

CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, THE GUILDHALL, CAMBRIDGE ON THURSDAY 14 JANUARY 2010 AT 9.30 am

Present: Conservators: Mr J A Adams (in the chair), Dr G Brighty, Mr A C G Brown, Mr R Ingersent, Cllr M I Nimmo-Smith, Mr L Phillips, Mr J R Pryce-Jones, Prof K Richards, Cllr L Walker, Dr R D Walker and Cllr T Ward.

Observers: Mr R T Bryant, Mr D Bradley, Mr W Key and Cllr H Smith.

In Attendance: Dr P E Noon (River Manager), Mr J R Wakefield (Deputy River Manager) and Mr C S Sparkes (River Foreman).

And of the general public (who signed the attendance record): Mr J Leader, Mr G Parrish, Mr J Macnaghten, Mr M Marks, Mr M Denney and Mr S Exley (Cambridge News) and Ms E Vos.

Action Required

By

The River Manager opened the meeting at 9.40am. Weather conditions affecting traffic had delayed some attendees.

1. **Appointment of Conservators:** The River Manager reported on the re-appointment by the City Council of Mr A C G Brown, Mr R C Hardingham, Mr R I Ingersent, Cllr M I Nimmo-Smith, Mr L Phillips, Cllr L Walker and Cllr T Ward, with effect from 1st January 2010 until 31st December 2012. All had signed their declarations. Returning Conservators were welcomed to the meeting.
2. Apologies for absence had been tendered by Mr R Hardingham, County Cllr M Williamson and Observer Mr J Bayliss-Smith.
3. **Election of Chairman:** On the nomination of Mr Brown, seconded by Dr Walker, Mr J A Adams was appointed Chairman for the following year unanimously. There were no other nominations.

Mr Ingersent entered the room

Mr Adams took the Chair and thanked Conservators for their vote.

4. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th September 2009:** These were approved with one typographic correction on page 95, substituting 'celebrating' for 'celebration', and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.
5. **Matters Arising from those minutes as reported (not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda):**
 - 4 **Health & Safety review:** The bill for the report prepared by BRM Consultancy Services for the September meeting (£1349.70) had been paid. The Chairman reminded Conservators of the recommendations given in the consultant's

report. The review was to be taken forwards, subject to a suitable quotation, to be presented at the April 2010 meeting.

- 5.1 Refurbishment of the Berky weed harvester: Reedman Services Ltd (Lincoln) had been commissioned to refurbish the Berky at a cost of £34,450 (ex. VAT). The Berky was lifted out at the EA's Ely Depot, 17th December, by Mid Anglia Crane Hire (cost £1,480 inc. VAT), the day before blizzards beset the region. S G Haulage Ltd transported the boat to Lincoln, charging £575. The works were expected to take 2 months to complete.
- 5.2 Staff training: Training had been arranged for the Deputy River Foreman for City & Guilds 2377-12 PAT (Portable Appliance Testing), near Huntingdon in January (cost £250). All portable appliances were due for re-inspection in January 2010.
- 7.5 Finance (capital finance sub-committee group): Counsel's written Opinion had been received plus his invoice (£2012). A meeting of the group had yet to be re-arranged, pending a review of the properties by the River Manager.

River Manager

6. Appointment of Deputy Chairman: On the nomination of Cllr Nimmo-Smith, seconded by Mr Brown, Dr R D Walker was appointed Deputy Chairman, *nem con*.
7. Delegation of powers to Chairman, Deputy Chairman and officers:

The following motions were taken *en bloc* and were agreed unanimously:

- 7.1 Conservators authorised the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and officers to carry out all such matters requiring their authority in the event of any emergency works or works consequential on works approved by the Conservators being required, and to take any decisions normally required to be given to the Conservators (including the Licensing Act 2003) where the obtaining of such approval might delay any matters to the detriment of the Conservators or any third party.
- 7.2 Conservators confirmed that the River Manager and officers be authorised and directed to collect the registration fees, any arrears and all other charges due to the Conservators and to take such steps as may be necessary (through Court action, including power to agree to and to sign proxy for the Conservators in respect of the Conservators' debtors or otherwise) on behalf of the Conservators to complete such collection or to enforce the Byelaws and statutes and to defend actions on behalf of the Conservators. The River Manager to be appointed to appear on behalf of the Conservators before any

Court of competent jurisdiction for these purposes and the powers of the Conservators for this purpose be delegated formally to the River Manager and her Deputy.

