



MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL - CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE
YSTRAD MYNACH ON MONDAY 23RD JANUARY 2012 AT 3.00 PM**

PRESENT:

Councillor S. Jenkins - Chairman

Mr. R.J. Dommatt - Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust - Vice Chair

Councillors:

K. James, M.H. Newman, Mrs. B.M. Toomer

By invitation: Councillor Mrs. P. Griffiths

Together with:

K. Kinsey (Principal Engineer - Consultancy), N. Liversuch (Manager, Countryside and Landscape Services), R. Davies (Funding Officer), P. Hudson (Marketing and Events Manager), H. C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Miss L. Ackerman, M. Davies, D.M. Gray and M.G. Parker.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors S. Jenkins declared an interest as Secretary of the Islwyn Canal Association.

2. RINGING OF THE BELLS' 2012 CELEBRATIONS

Reference was made to the proposals to commemorate the bicentenary of the opening of the Monmouthshire and Brecknock and Abergavenny Canals to navigation on 17th February 1812 and the details contained within the draft calendar of events and brochure were noted. British Waterways have taken the lead on the coordination of the events and numerous organisations/community groups had agreed to participate. A programme detailing all the events that will be taking place during the course of the year as part of the celebrations has subsequently been prepared.

There will be a celebratory dinner on 4th February 2012 (with all profits being donated to the Canal Regeneration Trust) and the launch of the celebrations will commence at Pontymoile Basin on 10th February 2012 with canal restoration displays and other events programmed to take place. The ringing of the bells will commence at 12 noon at Panteg Church and will be

followed by the quarter peal of church bells rippling along the canal corridor to Newport and Brecon which will conclude at 6.00 pm. Churches without bells are also participating with the use of recordings or hand bells.

During the course of the year there will be numerous other events to mark the anniversary, overarching canal wide events, followed by local authority events and then individual community events. Events at key sites include the Wales Waterway festival and the Manor Road festival. There will also be educational/historic materials for schools, a special 'canal brew', tow path tidy, a calendar (combining old and new photographs), children linking arms along the length of the canal to join communities and lantern parades.

As part of the celebrations Councillor S. Jenkins advised of the proposals of the Islwyn Canal Association to site a barge on the canal and to use a carthorse to show the traditional method of movement along the towpath with those on board wearing the clothing of that era.

4. REQUEST TO RESTORE NAVIGABLE USE

Councillors S. Jenkins declared an interest as Secretary of the Islwyn Canal Association and left the meeting when this item was discussed. Mr. Dommett took the Chair for this item

Consideration was given to the request from the Islwyn Canal Association for permission to restore authorised navigable use on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, Crumlin Branch Arm. It was noted that the Association have been awarded two grants. The first in the sum of £4,400, for fingerboard signs and information boards along the canal and the second, in the sum of £24,000 to purchase a trip boat (20 ft 12 seater) to operate from Darran Bridge to Pontwaun. As such, they require permission to use the canal for this purpose.

It was agreed that the request be approved in principle and a detailed report be presented in due course as to how this can be achieved.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

5. Booking Office/Waiting Area/Visitor Centre

Councillor S. Jenkins advised of proposals by Islwyn Canal Association to create a booking office/waiting area/visitor centre at Darran Road, for which a planning application will be submitted in due course. An application has also been submitted for a grant to improve the box culvert at Navigation Road. He referred to other longer term plans for the canal and the quarry area that the Association would wish to progress in the future.

6. Cross Party Group on Waterways to be held on 8th February 2012

Mr. Dommett made reference to the Cross Party Group on Waterways which will take place in Cardiff on Wednesday 8th February 2012. The meeting will be an opportunity to hear about the success of waterways in Scotland and how these waterways are being used to deliver the Scottish Government's objectives and Scotland's wider vision for its water resources.

There will also be a presentation on the work carried out by ARUP on behalf of the North Wales Cultural Action Plan looking at the way the iconic Pontcysyllte aqueduct may be used as the catalyst for wider regeneration of the area and increased visitor spend in North Wales.

It was agreed that a copy of the invitation would be sent to all members on the Working Group.

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm.