



MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL - CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE
AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON MONDAY 2ND MARCH 2023 AT 5.00 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillors:

N. George, P. Leonard, B. Owen, J. Simmonds, A. Whitcombe, K. Woodland and
C. Wright

Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces: Councillor C. Morgan

Together with:

C. Adams (Highways Engineering Group Manager) J. Pitman (Senior Assistant Engineer), S.
Stook (Principal Engineer), A. Jones (Committee Services Officer), J. Thomas (Committee
Services Officer)

Representing Monmouthshire, Brecon, and Abergavenny Canals Trust –Reverend J. Collier
(Chair of MBACT) and L. Gauntlett (MBACT)

Also present:

Also present: Mr R. Wysom (Islwyn Canal Association) and A.L. Perchard.

RECORDING, FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

All present were reminded that the meeting was being live-streamed and recorded and
would be made available following the meeting via the Council's website – [Click Here to
View](#). Members were advised that voting on decisions would be taken via Microsoft Forms.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D.W.R. Preece, A. Leonard together
with B. Smith (Regeneration Projects Officer)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C. Morgan declared a personal interest in Agenda Items 6 and 7 as a member of
the Inland Waterways Association, as a private boat owner.

3. TO APPOINT A VICE-CHAIR TO THE MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL – CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP

The Committee were advised that Mr Richard Dommatt the Vice-Chair had left MBACT. Therefore, this has left the position of Vice-Chair vacant. Reverend J. Collier nominated Lindsay Gauntlett (MBACT) to be appointed as the new Vice-Chair. The nomination was moved and seconded and Lindsay Gauntlett was appointed as Vice Chair of the Canal Group for the ensuing year. By a show of hands (and in noting there were 6 For, 0 Against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that Lindsay Gauntlett be appointed as vice-chair of the Monmouthshire and Brecon canal – Crumlin arm working group for the ensuing year.

4. MINUTES – 25TH JULY 2022

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal - Crumlin Arm Working Group held on 25th July 2022 be approved as a correct record. By a show of hands (and in noting there were 5 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal - Crumlin Arm Working Group held on 25th July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

5. UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE CANAL

Sarah Stook (Principal Engineer) presented the report, which detailed the current and planned maintenance and any capital works planned for the forthcoming year. The report set out details of current funding availability and outlined any current operational issues regarding the usage and the condition of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm.

The Officer summarised her report and also provided Members with further updates which had been received following the report being written.

Members were advised that in relation to the Manor Road emergency feed, the new Officer in Welsh Water who is responsible for this area has managed to find several new properties that are illegally connected to the culvert. However, they have no powers to make the residents take out the connections. Therefore, the next step is to have a meeting with the NRW, Welsh Water, Environmental Health and drainage colleagues, building control and possibly Housing Officers, if any of the properties connected are Council owned properties.

The Officer also advised Members that a new water control valve has been installed on the Darren culvert. The valve that has been installed is a Pen Stock Valve which has a sliding door mechanism, which needs to be operated manually. This will be integral going forward for managing water levels downstream.

The Chair thanked Miss Stook for her detailed report and updates and Members were given the opportunity to ask questions.

A Member raised his concern regarding the low water at Fourteen Locks which crosses over into Newport City Council's section of the canal. Miss Stook assured the Committee that since the repair of the Darren culvert the flow of water down to Newport has greatly improved but we continue to inspect and monitor water levels in the Caerphilly section of the canal routinely..

Lindsay Gauntlett (MBACT) updated the Committee Members that Newport City Council have bid for a sum of money for the canal repairs. However, at this time there is no certainty to how much will be allocated to the Crumlin Arm. The Members were also advised that Newport are investigating why the canal isn't holding water, and there are investigations underway to locate other water sources to divert into the canal.

The Chair thanked Lindsay Gauntlett for her update.

The Members were also assured that the aqueduct section of the canal near the Cwmcarn Scenic Drive is also under investigation. It was noted by Members this was a listed structure, therefore the Officer was hopeful that CADW would be onboard with the current plans to restore this structure. Regen team are exploring options for funding to help the investigation, but physical works would need to be bid for in the future.

Following discussion, the Canal Group noted the content of the report and thanked Miss Stook for her update.

The Chair noted that a request had been received from Mr Richard Wysom (Islwyn Canal Association) to address the Committee Members. Mr Wysom was welcomed to the meeting and was invited to address the Canal Group.

Mr Wysom advised Members, the 'Lily' had last been used on the canal in 2015, and at that time it struggled with navigation due to the build up of silt and trees. Mr Wysom suggested all of the canal needs to be cleared.

Mr Wysom also brought to the Committee Members attention the danger of electric scooters and bikes used along the towpath

The Chair thanked Mr Wysom for his comments and acknowledge the issue that all Local Authorities are having with the uses of electric scooters and bikes and requested that the Cabinet Members present in today's meeting take it back to their colleagues in Cabinet for discussion.

6. UPDATE FROM MBACT

Reverend John Collier (MBACT) provided a verbal update on recent MBACT developments and matters relating to the Canal.

Members were advised that MBACT are in the process of purchasing a truck saw which is a weed cutting machine and a pontoon which will allow work to be carried on both sides of the canal. MBACT are willing to allow the Councils to use this equipment.

Reverend John Collier also wished for his thanks to go on record for Sarah in relation to her excellent communication and the Council for the way in which they care about the canal.

The Canal Group thanked Reverend Collier and noted the details of the update.

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance and contributions and the meeting closed at 5.55 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2023, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR