

WORCESTER CANAL GROUP

MEETING 8 JAN 2020 AT THE PAUL PRY

1. **PRESENT;** Joy, George, Matt, Jackie, Allison, Mark, Neil, David, Helen, Richard, Beth, Paul, Graham. Apologies Geri.
2. **Matters arising.**
 - a. Welcome and happy new year to Mark Hurst, Neil Young and Paul Snookes to their first canal group, to Beth, Allison and Helen who have joined the group fairly recently and to all who have been group members for some time.
 - b. Peter Middleton – a member of the St Pauls creative group Peter worked with us over several years. He worked on the Wanderer, helped with the murals and helped run the Festival in Lansdowne Park. He was well known along the canal, especially at the blockhouse lock. Peter died recently. His funeral was yesterday in Leamington. He will be missed.
 - c. Warndon VEG group can help publicise canal group activities.
 - d. Helm training - Mark explained that he has recently moved to Worcester from Leicester. He has a narrow boat and is happy to undertake the helm training offered by Richard. Excellent news. Graham to let Geri know so that dates when we can use the Wanderer can be pencilled in.
3. **Treasurers Report.**
 - a. George said that we have no petty cash. In the bank we have £771.14. This includes £552 from Matts Divisional fund for a new bench. The actual cost of the bench is £662.40. Matt has sent off for the remainder of the money and is confident it will arrive soon. Agreed to go ahead with paying for and installing the bench.
 - b. Agreed to renew Arts Council membership at £25.
 - c. We will also need to renew BWDCS membership at £27. This will leave us with £194.14. Discussed fundraising. We have simply not done any for some time. There may be opportunities at festivals this coming year. Also, now that our activities extend much further along the canal there is a possibility of accessing two or perhaps three other CC divisional funds.
4. **Festivals** – Joy said that the Chestnut Community Action Group is actively working toward a festival in Lansdowne Park this year. Upfront funding and volunteers for the festival itself will be needed. There is a fundraising QUIZ at the Chestnuts on WEDNESDAY 15th, 8pm. £2.

A much bigger festival with narrow boats from all parts is the Inland Waterways Association festival in Perdiswell Park on August Bank holiday.

5. **Litter picks** – Matt said these are still going well. The next is Saturday 25th. Still intending meet the canal group socially in the Chestnuts at midday. Helen said that on Wednesday of next week she will meet Alistair and Anda of the Duckworth Trust at the Lansdowne road allotments to organise a big item litter pick at the top of the allotments next to Lansdowne crescent. Matt and Graham to attend. Also, there is a national litter pick on 29th February. Mark asked what to do if a litter picker finds a used needle. Joy said to ring the Hub and the Council will dispose of it. To investigate having our own sharps bins (available from Screwfix).
6. **Noticeboards** – David said that the boards are there and he can place information in them if people supply him with it. Paul said that the Warndon VEG group have been looking at the possibility of getting some lectern style information boards. An application to the City Council Community Fund was turned down. Each board costs about £800. A fresh application done together with the canal group, with a greater emphasis on community engagement and benefits to more of Worcester's population might succeed. Worth trying. Allison said that another option is to use posts along the canal and a code which sends information to your phone. This idea of providing more information about wildlife, history etc along the canal fits in very well with the virtual tour of the canal project we talked about last time. Matt described progress to date. The next step is provide him with photographs and clear locations to put on the website. Helen said that there is a lot of academic work being done on the value of connectedness between people and nature. Especially that by Miles Richardson at Derby University which looks at five ways to connectedness. This work has led to the National Trust changing its information boards. Agreed that this is a good theoretical underpinning for fresh funding applications.
7. **Wild and Rooted** - Helen said that this Saturday will see the start of Forest school for a second group of children. Once woodland toilet facilities have been built the project can open up to adults for example through social prescribing.
8. **Marina** - Richard said that there is drilling going on near the marina which means building work is likely to follow soon. The Marina is covered by the Shrub Hill Development Plan Joy said that she is trying to make sure that the development which is bound to take place has a positive impact on wildlife and the environment.
9. **Warndon VEG** – Paul explained that the work of the group is focussed on creating wildlife corridors in exactly the same way as that of the canal group. The VEG group has been talking to Nick McGowan Environmental Officer at the City Council about Offerton. The hope is that some areas can be cleared for wildflower glades. There is a real issue with pond. It is silting up and because of the nearby factories the soil is toxic. Potentially it will cost hundreds of thousands of pounds to resolve this problem. In the meantime plans to install a replacement viewing platform have been postponed.
10. **Wildlife** – Graham said that unfortunately the meeting of the Canal Corridor Group due to take place today had to be postponed. However he spoke to Nick Packham at WWT and the planning for the Wild Worcester project is still going ahead. It is a Community Engagement

Project. So, to see the groups and individuals from the community who now making links and working together as evidenced by coming along to the Canal Group is really encouraging. It would be worth each group sending information to Nick to support the development of the project.

11. **Plans for the year** – Agreed that the on line tour of the canal (Canal Connections?) being developed by Matt should be added to our existing list of work.

Next Meeting ; Wednesday 4th March 7.15 at the Paul Pry