

MINUTES

Title	Lowland Canals Key Stakeholder Group	
Date	13 July 2013	
Venue	The Boathouse, Auchinstarry Marina	
Attendees	<p>Martin Latimer, SC Board (Chair) (ML) martin.latimer@blueseamarinas.co.uk</p> <p>Geoff Aitkenhead, SC Board (GA) geoff.aitkenhead@scottishwater.co.uk</p> <p>David Brown, local boating representative (DB) mytho@live.co.uk</p> <p>Alistair McKenzie, Glasgow Watersports (AMcK) alistair_mckenzie@hotmail.co.uk</p> <p>Jim McLachlan, Forth & Clyde Canal Society (JMclL) jim.mclachlan@yahoo.co.uk</p> <p>Marion Preez, Spokes (MP) marion@urbanpioneers.co.uk</p> <p>David Thomson, Ramblers Scotland (DT) davidthomson@tesco.net</p> <p>Ron Woods, Scottish Federation for Coarse Angling (RW) policyofficer@sfca.co.uk</p> <p>Andy Carnduff, RYA Scotland (AC) acarnduff@btinternet.com</p> <p>Alasdair Smart, SC Waterway Manager (Minutes) (AS) Alasdair.Smart@scottishcanals.co.uk</p>	
Apologies	<p>Duncan Sutherland, SC Board</p> <p>Ronnie Rusack, Seagull Trust</p> <p>Andrew Stephenson, Edinburgh Leisure</p>	
		Action
1.	<p>Introductions & Agreement of Group's Remit</p> <p>ML opened meeting and welcomed all attendees to inaugural meeting of the group. ML passed on apologies and advised minutes will be circulated to members unable to attend.</p>	

	<p>ML explained purpose of group to bring stakeholders closer to the Board and management of Scottish Canals.</p> <p>Furthermore, it was to identify issues of concern and conflict with a view to overcoming this in a collaborative and mutually beneficial way.</p> <p>It was unanimously agreed that there was a genuine desire to improve the canal for all.</p> <p>SC to produce loose Terms of Reference for the group to confirm format and remit of group.</p> <p>ML clarified the purpose of this group as a small number of focussed representatives of stakeholder groups who could give informed comment from which actions, if appropriate, would be generated. This group aims to create closer relationships between Scottish Canals and its partners and stakeholders and does not replace any other group that already exists.</p> <p>ML highlighted that it was intended that this group would be kept small (around 12 members) and that the aim was to move issues from the group to the Board and Executive with a view, where appropriate, to solving conflicts and making the canals better places to use. Proposals for projects could be aired in the forum too, in order to get early views from all likely user groups. It would be incumbent on members of the groups to feedback information and not just rely on the website to disseminate news and output.</p>	<p>ML/ AS</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Membership criteria/ Rotation/ Appointment</p> <p>It was agreed to hold meetings up to three times in the first year and up to twice per year thereafter, if required. The next meeting to take place in November after the scheduled Lowland User Group Meeting (Oct 26, 2013).</p> <p>Meetings will be chaired by SC Board Members and group members were requested to ensure they, or an appropriate stand-in, was available to attend all meetings.</p> <p>Group would consist of 10 -1 2 members with all agreeing that the attendees present, plus those whose had been invited but were unable to attend, gave a fair cross-sector and geographical representation of Lowland Canals users.</p> <p>Members were asked to confirm if they were appropriate representatives of their respective body of users or if alternative representatives should be put forward.</p> <p>Appointments would be for 2 years with an opportunity to be re-appointed at the end of term. Individual user groups would agree selection and appointment of their own representatives.</p> <p>All users are encouraged to bring matters to the attention of their representatives so that issues and concerns can be escalated. However customers who have a concern were advised to contact Scottish Canals outwith this group via the usual channels. To</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p>

	<p>assist with this there will be communication via SC website about the group, its purpose, contact details for representatives and copies of minutes. Representatives are requested to supply content for inclusion on SC website promoting forthcoming events, things to do etc.</p> <p>ML stressed that it was important that group representatives took steps to ensure that they represented the “broad church” of views from their members.</p>	<p><i>All</i></p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Overview from Representatives – Issues & Aspirations</p> <p>AMcK: Focus on business success of Pinkston Paddlesports..Aspiration to bring new users to paddlesports and on to the canals. Group discussed introducing a water-based code of conduct to complement the recently produced “Towpath Code of Conduct”.</p> <p>RW: Deterioration of fish stocks over recent years due to removal of fish by anglers (who historically would catch and then return live fish to the canals). Difficulty in “policing” 70 miles of canal and lack of current legislation to prosecute. Use of illegal fishing and trapping equipment affecting stocks and damaging canal. All users encouraged to report illegal activities to SFCA and Police.</p> <p>AC: Issues with width and depth of canal. The characteristics of the canal were such that it was often difficult or impossible to pass or to gain access to the canal bank. Request for increased dredging and re-profiling of the canal as well as accommodating advertised depth of 1.83m. Longer-term aspiration to see removal of obstacle of Bowling Railway Bridge (sliding opening) to allow higher and masted vessels to transit up to Dalmuir.</p> <p>JMcL: Concern that similar previous meetings had not resulted in any actions. Aspiration to see improved ease of movement through canal (ie user-operations of locks and bridges).</p> <p>DT: Some cyclists riding too fast for towpaths and lack of use of warning bells. Particular concern in Edinburgh area. SC representatives on Edinburgh Council-led initiative. AS will escalate concerns of group to this body.</p> <p>MP: Keen to support initiatives to encourage considerate cycling. Would it be possible to record issues via the SC website?</p>	<p><i>AS</i></p> <p><i>All</i></p> <p><i>AS</i></p> <p><i>AS</i></p> <p><i>AS</i></p>

	<p>DB: Observed a deterioration in the condition of the canal over the past 6 years. He also commented on inappropriate repair techniques (dumping a load of stone where embankment failure had occurred) and stressed the need for dredging and re- profiling of the canal.</p> <p>All: General discussion highlighting aspirations for; Ease of access through the canal. Self-use or assisting SC staff. Increase in stopping off locations/ landing stages at appropriate locations. Increased information about things to see and do along the canal (eg Twechar) Fixed bridge opening times.</p>	AS
4.	<p>Next Meeting Date of next meeting proposed for Saturday 2 or 9 November. 1000 – 1200. Location tbc.</p>	All