

Medway River Users Association



Minutes of the Monthly Committee Meeting

19:30 hrs 10th February 2009

Present:

Tony Elliston (Chair)

Pat Fyfe

Brian Hegarty

Ray Chitty (Sec)

Katy Turner

Roger Mobbs

Bev Henderson

Bob Jennings

Terry Riley

Item 1:

Apologies:

Janet Higgins

Philip Munslow

John Morgan

Item 2:

Acceptance of the Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted unanimously after amendments had been raised. These amendments will be added prior to publication.

Item 3:

Minutes & Matters Arising

Roger Mobbs raised the amendments to Item 4 of the previous minutes regarding the wording of the cost of the first aid course and Item 5 the response from John Morgan.

Item 4:

Discussion Topics

Proposed Floating Restaurant

Tony Elliston raised the subject of the proposed floating restaurant which is planned to be mooring by the Old Palace. Brian Hegarty had to hand several documents and plans of the proposed restaurant, which were viewed by all present and an in depth debate surrounding the matter took place.

Several issues regarding the proposed plan were discussed, which included;

- Mooring arrangements not only of the restaurant but also the auxiliary vessels planned to support it i.e. the 30' gondola and electric boat. Bev Henderson commented on the structure of the mooring equipment and whether it was man enough to withstand a flood.
- The sanitation arrangements planned to accommodate 165 diners plus 32 staff.
- Location of a restaurant adjacent to a listed building.

- The undeclared construction of the vessel, steel, wood, concrete etc.?
- Shore based facilities for diners on the riverbank and illuminated signs.

The discussion concluded with a decision to write to the council outlining the MRUA concerns.

Action: Tony Elliston will draft a letter to the council

Annual General Meeting

Bev Henderson was asked if once again the Allington Belle could be used for the A.G.M, Bev agreed. The date of the A.G.M was set for Friday 8th May 2009 – 19:30 departure from Maidstone.

Item 5:

Report from the Environment Agency

Submitted report as follows;

Key points:

Allington Sluice refurbishment. The walkway across the structure will not be closed in February as there is a delay in setting up and agreeing the contract with the suppliers. We shall give you advance notice of when the walkway has to be closed. This should be for a maximum of 2 weeks while the scaffolding is erected. Note some tree removal near to the museum will be undertaken within the next week as part of the advance facilitation works. This is relatively low key and should not affect anyone.

Hampstead Lock. As you are no doubt aware flooding and sub zero temperatures (concrete cannot be poured in freezing conditions) are causing delays to the rebuilding of the lock structure. At this stage, the lock chamber will still be open throughout the 4 day Easter period (10th to 13th April inclusive) although after this we may revert to restricted opening for the following 3-4 weeks. This will allow navigation passage but at the same time allow the contractor to complete the works relatively un-hindered. At this stage this will be a worse case scenario but I am sending this as a warning in advance.

Oak Weir Lock upstream and downstream landing stages. These are 98% complete. Just some steps and snagging items to deal with.

East Lock upstream and downstream landing stages. Again these are 98% complete with just some snagging items to deal with.

Town Lock landing stages. Works started 2 - 3 weeks ago and have hit all the bad weather and river flows. Again today and tomorrow the contractor will not be working due to the river levels. The good news is that all of the piles have been installed upstream and the piling gate is in position downstream reading to receive piles for the canoe deck. With fair and dryer weather I would expect that these works will take a further 4 weeks to complete.

Dredging and tree clearance. Land and Water (contractors) are currently booked in to start dredging w/c 16th March. They will be starting at Allington and subject to river flows will be moving through Hampstead Lock just prior to Easter.

Item 6:

Report from Medway Valley Countryside Partnership

No report submitted – Caroline Drewett had written to Tony regarding an application for funding for river work and requested the MRUA support the application through a letter.

Action: Ray Chitty will supply a supporting letter.

Item 7:

Planning Report

Brian Hegarty is going to submit representations regarding the planned closure of toilets in and around the river area.

Item 8:

Boating Report

- Roger Mobbs informed the committee of the Small Boats Head on 22nd February, weather permitting. Also that the buoy marking the wreck at Tovil had broken free and caution should be taken if approaching that area.
- Bob Jennings informed the meeting that the Medway yacht Club will be moving from Cuxton to Medway Bridge in the near future.
- Bev Henderson expressed concern over the varying river depths along the river due to the recent flooding.

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

Terry Riley raised a query on whether the web site should display contact details of committee members following comments from web users, it was agreed the current contact system was suffice at this time.

Item 13:

Any Other Business

Tony Elliston raised the issue of the venue of the committee meetings as the club is frequently double booked for meetings. Item for further discussion.

Meeting concluded at 21:00hrs

Next meeting: **17th March 2009**