

### Trust Council Report: finance

- Overall cash balances have increased by 61% from a net £365k to £589k
- Unrestricted funds balances have increased by 28% from £607k to £777k
- Overall funds of the Trust have increased by 83% from £769k to £1.4m

The Trust continued our financial growth in 2017. It was a year of really hard fund raising, good trading, and some good fortune from legacies.

This is the 6<sup>th</sup> year that your trustees have focussed on these 3 key measures.

- The big increase in our overall funds is in part accounted for by the gift of the 4 Bruce boats from the Bruce Trust which came fully onto our books in October.
- I've been saying for the past couple of years that the balances will start to go down. This year, I can firmly promise that you are looking at the high water mark. As Peter will be briefing later, the Crofton project is well under way and I have signed off bills totalling more than £100k in the past couple of weeks.
- Before I move on from finances, I want to mention our trading company Enterprise and the oddities of accounting rules. Enterprise traded very well last year and brought its usual good income to the Trust. We always seek to 'manage' the paper profit of Enterprise with a management charge from Trust. Last year the Bruce boats were taken on at market value (as they should be) and depreciated for their age (as they should be). That produced a large non-cash charge which gave Enterprise a small paper loss. Please don't worry about that – it's an accounting thing. Is anyone still awake?

## Protect:

- We helped secure a planning refusal for 250 houses at Theale. We will now be supporting West Berks Council at the appeal
- We challenged successfully CRT's plan to split management of the K&A between regions and mobilised opposition

I've tended in the past few years to run through each of our branches. I'm not doing so this year because they've all been so busy and are doing such great and diverse things. Instead I want to pick 2 examples each of the ways in which we have protected, enhanced and promoted the K&A in 2017

## Enhance:

- Bath & Bristol branch completed the refurbishment of the canalside at Brassknocker just in time for the presentation of a 'Red Wheel' there
- We secured more than £700k in funding to undertake restoration and enhancement at Crofton

I could have added our first major refurbishment of the Bruce boat, Hannah, a new engine for the Rose of Hungerford, 40<sup>th</sup> birthday refurbishment and relaunch of Jubilee, and a new training and meeting room at Devizes. Oh, and online ticket sales for our passenger boats!

## Promote:

- o 22,500 people enjoyed public trips on our 4 passenger boats together with over a 1000 enjoying a day or a holiday on our amazing Bruce boats
- o We ran festivals at Reading, Newbury, Devizes, Crofton and (new) Bradford on Avon bringing thousands of people to enjoy our waterway

A real challenge to decide because our staff, volunteers and branches promote the canal very day of year

## : strategy

### o **Our Crofton Story'**

Having secured funding, we must deliver the project including capital works, new interpretation and an activity plan which will assure the sustainability of Crofton as a visitor destination for the future

### o **Success of our 9 boats**

Managing, crewing and looking after 9 boats will challenge us. But they are key to delivering on our objective to promote the canal and as a source of income.

### o **Collaboration with the Canal & River Trust (CRT)**

We need to work with CRT to ensure the K&A is properly supported by the new structure. Our aim is collaboration but sometimes challenge is needed.

Our strategy has evolved as we achieve things and new challenges arise.

- Please don't think Crofton is job done. We're very far from that and need to work with our volunteers to evolve Crofton over the next 2 years
- Our boats are really important in bringing in volunteers and as a tool to reach visitors. It's increasingly challenging to manage them
- CRT are not always easy especially when they're reorganising as they are now. It's probably true to say that the senior management wishes we weren't here. But we are.
- Finally, I've not listed it here but we need to renew our leadership. I have told trustees that I will stand down at the end of this year after 6 years, and our Treasurer, Tony Nares will also stand

down after 7 years. These are important roles and I call on all our members to join in with the task of finding new talent to help lead this amazing charity.