

Medway River Users Association



Minutes of the Bi-Monthly Committee Meeting

19:30 hrs 10th November 2009

Present:

Brian Hegarty (Chair)

Ray Chitty (Sec)

Bob Jennings

Des Long

Graham Ingram

Adrian Larkin

Terry Riley

Bev Henderson

Jackie Ingram

Andrea Griffiths

Pat Fyfe

Roger Mobbs

Jim Clark (Observer)

Item 1:

Apologies:

Phil Munslow

Item 2:

Acceptance of the Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted unanimously.

Item 3:

Minutes & Matters Arising

Brian stated that when the committee visit the town hall we have been invited to meet the Mayor in his parlour.

Possible 17 committee members and partners plan to attend the Christmas Dinner in the Bull Inn, East Farleigh in December.

Item 4:

Report from the Environment Agency

River Improvements 09/10 (Report sent by e-mail)

Teston and East Farleigh Landing Stages

Works on programme to complete in early Jan 2010. Any flooding will affect the programme.

Eldridges Lock Combined Canoe and Fish Pass

Works on programme and completion due early December.

Allington Sluice

Replacement of the first sluice gate has gone well so far. The new lifting gear will be installed over the next week or two and the gate is expected to be fully functional by the beginning of December.

Town Lock Gate Walkways

These are due for replacement in December.

Porters Lock quadrants

These are being re-concreted by the Nav team

Dredging

The dredging and planned tree clearance is complete for 2009. Land and Water will recommence dredging before the next season and after the winter floods.

New Automatic Barriers at Allington

These have now been installed and are operational. It now means that users of the slipway and moorings can leave the site without disturbing the lock keeper late at night. They also mean security is improved. The lock keeper can also operate the barriers and the lock at the same time in busy periods (this summer was very busy).

Brian Hegarty and Ray Chitty reported back to the committee the details of a meeting held with Phil Munslow at Tovil in October regarding the planned development of a mooring for 10 boats and the proposed opening of a slipway. The Environment Agency were very unhappy with the plans and would be taking the matter further.

Item 5:

Report from Medway Valley Countryside Partnership.

We welcomed Andrea Griffiths to the committee representing the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership. The report below had already been submitted by e-mail.

Autumn River Rubbish Round Up

Monday 19th October to Sunday 25th October.

This date means that early autumn weather will make venturing out and about a pleasant task but also means any rubbish left by visitors and user groups in the summer can be removed ready for a cleaner autumn season. Groups can tackle an area they know needs a bit of tlc or give the partnership a call - we will be covering the litter collecting along some of the promoted River Walks highlighted in our River Walks pack.

If you would like to pop out during the week your help would be gratefully appreciated. Please get in touch to discuss on andrea.griffiths@kent.gov.uk or by calling 01622 683695.

Tovil and Fant Open Space Project

MVCP are represented on the working group and have been undertaking ecological surveys at Hudson Quarry and along the river for MBC.

Giant Hogweed Control Programme

Spraying has been completed for this year. The aim next year is to identify gaps in

landownership along the river and encourage joining of the scheme by these landowners to ensure full coverage. The scheme covers the Medway catchment (Upper Medway and its tributaries). The GH report is currently being written and will be available upon request by landowners and river users from MVCP (andrea.griffiths@medwayvalley.org). Funding has been successfully gained next year by the partnership to enable a greater hit of the Teise area around Yalding. Andrea (Griffiths) will be in touch in the New Year - we would like to ask the MRUA for your help in spreading the word of the control programme and assisting with locating 'missing' landowners.

River Photography Competition

This years' photographic competition focuses entirely on the River Medway from Tonbridge to Rochester bridge.

Our 4 categories cover a diverse range of subjects. The competition is open until next spring 2010 so why not submit a few images and capture the change in seasons. As long as your image is of the river itself and falls into one of these four categories then why not enter. All entries will be on view on the website for the duration of the competition and there are prizes for the winners of each category. The overall winners from both the under and over 18's groups will win a fantastic photographic workshop day with professional wildlife photographer Terry Whittaker plus your best image from this special day will be framed for you to keep.

All images must be uploaded onto the website and therefore need to be in a digital format. All images submitted will be on display on this website under the category and the appropriate age group of the entrant. Images will remain on the website until after the competition deadline and judging.
To enter please visit ; <http://www.rivermedwayphoto.org/>

Medway Valley Walk

Work will soon be underway from Unicomes Lane - Tovil Footbridge to improve the surface - this work is being undertaken by KCC PROW.

KCC PROW have a small pot of funding for capital works along the PROW network to improve access. This funding needs to be spend by the end of the financial year - if you have any suggestion of improvements please e-mail MVCP who can pass on your details to PROW; medwayvalley@kent.gov.uk. Suitable works would be; replacement of stiles with kissing gates, improved surfacing, new footbridges.....

Riverside Communities Project

Funding for this community heritage project is coming to an end (beginning of December). Local events will be held over the coming months with parishes along the river to celebrate the river.

Circular walk packs are available from MVCP (paper copies) / <http://www.kent.gov.uk/publications/leisure-and-culture/explore-kent/medway-valley-walks.htm>

Surfacing is being completed around the sculptured benches installed along the river.

Finally - an education pack (online) is being produced which will focus on the river.

Item 6:

Planning Report

Committee informed of a drinks licence application by a company who plan to put a craft at Fairmeadow which will be used as a floating night club. Few details are available at this time but this application will be monitored.

Letters to be written to Tony Harwood and Fran Wilson regarding the concerns of the MRUA about river development.

Action: Ray Chitty

Item 7:

Boating Report.

Roger Mobbs reported that during the recent Small Boats Head 2 rowers had been disqualified for hitting moored vessels, this was something that the rowing club took very seriously. Also that a vessel had been scrapped by a rowing boat at Monktons Lane and a letter of apology had been sent to the owner.

Item 8:

Commercial Interest Report

No report submitted.

Item 9:

Treasurer's Report

The treasurers paperwork had been collected by Des Long and was handed over to Jaci Ingram. Brian Hegarty & Des Long will act as auditors to confirm the accounts on Jaci taking over as Treasurer.

Jaci Ingram will contact the bank regarding the change of details and signatories.

Action: Jaci Ingram

Item 10:

Membership Secretary's Report

Roger Mobbs handed Des Long 2 membership applications, 1 personal and 1 from Invicta Rowing Club.

Des Long reported that there were currently 92 members of the MRUA and that in the Spring we need to start a drive to attract new members. Various idea were put forward by committee members including marina visits, parent mail through the schools and representation at MVCP events.

Item 11:

Media

Ray Chitty suggested putting the Webmaster & Secretary names on the website. Agreed.

Action: Terry Riley

Item 12:

Discussion Topics Which Are Not Regular Agenda Items.

Floating restaurant placement in the town discussed and noted that the vessel is wider than the original plans submitted. Brian will mention this to local councillors and report back to the committee.

Action: Brian Hegarty

Due to the very high level of debris on the tidal part of the river the Secretary will make representations to the Medway Port Authority regarding the clearing of the debris. The debris was thought to hinder navigation and damage vessels.

Action: Ray Chitty

(Foot note to above: on navigating the tidal river in early December it was found that all the debris had cleared, possibly due to the high river levels. Currently no debris to complain about but the situation will be monitored as we enter the Spring.)

RC

Item 13:

Any Other Business

Any injured swans found on the river should be notified to the Outwood Swan Sanctuary on 01342 842666.

Roger Mobbs asked that if anyone had any old fenders he was looking for some to be used as river markers, please contact him.

Meeting closed at 21:00hrs

Next meeting: 12th January 2010