

Medway River Users Association



Minutes of the Medway River Users Association Committee meeting
Held on 13th January 2009 at the East Farleigh Club

Present: Tony Elliston (Chair), Bev Henderson, Pat Fyfe, Brian Hegarty, Katy Turner. Roger Mobbs, Bob Jennings, Anna Preswell, John Morgan

1. Apologies for Absence
Ray Chitty, Janet Higgins

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising
The minutes were agreed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising
None

4. Discussion Topics – Not Regular Agenda Items
1st Aid Training for the Rowing Club.

Roger has been in contact with the trainer to discuss a one day, 6 hour course which would provide Marine HSE certificate. 16 members of the rowing club are keen to attend and a room has been provisionally booked at the Marriott Tudor Park Hotel for Saturday 7th March. The course of the course is £450. Roger has contacted the Amateur Rowing Association re donation and is awaiting a response. Roger asked whether the MRUA would be prepared to sponsor this event.

There followed discussion regarding whether other MRUA members and associated clubs should be offered places. It was agreed that this should be publicized on the website on a “1st come 1st served” basis, with people asked to register interest with a view to further courses being run if there is sufficient interest. This will be a MRUA initiative to encourage safety on the water.

Proposal to fund the course on the above basis. Prop: Pat Fyfe, 2nd: Brian Hegarty

Katy to ask Terry to put onto website and to forward to Anna, as MVCP may be able to make a nominal contribution.

Action Katy

5. Report from Environment Agency.

John offered to circulate membership applications with EA renewals. Tony to supply forms to John.

Action Tony/John

John reported as follows:

- Hampstead Lock repairs are running to schedule
- All the landing stages both up and down river of all the locks between Tonbridge and Hampstead will have been renewed by the start of the boating season.
- Boat Safety Scheme: (Transport and Works Act). Still with DEFRA. Likely earliest implementation now April 2010 – will be some phasing of introduction.
- Dredging contract is ready to go. There is some silting around Teston Lock.
- Allington Sluice: Due to start February. Philip is trying to keep the walkway open during the works.

Roger thanked the EA for providing regular “flow monitoring” reports by telephone, but asked if, in the current weather, he could be advised of areas of ice in the river. John felt this would be impractical due to the localisation of the ice.

Following the comment last month regarding a fallen tree at Farleigh. Roger reported that it had now been cut to allow passage along the towpath.

John supported the proposal discussed last month regarding the MRUA meetings being held bi-monthly in future.

6. Report from Medway Valley Countryside Partnership.

Anna circulated a plan showing where seating and information panels were being placed along the riverside.

A draft program of events was circulated, with the final copy being available in about one month. It was suggested that this also be sent out with the EA river license renewals.

Action: Anna to arrange for copies to be passed to the EA

Anna circulated copies of the Kingfisher magazine. Pat to forward electronically to Ray for website link.

Anna reported that this would be her final meeting, as she would be moving to Edinburgh for a year to work on a climate change program. Mary Tate may attend in the future.

The committee thanked Anna for her support and wished her every success in her new role.

7. Planning Report.

7.1 Syngenta site. Brian reported that mediation is now complete. However, there is a new developer who will be resubmitting plans for the site. There will be a public display of the plans in 2009. The initial development will be cut by 50% and the nature reserve will be expanded.

7.2 Old Pumping Station at Farleigh. Brian understood the application had been withdrawn, however Bev had been advised by the applications that permission had been granted. Bev will contact Lol and Trish to obtain clarity and report back to next meeting. **Action: Bev**

8. Boating Report.

EFCC: No report. But Katy asked whether the planned trip for EA staff to be taken downriver by boaters had taken place. Tony advised it had not been possible to agree a date during 2008, but hopefully it would take place during 2009.

Maidstone Rowing Club: Will not be rescheduling the Small Boats Head which was cancelled on 14th December due to bad weather. One of the bouys put out for this event is still missing. There will be a 4s Head on 1st March.

9. Commercial Interest Report.

Nothing to report

10. Treasurer's report.

As Janet was not present, there was no report.

11. Membership Secretary's Report.

No report.

It was suggested that window stickers be issued to all members. Katy to find out how much EFCC pays for theirs. **Action: Katy**

12. Media

No official report. Although work on updating the website was still going ahead.

13. Any Other Business

Anna reported that 200 entries had been received for the photo competition. There is an exhibition of winners at Sessions House in Maidstone until Friday. There are also pictures on the website.

Date of next meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th February 2009.

Agenda items to include: AGM and Frequency of Meetings.