- 7.3 Conservators authorised the River Manager to issue such notices as may be necessary in respect of all work to be undertaken in the Conservancy Area and to take appropriate steps to maintain the same in conformity with the current statutes and the Byelaws affecting the same.
- 7.4 Conservators agreed that the River Manager, after consultation with the Chairman or Deputy Chairman, be given power to agree special terms for payment, to compromise or otherwise to amend any claim in respect of registration fees due to the Conservators and to agree terms for and to issue (with or without such conditions as deemed appropriate) licences for work to be carried out in or over the navigation or on the banks to applicants and to refuse such applications and those for registration of boats, for any reason for which the Conservators have that power and without limiting the generality of this authority, particularly if they have any concern as to the safety of the navigation or any boats concerned or their effect on the safety of others to implement such powers; provided that details of all such licences granted or refused shall be reported to the next ensuing meeting of the Conservators.

8. **Finance Report:**

- 8.1 2009/10 Budget comparisons: A table showing income and expenditure for the 9 months up to 31st December 2009 was tabled with supporting notes from Mr Wakefield. Expenditure was around £6-7k over budget predictions. Some adjustments would lessen this overspend, including income recently received from attendances at Bishop's Mill Sluices under the SLA with the City Council and EA MOU income.
- 8.2 2010/11 Revenue Budget: Conservators were presented with an estimate of anticipated revenue income and expenditure for the year ahead. The forecast had been adjusted for reduced interest rates. Mr Brown queried the expected rise in insurance costs; this matter would be raised with the insurers.
- 8.3 Capital expenditure: A table showing completed and outstanding projects identified for the 5-year life of the Business Plan was tabled. Conservators discussed the outstanding projects and the means of funding them. Dr Brighty gave apologies for his late arrival and returned briefly to the Revenue Budget, recommending that establishment charges and H&S/training needed greater financial input because current staffing levels could not deliver the capital programme.

Dr Brighty & Ms Vos
entered the room

River Manager

The Chairman proposed to undertake a review of the Business Plan and return to the April meeting with his report.

Chairman

- 8.4 Capital reserves: There was £380,000 invested in a Barclays Treasury Deposit maturing 11/01/2010 providing 0.28 % interest. In addition £250,000 was held on a Cambridge Building Society Hallmark Account as at 18/12/2009 which had been earning 0.75 % A.E.R. (0.6 % net per annum) since 03/04/2009. Mr Brown suggested that better interest rates could be found elsewhere. Mr Ingersent said that business account interest rates were generally dire but believed that the rates being offered by Barclays were better than many banks.
- 8.5 Bank accounts: Barclays Bank had notified that as of 7/12/2009 Business Premium and Business Reserve accounts were to be converted automatically to a Sterling Business Tracker Account.

The Chairman asked Conservators to approve the revenue budget and capital programme, as presented, pending the Chairman's report in April.

Mr Marks entered
the room

On the proposition of Cllr Nimmo-Smith, seconded by Mr Ingersent, all but one of the Conservators approved the revenue budget.

On the proposition of Mr Brown, seconded by Mr Pryce-Jones, Conservators approved the capital expenditure plan unanimously.

9. **Matter Agreed:**

- 9.1 Craft licensing review – powered craft: £108k potential income existed within the Conservancy Area. Only £24k was recouped directly through Conservancy registrations. The Interchange Agreement partly redressed this shortfall (£43k in 2009/10). The Chairman's paper gave a range of Options. The key objective of any change was to maximise Conservators' income in view of their future expenditure requirements. Dr Brighty declared his interests, noting that discussions were to be held with Waterways colleagues, not himself directly. Dr Walker asked if the shortfall in registration income could be attributed to cruisers or residential craft; analysis had shown that it was evenly distributed between the two. The option with the greatest simplicity was for each authority to recognise each other's licences without further fees being payable. This however, was likely to be financially unacceptable to the EA. Cllr Nimmo-Smith recommended that a sub-committee group should look into the situation and develop scenarios; he cautioned against being locked into any long-term agreement with the EA. Mr Brown advised further discussions with the EA before setting-up a sub-committee group, there being little

