



**Minutes of the Bi-Monthly Committee Meeting**

19:30 hrs 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010

**Present:**

Brian Hegarty (Chair)	Ray Chitty (Sec)	John Morgan (EA)
Bob Jennings	Terry Riley	Pat Fyfe
Des Long	Bev Henderson	Roger Mobbs

John Norcott (Observer) Robin Chapman (Observer)

Item 1:

**Apologies:**

Phil Munslow	Adrian Larkin	Andrea Griffiths
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Item 2:

**Acceptance of the Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted unanimously.

Item 3:

**Minutes & Matters Arising**

Item 12 – Pat Fyfe asked if there had been enforcement notices passed against the floating restaurant. Brian Hegarty stated that he was aware of one being placed but could obtain no information as to why but he will continue trying to find out.

Item 12 – Ray Chitty reported that the tidal debris noted in the river before Christmas had now been washed away by the high water levels over the winter, as such no grounds to write to Medway Port Authority to complain.

Item 4:

**Report from the Environment Agency** (*Submitted Written Report*)

Update on Medway Works 5<sup>th</sup> March 2010

**New - Teston and East Farleigh Landing Stages**

Works to these landing stages should be finally complete by Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March. There were some material shortages but hopefully this has been rectified by now. The contractor and us have suffered considerable delays as a result of the winter floods but the end is now in sight.

## **New - Teston and East Farleigh overnight moorings**

While the contractor has been working at Teston and East Farleigh, we have installed some new casual mooring posts for boaters. At East Farleigh these are located just downstream of the lock on the left bank. There are 12 posts altogether. These will be free to use for a 48hr period.

At Teston, we finally obtained consent from KCC to install 6 posts at the very upstream end of Teston Country Park. These moorings will belong to KCC and I believe that they intend to charge £5 per night for them. If the moorings don't work out for them then they will remove them.

## **Allington Sluice**

This £3 million project is progressing well and is due to be completed by September this year. To date one gate has been installed and is operational. The contractor is currently building the fish pass around the structure which will necessitate the closure of the sluice footbridge on occasions. The second and third gates are currently being fabricated by a local firm near Yalding. The fish pass is due for completion in May and by this time the new disabled access ramps would have been installed also.

## **Allington permanent moorings**

We will be installing four new finger pontoons next to Allington Slipway this month. These pontoons should give us up to seven new permanent moorings. We still have space for boats in our lock cut at Allington also. Speak to Tim or Steve at the lock for details.

## **Launch of the Medway Canoe Trail**

Our Strategy and Development team have produced a new "Medway Canoe Trail" leaflet. You can obtain copies from Michelle Waterman at Addington 01732 223222

## **Hampstead Lock internal steps**

We had some complaints that the steps inside the lock at Hampstead were slippery. As a result we have replaced them with steel treads which have better grip.

## **Eldridges Lock Combined Canoe and Fish Pass**

This is complete. Just waiting for the right weather window to raise the river above Eldridges Lock so that the pass runs with water. This should be mid to end of March. There is a small chance that the TV are interested in the opening – but we'll see.

## **East Lock Canoe and Fish Pass**

Works have started this week on removing the old weir and replacing it with a new canoe slide and fish pass. Works have required the river levels to be lowered either side. This work is due to be completed by Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March – ready for Easter.

## **Tonbridge Lock gate Walkways**

These have been replaced with the new black and white versions allowing improved access and a more pleasing look.

## **Yalding toilet and showers**

The new building for these has stalled due to funding. We do hope to find alternative solutions in the meantime. I am still hopeful that we can get something in place for the summer.

## **2010 Dredging and tree clearance**

I believe that this is due to start on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March or around then. Land and Water are the contractors undertaking the works.

John Morgan, who was present at the meeting, handed out the new Canoe Trail flyers for all to see.

John informed the meeting that since 1995 £11.5 million have been spent on the River Medway.

The meeting were also informed that the Transport & Workers Act had now been signed off by the Government which means that the Boat Safety System and cover by 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurance on the river can now be enforced. It is likely that the B.S.S will come into force in March 2011, all boats will be expected to have a certificate or a minor failure certificate by then.

Roger Mobbs asked if individuals were informed of Notices to Mariners on the river, John replied no, only to marinas and commercial services.

The meeting thanked John Morgan and his team for all the work that had been carried out on the river and particularly to John who was about to retire, the committee wished him well on his retirement.

Item 5:

### **Report from Medway Valley Countryside Partnership.**

No report submitted

Item 6:

### **Planning Report**

Brain Hegarty stated that although enforcement notices had been placed on the building project at Tovil it appears that no enforcement has been undertaken by the council. He also stated that there had been no further news on the proposed boat moorings planned for the site. It was suggested that we contact Phil Munslow and get an update on the situation.

**Action: Ray Chitty**

Item 7:

### **Boating Report.**

Roger Mobbs outlined the work undertaken by the Invicta Rowing Club to safe guard boats and other boaters during head races and then when on to outline a complaint that Invicta had received from a boater regarding the marking of the race line and alleged fouling of a propeller. The committee agreed that this was a single complaint from a non-MRUA member and had no grounds; as such the issue should not be pursued.

Roger outlined an incident on the river where a rib belonging to the rowing club had exceeded the speed limit and caused a wash to moored boats. He stated that the crew had been reprimanded for their actions and placed on a rib handling training course.

Item 8:

**Commercial Interest Report**

Bev Henderson expressed her concern over the closure of the public toilets by the river in Maidstone town and the inconvenience this causes to the public, the nearest toilets being up the High Street. Bev asked that the committee write to Councillor Ian Chittenden to express our concerns over the council's public toilet policy.

**Action: Ray Chitty**

Item 9:

**Treasurer's Report**

Ray Chitty reported that Jaci Ingram had resigned as Treasurer before actually taking over the formal duties; this had left us once again without a Treasurer. Being that no-one had offered to take on the role Ray would cover both Secretary and Treasurer duties from now.

Having contacted the bank it appears there is an issue over who are the designated signatories, it appears that the bank are accessing an old data file and have past members listed as signatories. This has been identified as a bank issue not an MRUA issue and Ray is communicating with the bank to have this corrected as soon as possible.

**Action: Ray Chitty**

Item 10:

**Membership Secretary's Report**

No report submitted.

Item 11:

**Media**

No report submitted.

Item 12:

**Discussion Topics Which Are Not Regular Agenda Items.**

The Annual General Meeting was set for Friday 21st May 2010. Bev Henderson has kindly offered once again the use of the Allington Belle to hold the meeting. The time set is 7:00pm for a prompt 7:30pm departure from the Belle's normal mooring in Maidstone town.

Letters are to be prepared and sent to all MRUA members.

Item 13:

**Any Other Business**

None

**Meeting closed at 21:30hrs**

**Next meeting: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2010**