

The Kennet and Avon Canal Trust

57th Annual General Meeting held on 11^h May 2019 at 10.30 at Devizes Wharf, Couch Lane,
Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 1EB.

1. Attendance and apologies	<p>The Chairman, Chris Sims, welcomed all to the meeting, attended by 29 members.</p> <p>Apologies (32): Rob and Julie Dean, Bryan Baker, Lesley and Steve Hooper, Bobby and Dot Haslam, Frank Stokes, Chris Hopkins Gill Hawkin, Trevor and Jill Staig, Tom Hine, Louis Rutter, Derick Hunt, Jean and Alan Smith, Pat and Merv Kelly, Rosie and Richard Bennet, Graham and Ann Snook, Carolyn Calder, Sharmain Washbourne, Tony Betley, Scott Whetton, Sarah Foley, Paul Eames, Simon Eveleigh, Paul Jakeman, Patrick Titman.</p> <p>Proxy votes (10): Proxy was granted to the Chairman by Rosemary and Richard Bennet, Tony Bettley, Graham and Ann Snook, Carolyn Calder, Sharmain Washbourne, Merv and Pat Kelly, and to Mike Rodd by Chris Hopkins.</p>
2. Welcome and introductions	<p>Chris Sims (CS) introduced himself as Chairman of the Trustee Council and David Bruce as the retiring Trust President. The new Trust President, Rob Dean, was unable to attend.</p> <p>CS then introduced all those Trustees and Enterprise Directors present at the meeting.</p>
3. Minutes of the last meeting	<p>It was proposed that the minutes of the last meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.</p> <p>Proposed: Mike Bailey Seconded: Chris Phillips Passed: Nem Con</p>
4. Matters arising	<p>There were no matters arising</p>
5. Report from Trust Council	<p>The Chairman briefly summarised the key points of the Trustees' report and the accounts. Comments were then invited regarding the financial report. The full text of the Trustees' report and financial statements is published on the Trust website.</p> <p>The Chairman noted the great progress made in embedding Bruce Boats into the operations of the Trust, with 77 weeks of hiring activity against a target of 80 weeks, but emphasised the challenges involved in recruiting sufficient volunteers to support this work.</p> <p>He highlighted the continuing good work on the Our Crofton Story (OCS) project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), reflecting on the enormous amount of complex planning and implementation work that had been carried out by the Crofton team to ensure that the capital works phase of the project was successfully completed to time, quality and budget. The Chairman reminded members of the Trust's legal charge on Crofton to the NLHF to meet the obligations set out in the Grant award. He explained that a Crofton Management Review had been initiated to</p>

	<p>ensure that Crofton became a professionally managed industrial heritage attraction and looked forward to the first annual meeting at Crofton to elect the new management team. He also welcomed Rob Dunton as a newly co-opted Trustee, highlighting the support that Rob has already provided to the Trust, in particular for the OCS project, in his role as a Heritage Architect.</p> <p>The Chairman reflected on the hard work carried out by all Trust volunteers over the year on trip boats and in all the other activities carried out on the Trust's behalf. He also noted that Reading Branch had trialled the running of a trip boat using the Bruce Boat, Diana, and were now preparing to take on a lease for their own trip boat, Matilda, in time for the Reading Waterfest in June.</p> <p>The Chairman briefly summarised the Trust's financial situation over the year which saw overall funds remain consistent at £1.4m, while overall cash balances fell slightly from a net £589k to £566k. Unrestricted funds balances fell by 3% from £777k to £754k. The slight decline in cash balances was largely attributed to the drawdown of the Trust's contribution to the costs of the OCS project, with balances expected to fall further in 2019/20 as the OCS project is completed. It was noted that Trustees will be agreeing a formal Reserves policy in 2019, which is likely to require at least £100k at Group level. This will properly reflect the risks the Trust faces and to ensure sufficient balances to enable unbudgeted high priority schemes which support the Trust's charitable objects. The Chairman summarised the main risks faced by the Trust and noted in particular the potential costs of meeting new Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) standards for the passenger trip boats.</p> <p>The Chairman closed the report with a look at the plans for future periods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main priority in 2019 is to complete the OCS project. • A proposal has been submitted to restore the Archimedean Screw at Crofton. • The Trust has offered to restore the Wash House at Aldermaston Wharf in exchange for a lease renewal at a peppercorn rent. • The Trust is due to agree renewal of the lease at Great Bedwyn Wharf and will begin development work to improve disabled access at the site. • Work is underway to negotiate a renewal of the lease at the Newbury Stone Building.
<p>6. Ordinary Resolutions</p>	<p>a. To receive and adopt the Trustees' Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2018.</p> <p>The report and accounts having been previously published on the Trust website, comments and questions on the financial statements were invited and the following were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that there were apparent inconsistencies in the financial statement regarding the figures for Commercial Trading Operations (page 12 and Note 4 of report refers). The Treasurer,

Chris Bolt, explained that this was not an inconsistency but was related to the treatment of management charge.

