

The Chesterfield Canal Trust Ltd

Minutes of the 21st Annual General Meeting held at Hollingwood Hub, Staveley, on Wednesday, 20 March 2019 at 7.30pm

The Chairman welcomed 44 members to the Trust's Headquarters for the Annual Meeting. Names were given of 16 members who had sent an apology.

1. To receive and approve Minutes of the AGM held on 21 March 2018

The minutes were approved by the members present.

2. To receive and Approve the Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements

a) Robin Stonebridge reminded members that the report and financial statements were in the format laid down by the Charity Commission and apologised for a serious IT problem which prevented him from showing any visual images. Members were advised that, in addition to the paper copies of the financial statements available at the meeting, the full report is available on the Trust website. He went on to summarize the annual report highlighting the key achievements throughout the period 1 October17 to 30 September18, including -

- The presentation of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service by the Duke of Devonshire.
- The massive number of trips and passengers carried by the 4 trip boats, especially over the pre-Christmas period.
- Historic boat activities – the Dawn Rose boat pull and Python's visit to Langley Mill for the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Erewash Canal Preservation and Development Society.
- The growing demands for talks about the canal and the substantial interest generated.
- The success achieved in the keep Britain Tidy Green Flag Awards, with the Trust receiving the award for Hollingwood Hub and also awards to Derbyshire County Council (Tapton Lock) and Canal and River Trust (covering the whole of the Eastern end of the canal).
- Permission to investigate the Lowgates Mineral Line and the massive scale of the resulting excavations.
- Continuing growth in membership – now more than 1800; all those involved in promoting membership, and in particular Mrs K Auton were thanked for their efforts.
- The huge number of hours put in by volunteers, which equated to a third of a million pounds in cash equivalent, or 20 full time posts. All concerned were thanked.

b) The Chair then drew attention to the financial statements and explained the detailed examination carried out by the auditors, who had concluded the Trust is in a sound position. He commented that although the financial capability of the Trust had been severely hindered by the continuing uncertainties over the HS2 railway, the Trust has

developed financial strengths and stands ready to raise the huge sums required for restoration when that uncertainty is resolved.

c) Income had increased from £213k to £256k, thanks to donations, legacies and trading activities, where the contribution from trip boat activities was particularly important. There are now around 140 members of our boat crews.

d) Expenditure was also higher, with the main reasons being the £20k cost of an easement on land at Killamarsh required to secure the restoration route, an increase in repairs and renewals and the costs of the festival at Staveley. There had also been a loss on a transaction with a stone company, the only organisation capable of meeting the requirements of the Trust at the time; advice had been received that the matter did not need to be reported to the Charity Commission. There was a decrease in materials of £35k.

e) Questions were then invited and answered on subjects including maintenance costs at Hollingwood Hub, where adherence to standards of Derbyshire County Council (owner) were part of the cause. Information was also given about Unity bank, the Trust's bankers.

f) Members were informed that an additional savings account had been opened, to protect the Trust against possible losses. Also that B. Caddy had been appointed as a signatory for the Mansfield Building Society account to replace D. Fox & J. Bower who had retired as Trustees.

d) Acceptance of the Annual Report and Financial Statements was then proposed by D. Thompson, seconded by J. Hayes and approved by the members present.

e) Mr J. Hayes then proposed a vote of thanks to all the volunteers and officers for carrying out their duties without claiming expenses – a highly creditable attitude. This was carried by acclaim.

3. Appointment of Trustees

a) The Chair noted that 4 of the retiring Trustees – R.D. Auton, J.A.C. Bower, R. Breese and B.A. Hunt, were not standing for re-election. He outlined their considerable contributions and thanked them sincerely.

b) M.E. Edwards offered himself for re-election; B. Caddy & G. Challands have served as co-opted members in the past year and wished to serve as elected members. The meeting agreed to the 3 appointments.

c) The appointment of I. Rowbotham was proposed by R. Auton, seconded by S. Stephens and agreed by all.

d) The Chair then outlined how the Trustees intended to look at the structure of the organisation, including possibility of a trading arm and perhaps a development organisation so as to be better able to meet future challenges.

4. Appointment of Accountants

The reappointment of Barber, Harrison & Platt as accountants to the Trust was agreed

5. Questions from Members

Mr Stonebridge then answered questions from members, including role of the development manager, the Trust as a membership organisation and HS2.

6. The Chesterfield Canal Trust Lifetime Achievement Award 2019

The 2019 award was presented to Mr Selwyn Jones, lately of Derbyshire County Council. Mr Stonebridge commented that Mr Jones had spent nearly 30 years years planning and overseeing restoration work on the western end of the canal. His input had been invaluable on many schemes, and particularly the substantial new bridges at Staveley. He had also provided considerable support to facilitate the work of volunteers. In response, Mr Jones noted that his first involvement was in restoration around St Helena's in the 1990s and he had now seen over five miles brought back into use. He expressed confidence in the future and felt sure that, with the enthusiasm of the Trust and the widespread public support, the canal will be restored in the foreseeable future

7. Other Business.

Mr R D Auton informed the meeting about the discussions that had taken place with Sheffield City Region and other organisations about ways of developing the structure and organisation of the Trust to meet the challenges of full restoration by 2027. The discussions culminated in a joint meeting of Trustees and members of the Engineering Group, where it was unanimously agreed that a full time, salaried, Development Manager should be appointed. Discussions were also taking place about the establishment of a Development Company.

Mr D Thompson introduced himself as the newly elected chair of the Supporters' Group and reminded members of the walk around Killamarsh planned for 16 April.

Mrs K Auton proposed a vote of thanks to Robin Stonebridge for his significant and dedicated work for the Trust and especially the major document produced in response to the latest HS2 consultation exercise. The members showed their appreciation with applause.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.40 pm