point discussing options without prior negotiation. Mr Pryce-Jones suspected that all craft would register with the EA if a reciprocal licence agreement was brought into being. He asked if craft could be compelled to register with the authority of their home port. This was likely to be acceptable to residential moorers but it would have a serious impact on the cruisers. Mr Brown believed that some boat owners might move from the Conservancy Area faced with that scenario. Cllr Ward noted that the Conservators would gain 100% of monies if the EA agreement was terminated. The aspiration of cruisers needed further exploration. The paper also offered an option for a premium licence, similar to a BW Gold licence, allowing boats access to both authorities' waterways. Mr Ingersent said it was a mystery that the agreement had survived for so long; there was no compelling argument to maintain its present form. The Conservators could rightfully assert their own policy; consultation over access to waters was a secondary consideration. Mr Ingersent reminded Conservators that they were not tackling congestion issues caused by increasing numbers of rowers on the lower river, and the fees paid by that user group were comparatively low as compared to powered craft. Mr Brown predicted future increases in BW Gold licence holders visiting the Conservancy Area, particularly if the Bedford-Milton Keynes link went ahead. Dr Brighty said that powered craft were just one aspect of navigation income; other craft categories should come under scrutiny also. For customers' benefit and ease of administration, licensing needed to be straightforward. The possible risk to income by any change in the scheme would need to be built into the Conservators' 2011/12 budget. Mr Phillips declared an interest; he was against any percentage increase in fees. He agreed with Mr Ingersent and Dr Brighty that boaters needed to be canvassed for their opinions. By freezing the Conservators' fees, Cam-resident boats might be encouraged to register with the Conservancy. Mr Phillips only purchased an EA licence if he intended to cruise that season; non-cruisers tended to buy Conservancy licences. Mr Key reminded Conservators that most rowers did not have to pay fees to row on British waters and the Conservancy's fees were already far higher than the EA's. Mr Ingersent said that the market elasticity needed to be explored through a process of consultation, possibly introducing gradual changes in steps over a 3-4 year period. Dr Brighty acknowledged the lack of information on the cost of running the navigation and its value to its users. An economic view was required. The Cam was a premium water; he likened it to a top golf course. Mr Brown suggested a calculation of the cost per navigable mile for different user groups. The Chairman believed the starting point for all of these discussions was the cost of running the Conservancy. The 5-year Business Plan had started this process of review but more robust figures were needed. The Conservators received no grant-in-aid; registration

fees reflected this. Mr Bryant said that any change in the present arrangement would unduly penalise Club sailing and motor boats at Waterbeach; their members rarely went to Cambridge. Charging two separate fees would be iniquitous.

The Chairman asked Conservators to consider two points in principle: (i) that any boat with its home mooring on the Cam should pay its registration fees to the Conservators; and (ii) income to the Conservators should be the key driver to negotiations and/or any consultation. The sub-committee group would refine the range of Options presented, and the Chairman asked if Conservators were agreeable to an EA Observer joining that group for discussions. Cllr Ward believed that any option could only be more beneficial than the current position. Prof Richards believed that a 2-tier licence ('Cam-plus', with a supplement for movement outside the Area) was worthy of market research and sensitivity analysis amongst user groups. If Cam-based boaters were required to buy an additional visitor licence for EA waters, the enforceability and administration costs would need to be considered. The Chairman indicated that the Options appraisal should be completed by October; the Agreement required 6 months' notice of termination. The Chairman proposed the motion of a sub-committee group being formed to the vote.

On the proposition of Cllr Nimmo-Smith, seconded by Dr Walker, Conservators agreed to establish a sub-committee group to review licensing arrangements for powered craft with the EA.

The Chairman asked for volunteers for the membership of that group. Mr Ingersent, Mr Brown and Mr Pryce-Jones agreed to assist. The Chairman resolved to report back at the next meeting.

Chairman

- 9.2 Registration fee options, 2010/11: Papers with proposed percentage increases on registration fees were tabled. The Chairman highlighted the two decisions that needed to be taken. Firstly, that registration fees for category 30-39 craft (motor vessels) should continue to track the EA's fees (at 95%) for the year ahead, matching the 3.3% increase instituted by the EA for 2010/11.

On the proposition of Mr Phillips, seconded by Mr Brown, Conservators were unanimous in agreeing a 3.3% increase on registration fees for motorised craft.

The officer's report recognised that controls were required to reduce congestion along the Backs; financial instruments alone were available to Conservators to restrict numbers of craft. A table illustrated the effects of increasing the commercial punt

multiplier on registration income (x5-x10, x7 being recommended by officers to bring-in sufficient income for anticipated expenditure over the 5-yr Business Plan). Mr Ingersent declared a prejudicial interest. Dr Walker suggested that the differential should be increased between single and double punts. Cllr Ward also supported that higher fees should be charged for double punts; single punts being charged less since they did not cause the same degree of congestion. The Chairman was aware of concerns about the proliferation of double punts. Dr Brighty cautioned that the economics of the navigation needed to be better understood before certain user groups were penalised financially; there was no proof that increasing the fees would reduce numbers of operators. The Chairman noted that Conservators had always adopted a pragmatic approach to their pricing policy. The attraction of the commercial multiplier was that it captured income from tourism. Mr Pryce-Jones supported the notion for a premium being charged for double punts. Mr Macnaghten requested permission to speak. Scudamore's paid £20k each year to the Conservators in registration fees; combined with other operators this figure amounted to £45k. The proposed adjustment to the commercial multiplier had not been made publicly known before today. Mr Macnaghten believed that the Conservators had a legal obligation to listen to its stakeholders. A 45% increase in one year was simply unfair as compared to only a 3.3% increase levied on motor craft. There had been no public consultation and yet the Conservators were prepared to consult over the Interchange Agreement. There was, he argued, insufficient case for the rationale that pricing was a curative for congestion. There had been little change in status along the middle river as compared to the lower river where congestion of rowing boats in the early morning was terrible. It was not fair to single-out one river user group only. The proposals would severely affect those with livelihoods on the river without any warning. There appeared to be little connection between the different policies for craft fees.