- An explanation was requested on the reason for the 7% fall in Enterprise turnover. The Treasurer explained that this was partly due to the curtailment of operations for the Barbara Mac trip boat following engine failure. However, budget contributions from Enterprise will remain largely the same in 2019 as for 2018.

It was then proposed that the meeting receive and adopt the council reports and accounts for the year ending 31st December 2018.

Proposed: Chris Sims

Seconded: Terry Mundy

Agreed: Nem Con

b. To elect Members to be Trustees: All individuals were nominated in accordance with the Trust's Articles of Association; election was conducted as a group with the consent of members present.

i. Mike Bailey, Terry Mundy and Daisy Mundy retired in accordance with Articles 32 and 33 of the Trust's Articles of Association. They, being eligible, offered themselves for re-election.

Mike Bailey

Proposed: Chris Bolt

Seconded: Peter Turvey

Terry Mundy

Proposed: Daisy Mundy

Seconded: Chris Sims

Daisy Mundy

Proposed: Terry Mundy

Seconded: Chris Sims

ii. Nominations for election to Trust Council had been received for Chris Sims, Chris Bolt and Rob Dunton, who had been co-opted to Trust Council during 2018 and 2019. Having been duly nominated, they were proposed for election as Trustees.

Chris Sims

Proposed: Terry Mundy

Seconded : Daisy Mundy

Chris Bolt

Proposed: Rob Dunton

Seconded: Will Job

Rob Dunton

Proposed: Peter Turvey

Seconded: Chris Sims

	<p>All individuals having been duly nominated in accordance with the Trust's Articles of Association, election was conducted as a group with the consent of members present.</p> <p>Proposed: David Fearn Seconded: Chris Churchhouse Agreed: Nem Con</p>
7. Presentation by the Retiring President	<p>The retiring President, David Bruce, gave a short speech reflecting on his involvements over the years with the Kennet and Avon Canal and wishing the Trust and his successor, Rob Dean, the very best for the future. A full transcript of the speech is at Appendix 1.</p>
8. Presentation of John Gould Award	<p>In 1997, British Waterways donated a trophy, to be called the "John Gould Award" to be presented annually to a person or group who has "undertaken noteworthy actions or deeds for the Kennet & Avon Canal in the past year". The award is made by the Chairman of the K&A Partnership, acting on advice from the Trustees of the K&A Canal Trust.</p> <p>The award was given to Chris Churchhouse and the following testimonial from the outgoing Chairman, Rob Dean, was read by David Bruce:</p> <p><i>The "John Gould Award" is presented annually to a person or group who has "undertaken noteworthy actions or deeds for the Kennet & Avon Canal in the past year". The award is made by the Chairman of Trustees, acting on advice from fellow Trustees. With so much great work being done throughout the Trust and along the canal, the Chairman always has a tough choice deciding who should receive the award.</i></p> <p><i>For 2018, I would like to make the award to you as our IT Manager. My fellow Trustees strongly supported this decision. You have looked after our IT for 6 years and have saved the Trust a great deal of money. You moved our IT onto a hosting service and then built systems for our emails, website, members' database, boat bookings and crew rostering. The online boat ticketing system has been a great success and went in so smoothly, that we hardly noticed it. You've always taken a professional approach and been ready to step in at short notice with support problems. I hope you will accept the award. Sadly, it is marked by a trophy rather than a holiday in Australia, but I can assure you that this recognition by the Trust places you in some distinguished company. With very best wishes and thanks from Trustees."</i></p> <p>David Bruce congratulated Chris on his achievements on behalf of the Trust and presented him with the award. Chris thanked the Trust Chairman for the award and noted the efforts of those who had supported his work, in particular Peter Cadogan, who had inspired some of the changes and assisted in their implementation.</p>
9. Presentations	<p>Short presentations were delivered on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Boating by Alison Cannon and Julie Myers. • Long Life Lock Gates by Vice President, Terry Kemp.

