

## **RICKMANSWORTH WATERWAYS TRUST LIMITED**

### **Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 18 July 2023**

**at Batchworth Lock Education Centre**

**101 Church Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1JJ**

#### Present

Trustees/Members: David Montague (DM), Paul Childerhouse, Tina Berry-Chmiel (TB-C), Chris Burrige, Marie Gillen, Mike Lansdown, Steve Mander, Les Mead, Pam Paterson, Asher Rickayzen

Officers and employees: Andy Holmes, Rob Moore, Mark Saxon, Beryl Whittaker.

Others: Roger Ayers, Jenny Barzilay, Sandy Bell, Nik Bennett, Tony Berry, Jean Berry, Julian Brackley, Gareth Bruce, Jillian Christensen, Graham Cooper, Judy Cooper, Celia De Vekey, Warwick Gainsborough, Sadie Galindez, Sheila Gilbert, Trevor Gilbert, Mike Gordon, John Harris, Martin Hart, David Heath, Chris Hillier, Sue Hillier, Fabian Hiscock, Pat Hiscock, Paul Kendall, Chris Lloyd, Jo Mander, Alison Moore, Bob Patey, Clive Pelerin, Douglas Paterson, Roy Rosenthal, Jennifer Sandercock, Jayne Saxon, Terry Smith, Martin Stokes, Simon Thornhill, Liz Tibbels, Simon Vangucci, Ann Vernau, Anne Walker, Joanna Watts, David Whittaker, Ian Wilson, Deborah Young.

#### Apologies

Trustees/Members: Deane Symes, Steve Vincent.

Others: John Hawkins, David Roy, Joan Roy.

#### **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

DM welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **Minutes of 2022 AGM**

The minutes of the 2022 AGM, which had been posted on the website, had been noted. SM proposed that they be accepted, which DM seconded, with all in agreement.

#### **Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for year ending 31 December 2022**

The Trustees had approved the report and accounts at their meeting on 1 June 2023. Mercer & Hole had subsequently examined them and found the accounts to be in order and had no concerns. The report and accounts were available for viewing on the website.

TB-C noted the following highlights from the 2022 report and accounts:

- The income for the year had amounted to £203,967 and the expenditure had been £160,682, resulting in a surplus for the year of £43,285, most of which had been from a generous donation of £30k.
- Festival income had amounted to £108k and after expenses of £63k, over £40k had been generated for the Trust from the Festival. Money from the Festival for 2023 had been even higher.
- The total assets on the balance sheet amounted to £543k, of which 332k was in respect of the education building and the rest was in cash. There were no other fixed assets at the year end, as Roger had been fully depreciated and the Pride of Batchworth had been purchased for £1.
- Most of the assets had been allocated to particular projects:

- £100k in the asset replacement fund had been spent on the purchase of a new trip boat after the year end.
- During 2022 £10k had been allocated to the Roger conservation fund and after the costs of the docking in December 2022 there was a balance in that fund of £2,500 to be carried forward for the next docking/conservation project.
- As there had been a healthy cash surplus, the Trustees had decided to invest the money back into the Trust, so £30k had been designated for special projects, including renovating the canal centre and designing a new website. The aim was to complete these projects by 2024.
- £79k was unrestricted for general use.

### **Election of Directors**

One third of the directors were due for re-election in accordance with the Articles of Association. Tina Berry-Chmiel and Pam Paterson had decided to stand down this year.

The two directors standing for re-election this year were Les Mead and Steve Mander.

Proposers and seconders for each person standing for re-election were recorded as below:

<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Secunder</b>
Les Mead	David Montague	Chris Burridge
Steve Mander	Tina Berry-Chmiel	David Montague

All members voted in favour of the reappointments.

### **Chairman's briefing**

DM reviewed the year by highlighting how the Trust had performed against its key objectives as follows:

- 1) Education.** After coming out of Covid in 2021 the number of school visits had been limited, much reduced from 2019. The problems with Pride had also compromised the offering to schools, although only one Learning at the Lock (LatL) booking had been lost. Bookings were also down in 2023 which the Trustee felt was due to schools' challenges with the strike action.

However adult groups were also being attracted to heritage talks and the Trust was keen to build on personal recommendation to extend these.

DM thanked Rob Moore and all the LatL volunteers for their hard work.

- 2) Heritage and boats.** The problems with Pride had highlighted the Trust's vulnerability with having just one trip boat, as the Trust had been unable to offer short ferry trips and charters when Pride had been out of action during the year. After research it had become clear that electric boats would not currently provide the reliability that the Trust needed. Accordingly, when a suitable boat had come up for sale, the Trust took the opportunity to buy it, and the Spirit of Batchworth was now in routine use, offering charters and ferry trips.

- 3) **Conservation of Roger.** The last docking of Roger had revealed that several large timbers would need replacing in the next five years. Following the engine failure on the way to Cavalcade this year, the engine had been totally cleaned of the carbon deposits which had built up over time with not running the engine under full load. In future it was intended to run the engine hotter to prevent such a build up in the future.

DM thanked Fabian Hiscock for his dedication in looking after Roger over a number of years and also Clive Pelerin, Bob Patey and Mark Saxon for their work in ensuring the continued conservation for operational use of this heritage asset.

- 4) **Festival.** The Festival had raised a lot of money in 2022 and 2023. However, in 2023 it had been a struggle to find funds and the break-even point had only been reached a week before the Festival. The feedback from the public was that they valued the event, but this did not ensure the viability of the Festival going forward. To consider the viability of the Festival, two meetings were being arranged:
  - a. Stakeholders' meeting to try and reach a constructive funding approach for the Festival.
  - b. Volunteers' evening for succession planning and to recruit new people to run the Festival going forward.

### Questions

Two questions were raised.

- 1) In reply to a question about the differences between the Trustees and Directors, BW confirmed that they were the same. Trustees were appointed to run the charity and they also became directors of the company which limited their liability.
- 2) As to whether the sponsors were aware of the challenges of the Festival, DM confirmed that they were. The Trust however needed to be assured in advance that funders would be willing to provide enough funding for the Festival to go ahead.

### Thanks

DM noted that the Trustees recognised that there were a lot of people to thank, in particular the volunteers who contributed to the success of the charity. Sincere thanks were given to all the volunteers.

Several people would be stepping down from some of the roles and all were thanked for their commitment and hard work.

- Jillian Christensen from organising the charters. The General Manager would organize these in the future.
- Nik Bennett as treasurer. Andy Holmes had taken on this role.
- Pam Paterson after nine years as a trustee and lately as Rob Moore's line manager.
- Tina Berry-Chmiel as a trustee and Finance Director since 2011. Sandy Bell, the examiner of the Trust's report and accounts, had agreed to replace her in October after he retired as an auditor.
- Mark Saxon after ten years as General Manager. He was being replaced by Warwick Gainsborough who was already in post.

Presentations were made accordingly.

**Closure of Meeting**

After the meeting, refreshments were served.