

Minutes from the thirty-eighth meeting of the Cross Party Group on Waterways

Conference Room 24 Ty Hywel, Cardiff Bay
Wednesday 3rd December 2014
6.00pm

AMs Present

Nick Ramsay AM (Chair) (Welsh Conservatives, Monmouth)

Julie James AM (Welsh Labour, Swansea West)

Present

Andrew Stumpf – Glandŵr Cymru

Laura Lewis – Glandŵr Cymru

Jamie McNamara – The Canal and River Trust

Helen Devitt – the Construction Youth Trust

David G Collins

Dawn Roberts

Brian Hancock

Elly Hannigan Popp – Ramblers Cymru

Margaret Gwalter – Swansea Canal Society

John Gwalter – Swansea Canal Society

Gareth Jones – Urban Regen

Donna Coyle

Rob Frowen

Julie Prichard

Carole Jacob

Martin Buckle Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

The meeting commenced at 6:15pm

Item 1: Presentation from Helen Devitt, Construction Youth Trust

Engaging hard to reach young people in skills and employment in Wales

Helen Devitt outlined the work and remit of the Construction Youth Trust in Wales. The Construction Youth Trust is a charity helping young people in England and Wales to build better futures by giving them access to training, education and employment opportunities in the construction industry.

Presentation available upon request from enquiries.wales@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Q & A

Andrew Stumpf: Do you find that there are different measures of success for the people that you work with that means we need to be more understanding as employers and mentors?

Helen Devitt: Yes, definitely. Considering the background and difficulties that some of the young people we help have come from even getting up and facing the day can be a huge achievement, and it is important that we acknowledge and work with this to support them in building their lives.

Nick Ramsay AM: Commented how important charities like the Construction Youth Trust are to Wales, and noted that more work like this to help people into education and employment would be greatly beneficial to Wales.

Jamie McNamara: We have found that construction and heritage work really connects with people who have fallen out of mainstream education and training, have you found that?

Helen Devitt: Yes, definitely. We have found that many young people who come to us find that they have found something that they care about and really want to do well in, which makes all the difference.

Item 2: Presentation by Jamie McNamara, Heritage Skills Leader for the Canal and River Trust.

Heritage Skills NVQ

Jamie McNamara presented the new Heritage Skills NVQ that has been launched by the Canal and River Trust. The project will run for three years, starting in 2014. We plan to offer 14 training positions per year at seven locations including the North West, North, Mid and South Wales, Midlands, and the South East In addition to these new trainees, we anticipate passing 100 waterway operatives through the training and our contractor May Keir will also pass approximately 100 through the knowledge based award and 50 through the NVQ.

Q & A

Helen Devitt: Have you found that there was a gap in the qualifications available before this?

Jamie McNamara: Yes, Previously, there was no entry-level qualification for heritage skills, workers would have to begin their qualifications at level 3, which was often unobtainable for people at the beginning of their career. We want our awards to act as a career pathway for our operational staff, new trainees and all who work in our sector. We would like these qualifications to raise the standard of work in all areas, with skills ranging from working with 200 year old brickwork, use of lime mortar, stonemasonry and carpentry.

Andrew Stumpf: How many of these will be in Wales?

Jamie McNamara: We have recruited two trainees in Wales this year, and plan to recruit a further two next year.

Item 3: Any Other Business

None

Date of Next Meeting: 12th January 2015.