The Chairman thanked Mr Macnaghten for his comments and asked Conservators if they would take the proposal to adjust the multiplier to x7 or discuss a differential between single and double punts. Cllr Walker believed that there should be some consultation given the views expressed, looking at the details more closely before taking a decision. The Chairman insisted that a basic increase needed to be fixed at this meeting. Cllr Nimmo-Smith suggested changing the differential between single and double punts from a ratio of 2 to 2.5 instead of changing the x5 multiplier. The Chairman identified that Conservators needed to separate the two items: (i) whether to apply a percentage increase on fees, or not; (ii) whether to adjust the commercial multiplier, or not. The Chairman put the proposal for a 3.3% increase on fees to the vote.

Mr Parrish left the room

Conservators agreed a +3.3% increase on non-motorised vessel fees for 2010/11. There was one abstention.

Cllr Ward supported the officer recommendation to adjust the commercial multiplier to x7. There was now a more coherent Business Plan; the Conservators' income base was not sustainable. The financial scenario offered a reasonable projection. Conservators needed to ask questions such as how much each paying passenger was contributing to the operator as a percentage of a punt's registration fees and how much did a rowing eight pay towards its fees per outing. A value needed to be placed on usage. Dr Brighty supported an outcome that would balance the budget but he was concerned about the lack of consultation and recommended that the multiplier should remain at x5; the Conservators could eat into their reserves until there was an economically-viable case for change. The Chairman drew discussions to their conclusion. He suggested amending the proposal, leaving the x5 multiplier unchanged but to develop a plan over the next 12 months, including some form of cost-benefit analysis, and to bring a more complete recommendation in January 2011. Powered craft charges would also be considered in that review.

Cllr Nimmo-Smith seconded this proposal to retain the x5 multiplier; six Conservators were in agreement, three against.

The Chairman took the other proposal for the differential between a single and double punt be increased from 2 to 2.5.

On the proposition of Cllr Nimmo-Smith, seconded by Cllr Walker, six Conservators agreed to increase the differential to 2.5, one was against and one abstained.

- 9.3 Pontoon licences: Pontoon licences issued to Scudamore's at Quayside and the Mill Pit were due to expire 31st March 2010. Land ownership issues at Quayside were still being resolved by the 3 parties involved. A recommendation was put forwards to delegate the drawing-up of terms and conditions for future pontoon licences to the existing finance sub-committee group (Chairman, Dr Walker, Mr Brown, Mr Williamson, officers).

Chairman

10. Chairman's Report:

The Chairman reported on his meeting with CFPAS to renew the fishing lease. He had also attended AINA's annual conference; he did not feel that the Conservators were in a position to use volunteer assistance to support the work programme at present. He had also met with Scudamore's and the City Council about pontoon licences. A productive liaison meeting had taken place with rowers. The Conservators' business had made some important steps forwards over

the last 12 months: financial requirements were known, the H&S policy details were on their way. He would bring to the April meeting a report on long-term capital planning. The Chairman acknowledged the expertise and knowledge around the table. He was keen to involve Conservators more fully in the management of their business beyond the quarterly meetings which he hoped would not be too burdensome.

11. River Manager's Report:

The Conservators noted her report on:-

11.1 Administration

Prof Richards was courting a Geography student's interest in developing a GIS-based data management/decision-support system for the Conservators in the Lent term. The City Council was looking to invest in a project management system called 'Conservation Management System' (CMS7); the River Manager attended a training session with City officers in December to assess its suitability for managing the Conservators' assets and projects.

The River Manager attended a meeting of the Regional Navigation Group at the EA's offices, Brampton, 27th October.

A family group had been wandering the towpath between Chesterton and Milton with a number of children, presumed to be playing truant. The river crew suspected they were responsible for fly-tipping black rubbish bags along the towpath. Their behaviour had been reported to the County Council's Child Welfare & Health department.

The River Manager declined an invitation to the annual Waterways Trust meeting.

New members of the EA Waterways Team (Ms Amanda Spivack, Mr Steve Lyons, Ms Erin Vos) accompanied by Mr Day (River Inspector) and Ms Amy Thurlow (Recreation Officer) made a reconnaissance visit to the Conservancy Area, 9th December, aboard the EA patrol boat to Jesus Green. Scudamore's generously provided a chauffeur punt for the group to view the Backs ex-Quayside, at nil fee. Mr Ingersent was thanked formally for his assistance.

