



Volunteer Role: Director of Boat Development for The Kennet & Avon Canal Trust

Background:

The Kennet & Avon Canal Trust is a volunteer led charity that works to protect, enhance and promote the Kennet & Avon Canal. As part of its wide-ranging work, the Trust currently operates 9 boats;

- 4 boats designed for, and hired to disabled and disadvantaged people & their carers.
- 1 boat is used by youth groups
- 4 boats are MCA coded trip boats (over 12 passengers)

The boats operate commercially, but are entirely managed and crewed by volunteers. The boats carry around 22,000 passengers each year and raise up to £100k to support the work of the Trust.

Role:

The Director of Boat Development's role, is to ensure the boats and the revenue from the boats, is maximised, within the constraints of the Trust's resources. The Trust wishes to get the best value out of the current boats, but the plans need to include end of economic life and replacement boats.

The role covers two main areas

- Develop & maintain a 10-year plan. Project management and implementation of the maintenance and upgrades to the boats.
- Maximising the revenue, profit and boat business opportunities.

The Director of Boat Development will need to work very closely with the **Director of Boat Operations** on long term plans, major works, upgrade projects, boat replacement, that arise from changes to the MCA (Maritime & Coastguard Agency) regulations and other safety standards.

This role will involve working very closely with the Branches and Boat Teams

Main Tasks:

- Member of the Trust's trading subsidiary board, managing a major boating, catering and retail business delivered via a volunteer work force.
- **Develop a 10-year plan that includes all the boats.** This needs to include upgrade projects, amendments required by the MCA and other general improvements
- Look at best practice and new developments that may help enhance the passenger, hirer and public's experience. e.g. passenger area refits, better disabled facilities, electric propulsion, removal of LPG equipment for electric.
- Talk to boat yards & boat builders to obtain their capabilities, inc. working to MCA standards.
- Build up a portfolio of costs for works and parts, that can be used to cost the items in the 10-year plan.
- Develop costed options for the KACTE board, so that decisions can be made on maximising the return from the boat investment.
- Explore and exploit synergies and expertise across all the boat teams.
- Work with the Branches to raise potential partial funding of the capital work. Eg funding better disabled facilities onboard.
- Ensure future projects are adequately manned and good project management is in place. That projects are planned and costed well in advance of work starting.
- Provide Technical and Project Management advice and support to the Project Teams.

- **Improve the revenue and profit, from the boat operations**
 - Work with each boat team to ensure passenger numbers are increasing not declining.
 - Develop a better use of Social Media to improve the public's visibility of the Trust's boat trips and accessible boat hire.
 - Help & support Branches that wish to start up a boat trip operation. Eg Boat trips through the centre of Reading.
 - Look at ways of improving the Trust's marketing. Help the Branches develop feedback systems, Focus Groups. Get a good understanding of what passengers and hirers will be looking for in 10 years' time.
- Co Host up to 2 meetings p.a. of the senior Boat Managers & Trainers

Time Commitment:

Highly flexible and much can be achieved working from home. Attendance is required at 5/6 board meetings each year, 2 Boat Manager meetings and several visits to the boats. Also visits to Boatyards, Boat builders and other trip boat operations may well be needed.

Average commitment would be about one day per week.

Skills:

- Good communication skills.
- Probably an Engineering background
- Project Management and planning experience will be needed
- Good understanding of boats, their construction and canal boating.