

Medway River Users Association



Minutes of the Monthly Committee Meeting

19:30 hrs 14th April 2009

Present:

Tony Elliston (Chair)

Brian Hegarty

Graham Ingram

Ray Chitty (Sec)

Katy Turner

Janet Higgins

Bob Jennings

Terry Riley

Roger Mobbs

Item 1:

Apologies:

Bev Henderson

Pat Fyfe

Phil Munslow

Item 2:

Acceptance of the Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted unanimously.

Item 3:

Minutes & Matters Arising

None

Item 4:

Discussion Topics

Committee Members

Tony Elliston and Janet Higgins announced that they will be standing down as Chairperson and Membership Secretary/Treasurer as of the AGM in May. Brian Hegarty will act as Chairperson for the foreseeable future unless a new Chairperson is elected at the AGM. Janet will continue dealing with membership and finance issues until August 2009 when the annual renewal and joining members are normally completed, at that point the role will have to be passed to someone else.

The large amount of archive documents will be passed to Brian who will store them at his home.

New committee members are required and it was hoped that the AGM would produce some willing volunteers.

Committee Meeting Frequency

The possibility of bi-monthly meetings was once again raised as an incentive to new committee. The general feeling of the committee is that if serious issues crop up between meeting it would be quite easy to call the committee together for an emergency meeting.

A.G.M

A speaker has been arranged for the AGM and will speak from the stern end of the Allington Belle so as to void last years issue of members talking over the speaker while socialising at the stern. Terry will provide a portable speaker system.

Action: Terry Riley

Item 5:

Report from the Environment Agency

1. As you may be aware Hampstead Lock was opened in time for Easter. The refurbishment isn't fully complete yet and Morrison Construction are back at work this week. It is hoped that the refurbishment will be finished by Friday 1st May. In the meantime the lock will be running with the slightly restricted opening times of 9am and 5pm until this date. Note for these 3 weeks it will continue to be operated by staff on the lock side. There will be no need for any boaters to disembark.

Photos here: <http://www.allingtonlock.co.uk>

2. All works upstream of Yalding are now complete. This includes six new landing stages and 3 new overnight mooring sites. Again, photos here:

<http://www.allingtonlock.co.uk/boaters2009.php>

3. The dredging contractor continues to make their way upstream. Today they are between Sluice Weir Lock and Oak Weir Lock and over the next two weeks they hope to get to Tonbridge. Following this they will be dropping back downstream dealing with overhanging/ vulnerable trees as they go along. (Note that between Tonbridge and East Lock all of the trees have already been cut back by a separate contractor). After this the dredging contractor will be removing the sunken vessel near Tovil.

4. Wilderness Boat Owners Club at Allington.

<http://www.wilderness.org.uk/> This club will be launching approx a dozen craft from Allington on Saturday 2nd May. They will be spending the weekend and possibly Monday on the Medway. The Mayor will also be in attendance at Allington to celebrate their launch. This will be a good test for the Allington site.

5. Subject to funding we hope to undertake the following major projects this year:

5.1 Installation of new combined canoe and fish pass at Porters Lock

- due to start late May 2009.

5.2 Replacement of Teston and East Farleigh landing stages

- due to start early September 2009.

5.3 Refurbishment of Eldridges Lock and installation of new weir

- due to start early September 2009.

5.4 Replacement of Town Lock gate walkways - (June 2009 - subject to funding).

Item 6:

Report from Medway Valley Countryside Partnership

No report submitted

Item 7:

Planning Report

The proposed floating restaurant has put in amended plans for their illuminated sign, Brian is writing to object to the sign. Tony will write to the Maidstone Council regarding the whole matter of the floating restaurant and copy the letter to National Heritage.

Brian informed the committee that there are plans to turn land around the Tovil area into a 'country park', Brian has been involved in discussions on the matter and asked the committee if they had any thoughts on possible use of the river bank. It was the general perception that due to regular flooding of the area any development would be worthless other than walkways along the river.

Item 8:

Boating Report

Roger Mobbs informed the committee of a canoe marathon on Sunday 19th April 2009.

Item 9:

Commercial Interest Report

None

Item 10:

Treasurer's Report

None

Item 11:

Membership Secretary's Report

12 new members following the Environment Agency mail shot. Members will receive a new window sticker in their pack.

Item 12:

Media

None

Item 13:

Any Other Business

Bob Jennings suggested having a stand at the River Festival this year, Brian asked if we could incorporate the MRUA stand with the RNLI stand, Bob said he could see no problem with that. Brian agreed to give a couple of hours on the day and produce some display boards.

A hearty vote of thanks was proposed for the excellent work carried out by both Tony and Janet during their time in office and they will be missed by all

Meeting concluded at 20:40hrs

Next meeting: **9th June 2009**

New Location: The Bull Inn, East Farleigh