

Worcester Canal Group

Minutes of (Zoom) meeting held 3rd February 2021 at 7pm

Present: Jackie Hollis; Cllr Matt Jenkins; Graham Fowler; Stuart Minchin (City Council); Cllr Joy Squires (Chair); George Squires (Treasurer); David Ritchie; Tim Booker (Canal and Rivers Trust); Emma and Luke; Dimitrios Theologitis; Gerry Lowman; Cllr Jenny Barnes

Everyone introduced themselves for the benefit of new attendees.

Apologies: Margaret Rowley

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). Tim had distributed 100 letters locally. 4 Responses, 3 against bench location – fear of ASB. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that Tim and Matt should go ahead with the bench in the location identified.
2. **City Council Allotments Review:** Joy reported that the National Allotment Society had been commissioned by the city council to carry out a review of allotments in Worcester, focussing on how the council manages them (waiting lists, uncultivated plots etc), governance issues (Allotment Forum) and, importantly, how to improve biodiversity on allotments (use of pesticides, bonfires, planting etc). Joy noted that Bramblewood and Graham's wildflower allotment in the Lansdowne allotments are excellent examples of how biodiversity can be encouraged. Joy will update the group once the review is completed.
3. **Updates:**
 - a. **Fruit trees project** – the Spacehive crowdfunder set up by Graham for this project has been successful with the original total achieved and further donations promised. £500 available for the fruit trees. Nick McGowan of the city council had identified 4 locations in Lansdowne Park where trees can be planted. Tim Booker was to meet with Jenny and Graham on Friday 5th February at 10am to identify suitable sites on CRT land. Jenny and Graham to progress purchase of suitable fruit trees once sites are agreed.
 - b. **Inland Waterways Festival:** Stuart said that organisers were still planning to hold the IWA festival at Paerdiswell during August Bank Holiday weekend.
 - c. **Creating Links Group** – Gerry updated the group on the Creative Links Group which was going to be starting work again on the garden near lock 4. This will form part of the Creating Havens project.
 - d. **International Day of Biodiversity 22nd May 2021:** Joy will pick this up with city council officers and will report back. Emma will speak to Nick Packham at the Wildlife Trust.
4. **Treasurer's Report:** George reported that the group has £226.90. A method for transferring the Spacehive crowdfunding money to the group's bank account was agreed. George will provide a cheque to pay for the fruit trees. George reported that Worcester Canal Group membership of Worcester Arts Council had been renewed at no cost – the Arts Council had decided it was unfair to ask for membership fees in light of the pandemic. Joy suggested that Gerry might like to apply for a grant to Worcester Arts Council to pay for the paint the Creating Links Group needs for a mural on the wall by the garden. It was suggested that Johnson's paint store might have free paint available.
5. **Any Other Business:** Stuart reminded the group that the Festival of Paint is scheduled to take place this summer.
6. **Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 24th March 2021, via Zoom