

Worcester Canal Group

Minutes of (Zoom) meeting held 2nd December 2020 at 7pm

Present: Jackie Hollis; Cllr Matt Jenkins; Helen Fairest; Graham Fowler; Stuart Minchin (City Council); Cllr Joy Squires (Chair); George Squires (Treasurer); David Ritchie; Tim Booker (Canal and Rivers Trust)

Apologies: None Received (but late change to meeting date noted)

1. **Minutes** of last meeting and matters arising not on agenda: Minutes approved.

- a. Matt Jenkins updated meeting on location of bench (Gregory's Mill bottom lock) and discussion with police about potential anti-social behaviour. Following this, Tim Booker is delivering a letter to local residents to check that they are happy with location and to advise that CRT will be seeking Green Flag status for this area of the canal up to Bilford Rd. Graham and others offered WCG's support for this.
- b. Joy updated meeting on Canal Corridor Group meeting of 4th November. Discussed Lowesmoor Wharf planning application and potential impact on canal and biodiversity.

2. **Updates:**

- a. **Natural Networks** - funding of WGC Fruit Trees project. Graham explained that Natural Networks would not be funding this project as too small to warrant all the monitoring etc. This means WCG will have to fund project itself.
- b. **Spacehive crowdfunder** - set up by Graham for this project has been successful with the original total achieved. It was agreed to keep the appeal open until the closing date of 10 December to try to cover the 45% of costs that Natural Networks would have provided. Everyone to promote the Spacehive crowdfunder 'create an arboretum in Worcester'. Time agreed to check any impediments to planting trees. Stuart said to remember not to plant in the way of large mowers, especially in Lansdowne Park!
- c. Bramblewood – Helen told us that Bramblewood's Spacehive crowdfunder had exceeded its target and that the County Council had donated £4k for the project. This would involve working with YSS to help young carers and veterans. Workshops and a variety of activities were being planned. Helen thanked Matt and Joy for their letters of support and hoped that WCG could make good use of Bramblewood. Graham suggested meeting there in May. Joy alerted Helen and others to the Allotment Review that is taking place.

3. **Other updates:**

- a. **Noticeboards:** David had not received any posters/communications. Tim will liaise with David on this.
- b. **Litter picks:** These are ongoing but because of lockdown and Christmas the November and December litter picks had been merged and would take place on 12th December.
- c. **The Wanderer:** We noted the need to identify a new helmsperson for the Group.

4. **International Day of Biodiversity 22nd May 2021:** Joy explained that she had asked the city council to celebrate the International Day of Biodiversity in May next year in recognition of a Biodiversity Emergency being declared by the city council. Joy asked for ideas on how WCG could join in. Suggestions, all to be discussed in more detail at next meeting, included:

- A 'BioBlitz' with volunteers/families investigating specific areas and charting what they find, involving expert advisers if possible

- Ask Worcestershire Wildlife Trust to launch their 'Wilder Worcester' initiative.
- Helping plant up the orchard on CRT land at Tibberton

5. Any Other Business:

Tim told the meeting that he had a quantity of coir rolls and mattresses, already seeded, which could be installed in the canal in the 'concrete corridor' between the basin and the Commandery bridge. This is fantastic news and was warmly welcomed by everyone! Tim needs to establish ownership of the properties adjacent to the canal as the coir will need to be attached to the walls of the buildings to stop it floating away.

6. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 3rd February 2021, probably via Zoom