

THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION

Island House, Moor Road, Chesham, Buckinghamshire HP5 1WA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SEPTEMBER (AGM) 2022

Minutes of the 63rd Annual General Meeting of The Inland Waterways Association (IWA), held at 11.30am on Saturday 24th September 2022 at The Guildhall, Lichfield, with some members also attending electronically via Zoom.

The meeting had been preceded with a presentation by Alison Smedley and Mike Palmer to launch the Association's *Waterways for Today* report.

PRESENT

72 persons were recorded as present in the room and a further 12 electronically.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jonathan Smith called the meeting to order and thanked Helen Whitehouse and IWA Lichfield Branch for making the day's arrangements. Sue O'Hare, a deputy national chair, welcomed those present to the meeting, and read out a message of welcome from Michael Fabricant, MP for Lichfield, chair of the all Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways and an IWA member.

CO-OPTION OF LES ETHERIDGE

Sue O'Hare reminded members that Paul Rodgers had resigned as national chairman and as a trustee in April 2022 and that the remaining trustees had co-opted Les Etheridge as a trustee subject to confirmation at the AGM, and appointed him as interim chair the following month. A resolution had been proposed to approve that co-option and appoint Les Etheridge as a trustee for a further term of 12 months. The resolution was approved. The remainder of the meeting was then passed to Les Etheridge to chair.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS GENERAL MEETING

No amendments were proposed and the minutes of the 62nd Annual General Meeting held on 25th September 2021 were agreed as a true record of that meeting.

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Les Etheridge introduced John Butler, chair of Finance Committee and National Treasurer, and Genevieve Wilson, Finance Manager. John Butler explained that finalising the accounts had run a little late this year, which was largely due to the time taken for the audit to be undertaken remotely and the preparation and consideration of the Going Concern Report, which had been a new requirement over the past couple of years.

Genevieve Wilson gave a slide presentation giving details of the Association's income and expenditure in 2021, both as consolidated accounts and excluding the figures for Essex Waterways. These showed that although the Charity's funds (including Essex Waterways Ltd) had risen to £2.658 million (from £2.542 million), the increase was largely due to Essex Waterways having a successful year, and that the charity's General Funds (i.e. excluding restricted funds, designated funds and reserves held by subsidiary companies) had fallen to a level below the Association's Reserves Policy, and that this situation needed to be addressed.

In a short Question and Answer session, members made suggestions to encourage legacies, noted and welcomed the success of Essex Waterways Ltd, and questioned the wisdom of donors placing money in restricted funds. Les Etheridge explained that the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31st December 2021 had been formally approved by trustees, and that further approval was not required.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

The meeting approved a resolution to reappoint Sayer Vincent LLP as auditors to the Association and to authorise trustees to determine the auditors' remuneration.

APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

Les Etheridge explained that in addition to Paul Rodgers a number of other trustees including Alison Woodhams and Ian Sesnan had resigned as trustees during the year and he thanked them for their service.

Les Etheridge explained the process by which the vacancies had been assessed, applications had been reviewed by a selection committee and their recommendations approved by the Board, which was the same procedure as the previous year.

Four candidates were put forward for election: Rick Barnes, Dave Chapman, Charlie Norman and Mike Wills. Each candidate was voted on individually, and all four candidates were duly appointed as trustees for terms of three years.

Les Etheridge informed members that this concluded the meeting.

NATIONAL AWARDS

Following the conclusion of the formal meeting, national awards were presented:

Richard Bird Medals: David Carrington, Mike Elwell, Jane Elwell, Sue Schweiso, John Hawkins and Mike Slade.

Christopher Power Prize: Terry Cavender and Buckingham Canal Society

Branch Achievement Award: IWA Lichfield Branch

Cyril Styring Award: John Fevyer

PRESENTATION FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND TRUSTEE QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Jonathan Smith gave a presentation highlighting the work and actions he had taken since his appointment at the beginning of May and the challenges facing the Association, particularly balancing income and expenditure and the need to raise membership fees and better promotion of the Association's work to existing members to ensure retention and to prospective new members. Questions were invited and members made comments and suggestions including the need for better membership recruitment promotion, a greater focus to be given to the condition of existing navigable waterways, support for Canal & River Trust's bid for government funding and concerns that some local branches were not responding to new members or to offers for new support. Les Etheridge thanked Jonathan Smith for his very considerable work since taking office.

The proceedings concluded with a short presentation about recent work on the Lichfield & Hatherton Canals by Peter Buck and Bob Williams, and then closed at about 1.00 pm.