



**THE KENNET & AVON CANAL TRUST**  
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## **Kennet and Avon Canal Trust (The)**

### **61st Annual General Meeting held on 3 June 2023 at 11 am at Devizes Wharf and by Zoom**

26 members were present in person or by Zoom. Apologies were received from 26 members. The Chairman, Chris Sims, welcomed all those attending and declared the meeting quorate.

#### **Item 1: To receive and adopt the Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022**

The Treasurer, Chris Bolt, summarised the Trust's achievements in 2022 and the financial results for the year. There were no questions on the Report and Accounts.

#### **Item 2: To elect Directors:**

Graham Snook, having offered himself for re-election, is recommended by the Directors for re-election

Agreed on a show of hands.

#### **Item 3: To consider amendments to the Articles relating to the composition of Branch Committees (special resolution)**

The Trustees recommend that Members agree the following amendments to the Articles:

##### **(a) to add a new Article 46(1a) as follows:**

46. (1a) The directors may delegate the implementation of their decisions and day to day management of the affairs of the company to any group of three or more persons but the terms of any delegation must be recorded in the minute book.

##### **(b) to amend Articles 46(2)(a) to insert "persons or" before "committee".**

##### **(c) to amend Article 46(4) to change "committees" to "persons or committee exercising delegated powers".**

##### **(d) to delete Article 62.**

Agreed on a show of hands.

#### **Item 4: To transact any other business which may properly be conducted at an Annual General Meeting**

There was no other business, and the Chairman declared the AGM closed at 11.17 am.



The formal meeting was followed by a question and answer session, introduced by the Chairman.

The Chairman thanked all Members and volunteers for their work for the Trust and Enterprise. He particularly thanked those Trustees standing down (David Copley, David Fearn and Tim Pyatt), and Chris Churchouse and Julian Foley as former directors of Enterprise. He welcomed Alison Cannon, who had been coopted as a Trustee, Darren Bone as Chair of Enterprise and Paul Hanson as Director of Boat Operations. He also paid tribute to David Harris (the first editor of the Butty) and Patrick Pease who had died during the year.

Issues covered by the Chairman or in questions from the floor included:

**The future of the Devizes Wharf building:** Final decisions have not been taken on whether to surrender the lease on the building, although it is increasingly expensive to maintain. Wiltshire Council does not seem to be in a position to progress with its plans for redeveloping the wharf, but even so it will only agree to a lease with a one year notice period. This makes it impossible to seek major grants for the building, which is not listed.

**Future role and reporting lines for Branches:** Given the decision to amend the Articles, Branches will now be consulted on new delegation arrangements. Trustees and the Enterprise Board have had initial discussions about these terms. Given that all 'boat' branches are already represented on the Enterprise Board, and most of their activities relate to operating trip boats and the Bruce Boat fleet, the initial view is that 'boat' branches should in future report to the Enterprise Board; it is felt that this would give greater clarity and focus. But no decisions have been taken - we are aiming to do this in the next month or so. Darren Bone, as Chair of Enterprise, now attends meetings of Trust Council to ensure effective two way communication. Darren then described the five challenges to be addressed if the trading company is to operate effectively in support of the Trust, and the three year budget exercise which is now in hand. The outcome will be discussed at Trust Council in July. Both Chris Sims and Darren Bone recognised the particular difficulties at Bruce Branch, which had been without a Chair since last year.

**Future membership of Trust Council:** The Chairman said that although Trustees have agreed to co-opt Alison Cannon, the Trust is still looking for a replacement for Chris Bolt as Treasurer, and for a Trustee to focus on volunteer recruitment and management. If there are no internal candidates, Trustees will continue to look externally.

**The future operation of Crofton Beam Engines:** While Crofton Beam Engines has a unique position in industrial heritage and is a key part of the Trust's charitable activities, a point endorsed by the President, the reduction in Trust reserves means that new income and funding streams need to be identified. Trustees have therefore supported the 'Crofton 2030' project to develop a strategy for the site, which was successful in getting financial support from the Heritage Fund. The project will develop and test ideas for increasing the number and range of people engaging with Crofton and help ensure that we can keep the engines operating to 2030 and beyond.

**The John Gould Award:** A new plaque has been purchased, and this award for somebody who has made an outstanding and sustained contribution to the Trust will be made again next year. The award is named after one of the early members of the Trust, who had campaigned against abandonment of the canal in the 1950s and played a leading role in its restoration and reopening in 1990.