

Minutes of Worcester Canal Group Meeting 22/01/2018

Present: Joy Squires, Dan Daye, Caroline Kendall, David Ritchie, Ann Lasenby- Griffiths, Jacky Hollis, George Squires, Graham Fowler, Matthew Jenkins, Geri Lowman, Michael Doyle, Jane Moorhouse, Peter Moorhouse.

Apologies: Ivan Smith.

1. Welcome to Anne, a new group member.
2. Chairs Update.
 - a. 2017 was something of a 'hit and miss' year with regard to regular meetings at the Guildhall because of other commitments there and so the decision was taken to move here to the Cricketers.
 - b. The Canal Corridor Project is going well with lots of agencies taking part.
 - c. The CRT is to be reorganised with a possible reduction from the present 8 regions to 6.
3. **Wildlife Survey.** As part of the work of the Canal corridor Project Graham has written a draft policy based on the work we did for our wildlife week. This was circulated before the meeting. It will be discussed at the corridor project meeting on 7th Feb. Following that Laura Mullholland the CRT ecologist came to Worcester to take a look at the canal from Six Ways down to Diglis. Laura and Graham are suggesting that as a first step in the work that will be needed we undertake another monitoring exercise. This will be very similar to the monitoring that was done as part of the wildlife week. For example the same forms can be used. An article for the CRT volunteer newsletter and for 58 has already been written. The main differences are:
 - a. The area to be covered is from Diglis to Six Ways
 - b. The dates aimed at Easter this year, the weekend 30 March to 2 April 2018 , to contrast results with the autumn monitoring exercise last time.
 - c. Far more organisations are involved. It is hoped that this will produce more results and make it easier to collect results from interested individuals. So for example, litter pickers who take part can return their results to Matt for collection, Canal and River Trust volunteers can return their results to Caroline.

Discussion of this and lots of useful suggestions, including: Peter to take a look at the poster put up last time with a view to updating it. Dan to see if the Wanderer is available, it would be very good if short boat trips could be part of the event. Photos could be taken and uploaded on to the wildlife section of our website, perhaps Worcester Photographic Club could take part. Last time, Julie May had the excellent idea of arranging to be at a site with guide books and binoculars to help with identification. This could be attempted again. There is a lot to be said for concentrating on four spots along the canal and letting people know that someone will be there to help. To finalise plans at our next meeting.

4. **Community Canal Festival.** Joy said that she is nominally convening a group of people to work on this – Tanya, Ian and Mel, Colin, Mike and Ben. Ivan was a member but has had to drop out because of family difficulties. The group has considered a repeat of the last festival and has had discussions about risk and the legal position if lots of boats come and moor at the site as happened last time. So the decision has been taken to go for a more of a local community festival. The dates will be 29th June – 1st July. The City Council are offering support 'in kind'. Three charities are being chosen to benefit from any money made. The plans are for a variety of stalls, a greener and more inclusive festival than last time and for more school involvement. There are 12 – 15 volunteers but a need to recruit more as about 30 are necessary. Quite a small amount of money is needed to get started, after that it is hoped that the bar and sponsorship will pay for the event. The Worcester Canal Group has no liability. The event has a separate bank account which George Squires is dealing with. The intention is to hire professional security. There was discussion about the relationship between the festival and other local groups. The Arboretum Residents Association has declined a request to be

partners. Mike said that he hoped the Canal Group would consider itself to be a partner organisation. The next meeting of the group is 16 Feb at 5.15.

5. Other Activities

- a. The Wanderer – the boat is at Tardebigge. The hope is to use it for St Pauls as part of the work they have taken on through adopting a stretch of canal. The boat is necessary in the litter picks, for example last time 13 bags were collected between Diglis and Lansdowne. This will become easier now that fishing nets have been obtained which will allow easier access into the reeds.
 - b. Notice boards – going well. The board at the block house is blocked and will be changed. iii) St Pauls have adopted a stretch of canal from Wickes to the Commmandery. Drug paraphernalia is a constant problem at Wickes. The group is just starting to tackle the little garden which Julie May has worked on. It is amazing how much difference having high-vis vests and putting up signs makes to the interaction with the public.
6. **Treasurer.** Ivan Smith has resigned and handed over the file to Joy. There is £331 in the account. To ask for a volunteer to take this task on.
 7. **Representation on Waterways forum and WBDCS.** There is some attendance from group members and emails are received but no official representation. For now this is sufficient.
 8. **Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 14th March, 7.15 at the Cricketers. To arrange AGM for Monday 14th May.
 9. **AOB:** Jane to investigate the Wharf at St Georges lane where the information board promised by St Modwen has been installed.