11.1.1 Archiving: Mrs Betts of Ditton Fields asked for information about the construction date of Jesus Green footbridge (1892). She was referred to the County Archives Services. Mr Booth, a Milton resident, had sent photographs to the office showing the extent of the 1978 flooding and Baits Bite Lock in 1965.

11.1.2 Business Plan: See Finance Report, above.

11.1.3 AINA/BW consultation: The Chairman, River Manager and River Foreman attended the one-day AINA conference, 'Volunteering and the Inland Waterways', in London, 2nd

November. Huw Irranca-Davies, MP, Defra minister with responsibility for the waterways, gave the keynote address. Revised estimates of volunteer hours were provided to Ian White Associates after this meeting for the IWAC report to Defra.

The River Manager visited the NT Wey and Godalming Navigations, Guildford, 19th November, courtesy of Mr Gibson, Navigation Manager. The brief tour took in a visit to Coxes Lock which had been drained-down for brickwork repairs.

An IWA Newsflash warned that the Government might include BW's property portfolio as a component of a £16bn asset sale, with far-reaching effects on the future of all national waterways. An e-petition had appeared on the 10 Downing Street website.

AINA had issued a final working version of its report 'Residential use of the waterways' to its members only for comments before 31st January.

The AINA Executive agreed to convene a workshop on Climate Change on 8th February in London, preceded by a briefing updating members on the AINA work programme.

The River Manager attended a meeting of the AINA Executive Committee in London, 1st December. Mr Smith (Middle Level) announced that as of September 2010 he would be standing-down as Vice Chairman of the Executive. The AINA constitution required this position to be taken by an authority outside the 'big three' (BW, EA, Broads Authority).

Following its AGM in October, BW circulated a Compass report 'Setting a new course: Britain's waterways in the third sector' setting out BW's ideas for moving the organisation from the public to the third sector. Feedback on this strategy document and recommendations were to be taken to the BW Board in Spring 2010.

Defra launched its 'Waterways For Everyone' consultation on 21st December, the Government's strategy for the inland waterways of England and Wales.

The River Manager submitted the half-yearly (Jul-Dec) return of incident records from the AINA IRIS database to the AINA Manager on 31st December.

- 11.1.4 Insurance: Background information had been provided to the insurers in respect of the claim arising from person injured by a falling willow branch at Baits Bite, 4th September 2009. Mr Cooke (Towergate Risk Solutions) was due to visit the office on 26th January to discuss the Conservators' 2010/11 insurance policies.
- 11.1.5 Office Supplies: Consumables have been purchased in the last quarter (toner cartridges, paper). The River Bailiff has purchased photo albums for cataloguing the Halingway trees.

11.1.6 Procedures: Barry Jones and Paul Rushmer (EA) had installed a prototype strong-stream monitor in the office at Baits Bite. The system had been set up with two alarm thresholds (amber and red) based on the gate opening positions for Baits Bite and Jesus sluices. Officers would make note of river conditions when the alarms were activated. Observations would be compared against hydrographic data from the EA after a few months' operation. It was anticipated that a fully operational system, with automated messaging to members of the boating public using the Cam, might be available, with the EA's support, before winter 2010/11.

11.1.7 Staff: The Deputy River Foreman aggravated an existing back injury when clearing-up the Depot, a time off injury (one day). Manual handling training was required for all staff. The River Bailiff reported that a work-related injury to his ankle, sustained 2001, continued to impact upon his mobility.

Staff had been circulated with copies of new Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations issued in October.

The Deputy River Manager was unable to complete his attendance at a part-time evening touch typing course in Ely.

The River Manager took annual leave 20th-27th November inclusive. The River Foreman took two short periods of leave in October and December.

Squadron Leader John Walton, imminently to retire after 35 years' service in the RAF in engineering and operations management, also qualified in powerboating, had approached the River Manager regarding work placement or volunteering opportunities with the Conservators as part of his resettlement. Following an initial visit on 5th November, Mr Walton has agreed to join the Conservancy for a month (15th February to 12th March 2010) to assist with the work programme.

To improve enforcement procedures, the Chairman has authorised for all staff to undergo enforcement training in the PACE codes (Police and Criminal Evidence Act), in keeping with other officers with statutory powers (e.g. EA River Inspectors, Environmental Health Officers). Course bookings were being arranged with Aquila Training.

The River Manager attended a one-day training session with City Council employees in CMS7 software (Conservation Management System) in Cambridge, 17th December. Costs were to be shared across the group (estimated £114 per delegate).

The Chairman joined the staff for a Christmas lunch at the Fort St George, 15th December, and part-contributed to the costs.

The River Manager was to attend a Pensions Employer Forum at Shire Hall, 15th January, regarding changes to the Local Government Pensions Scheme.

