

## Shropshire Union Canal Society.



The Minutes of the (2021) Annual General Meeting of the Shropshire Union Canal Society Limited took place on January 8<sup>th</sup>2022 at 11.00.a.m.

Due to the Covid 19 situation, this meeting was held, using Zoom Video Conferencing.

### Persons Present.

#### Council Members.

Rich Hamp, David Carter, Ian Hendley, Chris Bryan-Smith, Richard Feeney, Clive Robertson, Peter Richards, Pat Tolster, Tom Fulda, Chris Hesketh. Fred Barrett.

#### Ordinary Members

John Bannister, Peter Brown, Steven Clews, Barbara Cowie, John Cowie, John Dodwell, Andy Greenwell, Stephanie Grey-Smart, Malcolm Grey-Smart, John Hallewell, Carol Hamilton-King, Rod Hamilton-King, Michael Limbrey, Peter Hesketh, Michael Miller, Nick Nicholson, Stephen Palmer, Christine Palin, Chris Ray, Arthur Ronald, Elizabeth Tolster,

#### Post Meeting Presenter

Lizey Thomson

### **1. There is no clause in our Articles of Association that allows us to have online meetings.**

**However, in accordance with Government Covid 19 guidance we are allowed to hold this Meeting, using a digital solution :- Zoom Video Conferencing.**

### **2. Apologies for Absence.**

Tony and Christine Hesselgrave, Margaret Powell, Roger Squires, John Myers, Stephen Foote, Terry O'Brien

### **3. Reminder of the procedure for this Meeting.**

RH asked attendees to clearly indicate, by a showing of a hand, when votes were taken.

### **4. Adoption of the Minutes of the 2020 A.G.M.**

The adoption of the Minutes of the 2020 A.G.M. was proposed by RH and seconded by IH. The adoption was accepted. All voted in favour with the exception of two abstentions. (John Cowie and Peter Brown ).

### **5. Reports**

#### **(i) Chairman. Rich Hamp.**

This has been another year of nearly constant adversity against the odds in the society's ongoing ambitions to complete the current section of the canal and, by implication, get the water that much closer to its Welsh neighbour in Llanymynech.

The constant enthusiasm of the restoration volunteers never fails to impress me – equally impressive, is that their professional approach to the work required has been noted by visiting organisation, who are interested in the canal restoration.

In fact this last year has seen the society achieve the honour of receiving the Community Engagement Award section of the Ground Engineering Award along with Canal and River Trust and Arcadis, for our collective work on the extensive engineering problems that this current section of the canal has created.

2021 saw the departure of David Hennessey from CRT. David has made a substantial contribution to the society's relationship with N.H.L.F and I would like to take this opportunity to repeat the society's appreciation for all the hard work he has undertaken during the course of the Lottery bid.

We have also seen two Trustees retire from Council. Terry O'Brien has been a stalwart figure for over 16 years, first as Chairman and then as Secretary whilst Gill Robertson has managed the Fundraising portfolio with panache – the society's lock winds have been a notable feature for the past few years until Covid struck. Her retirement will also see a serious shortfall in jam production. We sincerely wish Terry and Gill all the best for the future.

And it is the future which I wish to address next. Your chairman has been concerned for a number of years that the society appeared to be running out of volunteers to cover the more tedious background work that is required for us to exist legally. Thankfully the last year has seen a radical improvement on this front and we go into 2022 with a reinvigorated Council. This will now allow the society to address the two 'issues' that need immediate attention.

Whilst totally welcoming the new enthusiasm that comes with new Trustees – they will also need a short period of time to absorb the necessary 'knowledge' to take the society forward to a new project which is the section southwest of Crickheath Bridge on towards Schoolhouse Bridge. This will commence fulltime, when the current section is completed, hopefully by the end of this current year.

However it has always been the Society's policy to organise the necessary systems to operate correctly two years in advance. We are already well into producing our proposal's to Canal and River Trust for their approval.

We have been somewhat protected financially the last few years with the help of the NHL monies, and, our biggest priority in the future will be the need for some serious fundraising. Whilst it is true that the society holds money in its accounts – this sum would be diminished to nothing over a short period of time at current costings for running the society and also the restoration.

We therefore need some serious fundraising to continue the projected plans.

Even allowing for pandemics – hopefully a brighter future is on the horizon for the Society, however I must end by emphasising that the only reason that we have got this far is due to the unstinting work and support from so many volunteers.

So – whether you work on the physical restoration, edit the society's magazine, maintain the website, are part of the donation box collector's team, work on the constant background administration of the society and any of the other myriad jobs that need doing – I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your continuing support and help.

#### **( ii ) Treasurer. Ian Hendley.**

IH stated that his first task was to present the Society's Annual Report and Accounts for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This document was prepared by our Accountants, approved by the Society's Council of Management before being finalised, again by our Accountants, to include the certification required by Company Law.

The report was published in an abridged form in Cuttings last September in full and glorious detail on our website, and, on the Companies House website. The headings and layout of the Statement of Financial Activity – another term for an income and expenditure account – and the Balance Sheet, are determined by the Charities Commission and the various Companies Acts. A more informative and detailed summary of the Society's financial activity can be found at the end of the report.

There were no questions.

#### **6. Election of Auditors.**

Ian Hendley proposed that Barrington's should be appointed to continue as our Accountants. FB seconded. All voted in favour. There was one abstention. Arthur Ronald.

## **7. Election of Trustees.**

**Ian Hendley, - Peter Richards and Fred Barrett, are applying for re-election.**

RH proposed that all three be re-elected en-bloc. Stephen Palmer seconded the proposal. All voted in favour. There were no abstentions.

**Tom Fulda and Chris Hesketh are applying for formal election.**

Both were proposed by RH and seconded by IH. All voted in favour. There were no abstentions.

## **8. Amendment to Articles of Association.**

Ian Hendley presented the following:-

At the prompting of the Charity Commission, we have reviewed the section of the Society Articles, termed, Notices, that deal with communications in the existing document. The original clauses cover post and hand delivery only, since the range of electronic communication alternatives available today, did not exist in 1972!

The revised section simply extends the range of methods for communication to include, any and all forms, of electronic messaging, and, is based entirely on draft wording provided by the Charity Commission. The wording of the proposed change has been published on the Society's website. There were no questions,

Ian Hendley proposed that the Society's Articles be amended to include electronic communications. Rich Hamp seconded. All voted in favour. There were no abstentions.

## **9. Any Other Business.**

Carol Hamilton-King raised the question of a replacement secretary, due to the retirement of Terry O'Brien.

RH responded that, Ian Hendley and Fred Barrett were providing temporary cover, but it was hoped that a permanent appointment would be made at the next General Meeting on January 21<sup>st</sup> 2022. There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.27 a.m.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting were taken by Fred Barrett.

All votes cast were by a show of hands

A full Audio Version of this Meeting and the following presentation is retained in the S.U.C.S. Archives.

**There followed a presentation on Montgomery Canal Heritage by:-**

**Elizabeth Thomson Heritage Adviser Operational Projects. CRT. West Midlands.**

Tom Fulda welcomed Lizzy Thompson to the meeting.

There followed a very interesting session:- regarding heritage matters, definitions of those at risk, and opportunities for volunteer involvement ,relating to the recording the whole of the Montgomery Canal.

She then moved on to the specific matter of restoring the Canal between Crickheath Bridge and Schoolhouse Bridge, and, heritage issues, methods of re-construction, sourcing of materials and varied opportunities for volunteer involvement.

Tom Fulda thanked Lizzy for her contribution.

Chairman Rich Hamp drew matters to a close at 11.55 a.m. thanking all for their attendance.