

WORCESTER CANAL GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING 28th November 2018

Present: Joy Squires, Jacky Hollis, Gerri Lowman, David Ritchie, Tim Booker, Matthew Jenkins, Peter Moorhouse, Graham Fowler, George Squires

Apologies: Margaret Rowley, Adam Scott, Dan Daye

1. Minutes to last meeting agreed
Matters arising: Tragically, Geoff Williams who had recently joined the group and taken on the role of vice chair has died. His funeral was on Monday and was attended by Joy.
2. Walk from St George's Lane to Perdiswell park:
 - a. Undertaken on a Saturday morning by Joy, Matt, David, Peter, George and Graham for the purpose of taking a look at the stretch of canal we have now adopted. It was an enjoyable walk. It seems clear that wildlife could be the main focus of any work we undertake. Rather than, for instance, repairs to locks. There is very little litter although some areas need tidying up and some work has been done on this recently. It was noticeable that when Barbourne brook is taken into account this is a complex area with quite a lot of underground water courses. Contact has been made with the Friends of Perdiswell.
 - b. In terms of work that could be undertaken it was suggested that
 - i. We join in with the proposed wildlife survey at Astwood cemetery
 - ii. We get permission from the County Council to access the quite large area behind the tip and adjacent to the canal to find out what wildlife inhabits this relatively untouched area.
 - iii. We aim to carry out a wildlife survey in Perdiswell park in the spring. To look at the canal and the brook as a linked habitat. Tim to try to reserve the Wanderer to take part.
3. Feedback on walk in Diglis:
 - a. This was undertaken by Graham together with Andy Graham who used to work for WWT but now works at Slimbridge and as a Warndon resident does guided nature walks there. The purpose was to look at the stretch of canal from the Commandery to the river which our Easter Wildlife survey identified as an obstacle to the movement of wildlife. Of particular interest was the pond in the small area between the first locks and the river. There is a problem with dumping but even so work has clearly been done by CRT volunteers and this is an interesting and valuable urban wetland. The real problem is the total lack of habitats between the Marina and the Commandery. Tim and Laura Mullholland CRT ecologist have also been considering the issue. It will cost money. For example, pontoons could be brought in, planted up and secured to the offside wall. Andy Graham is pricing these. It was agreed that someone from the CRT fundraising team be invited to the next meeting of the Worcester Canal Corridor Group in February.
4. Other Group Activities
 - a. The CRT is entering another round of restructuring which will involve substantial changes to staffing levels and job descriptions.
 - b. The Wanderer is now at Alvechurch for a service
 - c. Litter picks continue, usually with a group of about nine.

- d. Gerri asked if the brambles could be cleared from the bank at Wickes. There are used syringes there. **Joy to find out who has responsibility for clearing these.** Tim offered to provide bark for the small garden at the Blockhouse lock.
 - e. Noticeboards. Tim said that the CRT have a national plan to simplify and improve all of their noticeboards in line with their new focus on canals as a community resource. In the meantime, it was agreed that the large notice placed in the noticeboard at Bilford lock to the exclusion of all other information can be removed. The board at Diglis is now the responsibility of South Wales and can be left out of Davids rounds. The board at the Block House lets in water.
5. AOB:
- a. Treasurers Report - We have £312 in the bank and £13 in petty cash
 - b. Membership of WBDCS has been renewed at a cost of £27. Agreed that Joy would be reimbursed for this.
 - c. Tim was like to place a plaque to Alan Hollis, a very active CRT volunteer on one of the benches we installed in the Arboretum. Peter to check with the ARA but agreed in principle. We have now been in existence as a group for five years yet it is still the case that we have no formal links with CRT volunteers even those who work on the same stretch of canal as we do.
 - d. Graham suggested that next year we might like spend a day with the Wild and Rooted CIC which is setting up a Forest School in the wild area between the two Lansdowne allotment sites. St Pauls Creative Group are quite keen on taking up this offer.
6. Next Meeting
- a. 7.15pm WEDNESDAY 6th FEBRUARY 2019 AT THE PAUL PRY.