11.1.8 Licensing Act: Nothing to report.

11.1.9 Grant Applications: The River Manager canvassed the EA MOU Supervisor and Mr Duthie, County Council, for their views regarding a joint application to WREN for landfill tax funding to support the bank protection programme using 'soft' engineering materials. An estimated £50k of project monies could protect substantial length of eroding riverbank downstream of Baits Bite. The deadline for grant applications was 29th January. The County Council was willing to spare some officer time (see also 11.2.5 Jesus Lock).

11.1.10 Revd Ian Thompson: The Dean of King's College, and Senior Treasurer of the CUCBC, passed away 24th September. A memorial service had been arranged at King's College, 13th February, 2.30pm. CUCBC held an extraordinary meeting in October and created a new role of Deputy Chairman. Mr Richard Hamersley had been elected to this post, to support the Chairman, Dr Convey. Dr Holly Hedgeland had been appointed Senior Treasurer. Mr Hamersley made an introductory visit to the Conservators' office on 30th October.

11.2 Property management

11.2.1 Jesus Lock Keeper's Cottage: PMS Cambridge Ltd had fitted an extractor fan and light pendant (cost £115). A new gas cooker (Hotpoint HW170GIK FFD), complete with flame safety device to fulfil safety standards for multiple occupancy dwellings (cost £329, plus £44 extended warranty period up to December 2011), was installed by M&M Heating on 21st December. Exec Cllr Julie Smith had been alerted to City Streetscene leaving the Victoria Avenue gate wide open during the day. The City Council had confiscated the EA issue padlock, believing that it was the Conservators' staff and contractors who had been leaving the gate open.

11.2.2 Baits Bite Cottages: The tenants of No. 1 Cottage had given notice and were due to vacate the property by 8th January 2010. The property had been advertised to let by Carter Jonas at the same rental; potential tenants had viewed the property. Andrew Gilbert serviced the boiler of No. 1 Cottage, 11th December (cost £95). An Energy Performance Certificate was required before the Cottage was re-let; Carter Jonas was to arrange this inspection.

SBS Heating & Electrical refilled the header tank and the vent radiators of No. 2 cottage on 11th November (cost £50).

Veolia Environmental Services failed to pump out the site sewage treatment plant on 10th December because the tanker's progress along the towpath was impeded by overhanging branches. A service visit was to be re-arranged once the trees had been cut back in January/February.

- 11.2.3 Baits Bite Office: The BT Total Broadband contract was renewed on 23rd November for a 24-month period. The office alarm went off unexpectedly in late September out of normal office hours; the River Foreman had attended. The engineer from Advance Security suspected a fault in the heat/motion sensor; he replaced the unit. He warned that spiders were a possible cause. The office exterior had been swathed in cobwebs in autumn, the source of much amateur photographic interest.
- 11.2.4 Clayhithe House and Depot/Workshop: The water account for the period 1st June to 30th November had been received (£112). The Cambridge Ramblers were very satisfied with the new metal bench near the slipway. The River Foreman was asked to clear his personal items from the Old and New Workshops and yard by 31st January to effect improved storage arrangements at the site. Advance Security quoted £190 plus VAT to upgrade the workshop alarm system with a speech dialler (i.e. alarm message relayed to a telephone call-down list). Archer & Archer solicitors had written to Cheffins, acting on behalf of Mr Gingell, on 20th October, offering a grant of easement for the drain leading from his field to the river frontage. Cheffins defended their client's demands for the pipe to be repaired at the Conservators' cost; their client believed that tree roots had encroached from the Conservators' property, blocking the pipe. Their client also claimed that the River Manager and River Foreman had previously agreed to undertake works, at the Conservators' expense, when they met with Mr Gingell in April. Cheffins claimed that the Conservators' application to the EA for Land Drainage consent for a new pipe served to prove Mr Gingell's line of argument. Archer & Archer made it clear that the Conservators were not enjoying any benefits from the pipe; it was unreasonable for Mr Gingell to expect a pipe serving him exclusively to be repaired without cost to himself. A closure date was suggested for any offer of a grant of easement (31st January 2010) in an attempt to close the matter. The power supply to Clayhithe failed overnight 17th-18th December for a 14-hour period following blizzards. Other parts of the region also suffered power cuts. EDF had been overwhelmed with calls from members of the public. Reeds of Cambridge (canoe outfitters based at Cathedral Marina, Ely) were looking to re-locate to the Cambridge area again, and had asked if the Conservators had any premises available to them.
- 11.2.5 Jesus Lock: Hargreaves visited on 15th October to remedy leakage at the upstream gates. The river crew reported that the modifications had been successful. A second payment of £34,394 has been remitted (making a total of £48,990 paid to

date). A balance of £2,530 remained unpaid (5% retention); Hargreaves were to raise their final invoice in July 2010. Mr Crooks, EA Waterways Engineer, wanted to borrow the new stop-timbers for a drain-down inspection at Bedford Lock, of similar dimensions. The River Manager had seen spare stop-timbers at Denver Complex; he was advised to try there first.

