

# *Medway River Users Association*



## **Minutes of the Monthly Committee Meeting**

19:30 hrs      9<sup>th</sup> December 2008

### **Present:**

Katy Turner

Terry Riley

Anna Presswell

Brian Hegarty (Chair)

Roger Mobbs

Ray Chitty (Sec.)

Bob Jennings

### Item 1:

#### **Apologies:**

Tony Elliston

Bev Henderson

Janet Higgins

Philip Munslow

Graham Ingram

John Morgan

### Item 2:

#### **Acceptance of the Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted unanimously.

### Item 3:

#### **Minutes & Matters Arising**

Brian Hegarty has been in touch with Kent County Council regarding trees overhanging the river as technically the river is classed as a highway. K.C.C didn't feel that this is a highways issue but gave Brian the name of David Munn as a contact regarding this issue.

### Item 4:

#### **Discussion Topics**

Ray Chitty, having attended the MEDWAY NAVIGATION CONSULTATION MEETING reported back to the committee on the following points;

#### **COSTS**

The Environment Agency plan to spend £2.6 million on the river during the next financial year with the continuation of the work on the locks and moorings.

There will be an increase in charges on the Medway of 7.8% for 2009/10.

#### **BOAT SAFETY SCHEME AND NEW BYE LAWS**

The Transport and Works Order is currently being reviewed by DEFRA lawyers, however we are optimistic that the Secretary of State will sign off the order in the near future. Once this is in place we will introduce the Boat Safety Scheme and Third Party

insurance. The E.A will also update the Medway Byelaws to reflect these changes.

### **STAFF CHANGES**

Rebecca Cox has taken up the Post of Navigation Office moving over from Facilities Department in Addington. Penny Fox has become Waterways Officer while Jonathan Balkwill has moved over to become Waterways Strategy and Development Team Leader.

### **NEW RIVER MEDWAY WEBSITE.**

The E.A is looking to begin work on our new website in the New Year. This will be an important tool to promote the river to the public and convey information to our users. The issue of their river state indicator was raised as it appeared that on several occasions the website had shown a green state for the river where in fact the river was running hard and should have indicated a red state. The E.A agreed to add a warning on the site that the river state was not updated regularly and was only a guide.

The table below gives a summary of the number of craft registered on the Medway Navigation between April 2002 and March 2008.

	<b>2002/03</b>	<b>2003/04</b>	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	1837	1863	1783	1835	1791	1863

Copies of all relevant documents are available if required.

Item 5:

#### **Report from the Environment Agency**

No report submitted.

Item 6:

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

Anna Presswell gave a brief report on work being carried out along the riverbank which included;

- Replacement of the path in the Unicombe Lane area.
- The last of the new benches being installed.
- The provision of 'walking maps', which are available on the MVCP website now and will be printed in the Spring as a leaflet.
- An events leaflet which will contain lots of new events and will also be published in the new year.

Item 7:

#### **Planning Report**

Brian Hegarty reported that a new housing project was going in just below the old Tovil boat yard. When a date has been set for the planning meeting Brian will attend and report back. Brian also stated that there appeared to be lots of ideas in the pipeline for the Tovil area and a careful watch needs to be kept for any new planning applications in that area.

Item 8:

#### **Boating Report**

Roger Mobbs informed the committee of the Maidstone Invicta Rowing Club Heads Weekend which would be 13<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

Item 9:

**Commercial Interest Report**

No report submitted

Item 10:

**Treasurer's Report**

No report submitted

Item 11:

**Membership Secretary's Report**

No report submitted

Item 12:

**Media**

Roger Mobbs has now been in touch with the First Aid tutor regarding the setting up of first aid courses for boaters. Roger is currently working towards getting this course certified and developed for boaters.

Terry is continuing to update and maintain the MRUA website, Terry said that he had been approached by Derek Lidington (Boat Safety Examiner) will regard to advertising on the site. Ray Chitty said it would be a better option for Derek to have a small site of his own and place a link onto the MRUA site, especially with the forthcoming requirement for boat safety certificates on the Medway.

**ACTION: Ray Chitty to contact Derek Lidington**

Following the discussions on seeking available land along the river for moorings or camping Terry will add a piece to the website enquiring if any landowners are interested in renting land to the M.R.U.A for this purpose.

Item 13:

**Any Other Business**

Roger Mobbs raised the discussion on whether the committee meetings should be bi-monthly, particularly during the winter months as activities on the river was considerably reduced. With most people having access to mobile phones and internet it was thought that if a major issue arose between meetings then an emergency meeting could be called at short notice. As the timing of committee meetings is part of the associations constitution any revision of committee meeting schedule must be put to the A.G.M.  
This matter for further discussion.

Meeting concluded at 21:00hrs

Next meeting: **13<sup>th</sup> January 2009**