

## THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION

Unit 16B Chiltern Court, Asheridge Road, Chesham, Buckinghamshire HP5 2PX

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SEPTEMBER (AGM) 2024

Minutes of the 65<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of The Inland Waterways Association (IWA), held at 11.30am on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at De Montfort University in Leicester, LE2 7BY, with some members also attending electronically via Zoom.

The meeting was preceded with presentations by Sue O'Hare and Mike Palmer to update members on recent current campaign and waterway restoration issues.

#### PRESENT

78 persons were recorded as present in the room and a further 45 electronically.

#### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mike Wills called the meeting to order and thanked staff and members of IWA Leicestershire Branch for making the day's arrangements. He then welcomed those present to the meeting. Mike Wills recounted to those present the difficult situation that had faced the Association at the 2023 AGM and explained the actions that had been taken to address that situation.

#### MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS GENERAL MEETING

No amendments were proposed and the minutes of the 64<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2023 were agreed as a true record of that meeting.

#### ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Mike Wills introduced the Annual Report and Financial Statements and explained the reviews and actions that had been taken during the past 12 months. He also explained actions taken to advance the Association's campaign, including waterway restoration work, and welcomed the appointment of Charlie Norman as Campaigns and Public Affairs Director. Mike Wills drew attention to the level of restricted funds and the desire to see these spent on the purposes for which they had been given. The Annual Report and Financial Statements, which had previously been approved by trustees, were received by the meeting.

#### 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

Mike Wills explained that Robert Atkins and Hannah Rigley had completed their terms of office, and that they were willing to be reappointed. Christl Hughes, Ian Sesnan and Colin Porter had been co-opted during the year and sought appointment for full terms as trustees.

Five candidates were put forward for election: Robert Atkins, Hannah Rigley, Crystl Hughes, Ian Sesnan and Colin Porter. All five candidates were duly appointed as trustees for terms of three years.

#### TRUSTEES QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Members made several comments and asked questions on a variety of subjects including the recruitment of younger members, and indeed any new members, and asked whether trustees had considered the recruitment of consultants to assist with this. The increasing

unaffordability of boating, including hire-boating, was of concern. Members also spoke of the need to engage with waterway users other than boaters, and proposals for water transfer using navigable waterways. There was concern at a reported proposal to abolish branches, albeit the proposal had been withdrawn, and there were requests for paid employee support for branches and better communications. Mike Wills explained that these issues were being reviewed. Members noted that the Association now appeared to be in competition with Canal & River Trust. There was confusion amongst the public as to which organisation they ought to join. A technical question concerning legacies reporting in the Annual Report & Financial Statements was explained. Concern was also expressed at the condition of many navigable waterways, especially in the Northwest, and a question was raised whether funds for restoration ought to be diverted to keeping existing navigable waterways open, but this was countered with enthusiasm for extending the existing navigable network. The new IWA moorings on the Trent were commended.

Mike Wills informed members that this concluded the meeting.

#### NATIONAL AWARDS

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

**Richard Bird Medals:** Pete Fleming, Emma Greenall, Peter Hill and Bernard Moreton

**Christopher Power Prize:** Ali Bottomley (WRG Training)

**Branch Achievement Award:** IWA Northampton Branch

**Cyril Styring Award:** Ray Alexander

**Sustainable Boating Awards:** Kay & Paul Sumpner, Mothership Marine, and Ortomarine

The meeting was followed by a presentation and discussion on Residential Boating led by Ivor Caplan.