have been reported in had been dealt with, to close the loop. RM said that MS and Paula would produce a spread sheet detailing what has been raised and what has happened for the next meeting. 	MS Paula

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GD proposed that the Year of Coasts and Waters provisional date of May 2021 for the rally be moved to September 2021 as May is still likely to be too early. • JS advised that the Forth & Clyde Canal will be closed between locks 8 and 9 on 8th and 9th of December due to third party works on the canal and that SC was writing to all boaters • GD asked that a vote of thanks to our Vice Chair be minuted 	
15	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next (virtual) meeting of the SWfA management committee will be on 27th January 2021 from 10am to 12 noon.</p>	