<p>10. Other Business</p>	<p>The Chairman extended thanks to the following Trustees and Enterprise Directors who had recently stepped down:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rob Dean, for the enormous amount of time and effort given to the Trust as Chairman over the last six years and for his continuing support as Trust President. • Tony Nares, previously Hon. Treasurer, for his significant contribution to the health of the Trust finances. • Will Job, previously Chairman of Enterprise, and Enterprise Directors, Tim Pyatt, Deborah Robinson and Daisy Mundy. <p>The Chairman also thanked Trust staff for all their hard work this year, highlighting in particular Simon Hobson (Crofton site manager) for his work on grant applications and event organisation, and Jean Cook (Devizes Office Manager) for her support to the Trustees in keeping the Trust running smoothly. He also raised the issue of communications with Trust staff, noting the number of rude and inappropriate e-mails that were routinely received into the office from volunteers and members, asking that everyone should accord proper respect and courtesy to Trust staff at all times.</p>
<p>11. Questions and Closing Address</p>	<p>The Chairman invited questions and comments from members; the following were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill Fisher acknowledged the importance of good communications with Trust staff, but asked that there should also be effective communication with Trust volunteers, so that all felt informed and included. • The Trust Bookings Administrator, Jen Furmage, noted that there should be an amendment to the figures for the Bruce Boats annual target from 80 weeks to 70 weeks, meaning that they had in fact exceeded targets for the year. <p>The Chairman then closed the meeting.</p>

Appendix 1 – Reflections by the Retiring President of the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust

After eight years serving as your President and three years before that as a Vice-President, I just want to share a few reflections on my various involvements over the years with our canal.

- My first official involvement was 30 years ago when in 1989 I chaired our Trust's Last Lock Appeal to raise the final £10,000 required before H.M. the Queen reopened our canal in 1990.
- Also, in 1989, my own Trust launched its first boat, The Rebecca. Since then the four Bruce Boats have provided holidays on our canal for over 22,000 disabled, disadvantaged or elderly people, together with their carers.
- 11 years ago in 2008, I became a Vice-President but it was not until Mike Rodd, the then Chairman, invited me to become President in 2011 that I became fully active in representing our Trust on all manner of occasions.
- I immediately became immersed in lobbying the government regarding its plans to transfer Britain's 2,000 miles of inland waterways from the government-funded British Waterways to a new charity to be known as the Canal and River Trust. One of my biggest concerns was that the newly-formed C&RT was proposing to downgrade our canal to a 'remainder waterway' rather than it remaining as a 'cruiseway', which meant they would have no obligation to keep it open at all, let alone maintain or improve it. Some of you may remember the passionate speeches I made to our branches in 2011/12 expressing my concerns for our canal's future under the ownership of the C&RT. In addition, Mike Rodd and I attended various meetings at the House of Commons and I even lobbied alongside dozens of equally concerned trade unionists from British Waterways at the final AGM of British Waterways in Birmingham.
- It was Mike and me who drafted the vitally important 'Memorandum of Understanding' between our Trust and C&RT to ensure that the new owners would understand exactly where we were coming from in order to secure our canal's future under their new regime from 2012.
- Apart from enjoying the launching of the Jubilee at Newbury, several Waterfests at Reading and Newbury and the awarding of Red Wheel plaques to our Trust at Crofton, Claverton and Caen Hill, it was a great pleasure to show the Duke of Gloucester around Crofton and also to accept on behalf of our Trust the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service from the Princess Royal in Devizes in 2013.
- More recently, I enjoyed working with Rob Dean, my successor as President, in helping to secure the long-term future for the four Bruce boats. It was the confidence he gave me that Devizes HQ, together with the recently-created Bruce Branch at Great Bedwyn, would be able to continue the operation of my Trust's boats which resulted in me being happy last year to gift for free the £600,000 worth at cost of the four boats from my Trust to the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust.
- Also last year, it was a pleasure for both my private company and my Trust to donate a total of £20,000 towards the cost of the new loos for disabled people at Crofton.

So, it has been a wonderfully enjoyable and interesting time being your President, I wish you all the very best for the future and I know that Rob Dean will make a brilliant President in my place.

Thank you all for your support during the past eight years.