The River Manager met with representatives of Jesus Green Association and staff at the Botanic Gardens to discuss planting ideas for the lock garden, 14th October. At their AGM in December, JGA's Chairman asked for support in principle and for gardening volunteers to come forwards. The motion was approved and 3 volunteers offered their services (Mr Davies, Mr Raffan, Mr Edgar). A draft Sustainable City Grant to fund the new planting scheme was put forwards in December but the City's officer requested further details which could not be submitted in time for the application deadline. An application was to be re-presented for the next funding round (deadline 26th February).

The newly painted downstream balancing beam was subject to a graffiti attack on 14th October. The River Bailiff's photograph of the 'artwork' was forwarded to the Police.

Mr Ashley Dalton, independent punt operator, was looking for storage space on the lock island for his business paraphernalia, pending the closure and demolition of the bowls' pavilion on Jesus Green. The licensed operators at La Mimosa punt station had been using the pavilion for storing blankets, cushions etc. Permission to use the lock island was deemed to be impracticable and dangerous (access to authorised personnel only).

The oak rests for the lock swingbridge had been replaced by John Harrison (cost £740).

Halcrow's Final Report has been returned to them (7th January) for final corrections.

11.2.6 Baits Bite Lock: R J Marriott (Engineering) Ltd carried out their bi-annual M&E service, 26th October. They added two fixing eyes to the guillotine gate, so allowing the gate to be jacked-up in an emergency using block and tackle for flood discharge once the motor unit had been decommissioned pending the actuator replacement project in January.

The lock was measured for stop-timbers on 11th November by Hargreaves Lock Gates; they quoted £4032 for both sets (head and tail) inc VAT plus transport. Stop-timbers were necessary for a drain-down inspection, to be arranged via the EA and its engineers, Halcrow Group, in 2010.

A scaffolding design plan and flood risk management plan were submitted to the EA Development Control department to support the Flood Defence consent application (L09/C/131). The EA Asset System Management team required supporting information for its Project Mandate to secure financial approval

(50 % EA contribution to project costs). The EA's Purchase Order for £13,200 had been received.

Mr Hamersley (CUCBC) mooted the idea of placing an anemometer and/or digital weather station above the guillotine gate to relay information on local weather conditions to the boathouses.

A cyclist complained about the treacherous ice on the lock footbridge on 21st December following snow and freezing conditions over the preceding weekend. The River Foreman was asked to purchase supplies of rock salt for limited distribution around the public access points at Baits Bite and at Clayhithe Depot.

11.2.7 The Halingway: A dumper truck had been used on the towpath. The County Council's padlock had been removed from the Grassy Corner gate. The offenders had been hauling logs out of the ditches; the tracked tyres had damaged the cycleway surface. The Police, SCDC and the County Council had been alerted to these activities.

The River Manager had contacted a pest control expert regarding the presumed rat holes undermining the towpath near Clayhithe Bridge.

Mrs Gooch-Hammal had enquired about placing a memorial bench beside the river near Stourbridge Common on her father's behalf. An alternative site beside the Halingway at Chesterton was offered to her, but this was deemed too distant from her father's house at Camside.

The local Sustrans Ranger for Route 11, Mr Merrington, was standing-down from his duties. His replacement was being sought.

The River Manager was due to attend a meeting of the Chesterton Fen sub-group (Old Chesterton Residents' Association) on 26th January, 2010.

11.2.8 Lease of Fishing Rights: The final half-yearly payment of £1,065 had been received under the existing 10-year lease. This was due to expire 31st May 2010. Following a meeting with Mr Lacy Anderson and Mr Barry Peachey (two Directors of CPFAS Ltd) at Baits Bite on 4th October, a new lease was being prepared for a 3-year period only. CFPAS was concerned about the marked reduction of interest in river fishing as compared to stocked lakes and ponds, observed elsewhere around the country. Their members were also concerned about the excessive speed of cyclists using the towpath and accident risk. Conservator Mr Brown used his legal expertise to review the draft document.

Members of the public had sought advice regarding coarse fishing and pike fishing on the Cam. Information about licences and permits was provided to them.

The EA Fisheries Enforcement officer was alerted to reports of three foreign men with fishing tackle acting suspiciously near

Baits Bite Lock in the early hours of the morning. The vehicle registration plate details were passed on to the EA.

11.2.9 Grazing, 1.74 acres Fen Road: Payment of the £675 annual rental had been received from the tenant, Mrs Barton.

11.2.10 Grazing, 4.69 acres Fen Road: The River Manager wrote to Mr Crickmore, owner of the neighbouring plot, on 25th September asking if he knew the identity of the individual(s) squatting on the Conservators' grazing field. No response was forthcoming. Carter Jonas had handled the original field lease in 2006; they were approached for advice on how to remove squatters. The firm's Partner, Mr Zeid, offered some helpful guidance notes issued by the Country Land & Business Association regarding 'squatting' livestock. He recommended using an experienced solicitor to handle the matter; inappropriate enforcement might back-fire with legal consequences for the landowner. An associated firm, Roythornes, had been in contact subsequently. Legal costs were inevitable with any action taken to remove the squatter(s).

