

**Minutes from the forty-third meeting of the Cross Party Group on Waterways**

Location: Conference Rooms C&D, Welsh Assembly, Cardiff, CF99 1NA.

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016

6.00pm

**AMs in attendance:**

Nick Ramsay AM (Welsh Conservative, Monmouth)

Mike Hedges AM (Welsh Labour, Swansea East)

David Rowlands AM (UKIP, South East Wales)

**Attendees:**

Andrew Stumpf – Glandŵr Cymru – Canal & River Trust in Wales

Laura Lewis – Glandŵr Cymru – Canal & River Trust in Wales

David Morgan – Canal & River Trust

Anthony Pugh

Gareth Jones – Torfaen County Borough Council

Richard Dommett – MBACT

Heidi Carey – Torfaen County Borough Council

Roger Holmes

Tony Harrington – Dwr Cymru

John Andrew Davies, Swansea Bay Inland Waterway Partnership

Wyn Mitchell – Monmouthshire, Brecon & Abergavenny Canals Trust

Richard Dearing –Water Recreation & Access Advisor NRW

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The meeting commenced at 6:20pm

Nick Ramsay AM began by welcoming new members to the group, and giving a history of the Waterways Cross Party Group.

Nick Ramsay noted the change to the agenda, as the order of the presentations were swapped.

**Item 1: Re-election of Chair**

Nick Ramsay AM was reconfirmed as Chair of the Group.

Glandŵr Cymru – The Canal & River Trust in Wales was confirmed as the group's secretariat.

**Item 2: Presentation: Waterworks: Volunteer Restoration & Training on the M&B Canal**

Heidi Carey, Torfaen County Borough Council and Richard Dommett, Mon & Brec Canals Trust gave a presentation outlining the work of the Waterworks project taking place on the Mon and Brec Canal.

The presentation gave an overview of the project, explaining that Waterworks is a heritage lottery funded project to restore 1.5km (1 Mile) stretch of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, in Llantarnam, South Cwmbran. The project will run for three years initially from 2012-2015. Within the 1.5km section of restoration there are eight lock chambers to restore as well as a number of listed bridges and pounds.

Richard Dommett added that the project is a partnership between Torfaen County Borough Council and the Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canal Trust and involves a

number of training organisations including Coleg Gwent, Torfaen Training, ITEC Training and Rathborne.

Heidi Carey stated that the Canal restoration project will be led by community volunteers and will provide training in canal restoration and heritage skills to help sustain the canal in the future.

The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal flows from Brecon through Brecon Beacons National Park and Torfaen to Newport and Caerphilly. Now two hundred years old, the canal is an important part of our landscape and industrial heritage.

The presentation explained that restoring the disused canal through Ty Coch in Cwmbran forms part of a long term strategy to reopen the canal to navigation. By doing so, the canal can provide a recreational resource and attractive green corridor at the heart of the community that can play a major role in the regeneration of the area.

Presentation available, contact [laura.lewis@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:laura.lewis@canalrivertrust.org.uk).

## **Item 2: Presentation: What waterways can do for Wales?**

Andrew Stumpf, Head of Wales, Glandŵr Cymru, gave an overview of the current role of Welsh Waterways, and set out his vision of the future of the network in light of the £2.538 Million investment from the Welsh Government. Andrew explained the details of the project, which begins with enabling works to secure the top section of the Mon and Brec canal.

Andrew added that there is considerable synergy between public policy aspirations in Wales and the potential for the Trust to do things differently in Wales. The MoU between Glandŵr Cymru and the Welsh Government is helping to cement the role of canals in Welsh life.

Andrew Stumpf then explained how the feedback process was structured and the format for the rest of the group's session.

Presentation available, contact [laura.lewis@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:laura.lewis@canalrivertrust.org.uk).

## **Item 3: Feedback and Discussion**

Attendees were asked to feedback on the presentations and share their thoughts on what the canal network can bring to Wales.

Areas discussed included:

- Growth & Jobs – How many jobs the Mon & Brec investment could generate
- Tourism
- Opportunities for Volunteering
- Potential funding pots
- Education
- The role of the canal in the city region

Tony Harrington from Welsh Water noted that Dwr Cymru sponsors capital projects, and urged both CRT and the canal Trusts to apply. He also asked how Glandŵr Cymru is currently fundraising.

Andrew Stumpf answered that we currently use fundraisers, major donors, current contacts and bids into open funding streams.

David Rowlands AM asked if the £2.538 Million would be going towards restoration.

Andrew Stumpf answered that the first project is enabling works at the top of the Mon and Brec to allow restoration at the bottom end in future.

**Item 4: AOB**

No comments.