11.2.11 11.3 acres Clayhithe Field: Mr Smart had been asked to reimburse the costs of the water bill for the six months to 30th November 2009 (£163.19).

11.3 Plant and equipment

11.3.1 Computer: AKM, the Conservators' software support provider, notified a change of telephone number to 0845 459 0079.

11.3.2 Conservators' Boats: Officers from Middle Level visited Clayhithe to see the Berky in action; they were contemplating the purchase of a similar machine for their operations.

After a day's piling work, the Berky weed harvester suffered another hydraulic oil leak into its hold on 28th September. The river crew spent a day mopping up the spill, replacing a fractured hose. On 21st October, the main drive broke down, requiring another day's maintenance. This drive was isolated on account of a chronic oil leak and pollution risk. Pete Maskell fitted a new gear pump to the weed harvester on 30th October (cost £587). See also Matters Arising.

Protective boat covers, fabricated by Two Tees Boatyard, had been acquired for the two Aquapeche boats, the 'Ted Gambie' (Bailiff's punt) and 'Fred Young' (general open boat).

11.3.3 Safety Equipment: New items of chainsaw protective equipment had been purchased for the river crew, as agreed in the Business Plan

11.3.4 Vehicles: W D Chipchase serviced the Ford Transit, 24th September (cost £283). The Allianz Cornhill lifting equipment

inspector noted a fracture in the Massey Ferguson tractor's loading arm when he visited on 15th December; the welding repairs were to be completed in-house.

River Foreman

11.3.5 Mobile phones: The River Foreman's phone broke in late November; as a consequence he did not receive an early morning alarm call from the EA for Bishop's Mill Sluices. He was given a spare handset from office supplies. O2 were expected to offer a free handset upgrade in February 2010. More robust handsets were required.

11.4 River Work

11.4.1 Bishop's Mill SLA with the City Council: The invoice for the three months ending 30th September had been issued; payment had been received. A programme of maintenance works for the year commencing 1st April 2010 had been submitted to Cambridge City Council, together with a quotation of £8,578 (which excluded the cost of out-of hours' attendances). The River Manager wrote to the asset manager, Mr Prinsep, City Council, reminding him that the powered gates would now require regular electrical inspections to meet H&S requirements. Various 'snagging' points associated with the engineering upgrade had also been brought to his attention. The river crew had requested lighting above the gates to improve safety during callouts in the hours of darkness.

11.4.2 EA Memorandum of Understanding (SLA): Estimates of the costings for the year commencing 1st April 2010 had been provided to the EA MOU Supervisor in accordance with the terms of the agreement. Their official order was awaited.

11.4.3 Towpath - grass cutting: CGM (Cambridge) Ltd cut the grass along the towpath over three days (completed 18th September) at a cost of £1,255.

11.4.4 Miscellaneous Applications: The River Manager met with Mr Guy Belcher, City Conservation Officer, and the City's Pinder, 7th October to discuss the provision of a ramp or steps for recovering cattle from the river near the Fort St George public house. Single Farm Payment monies had become available to the Council. They were made aware that any works to the riverbank required a s15 licence.

Revised arrangements for lowering the middle river had been circulated to the College Bursars via the Secretary of the College Bursars' Committee plus those officers in the County Council with vested interests in riverside structures.

Trinity College, via its agents J P Chick & Partners Ltd, applied for a period of river lowering to complete replace the sheet steel piling along a 30-metre length of riverbank (west bank of the Cam along the Backs, EA Land Drainage Consent

L09/C/139). A s15 licence was being prepared for these works. The Clerk of Works for Darwin College had also enquired about a lowering period for an engineering inspection. A public notice was issued, advertising the lowering period (18th January to 1st February 2010 inclusive). The EA fisheries team was also been notified. The River Bailiff hand-delivered letters to residential boaters moored above Jesus Sluices, asking them to move beforehand. The City Council asked permit holders, via Camboaters, to respect this request. Punt operators had contacted the office about alternative moorings for the duration. Scudamore's arranged for some of its staff to take annual leave to reduce the impact on their business.

Mr Harrison of Horningsea has submitted an application to the EA for Consent to construct a boathouse over the cut which he had constructed along his frontage winter 2008/09. The s15 licence granted to him previously gave provision for this without further fees.

Engineers acting on behalf of the Doubletree Hotel were researching the potential flood defence impacts of an extension to its leisure facility. The consultants were struggling to meet the EA's specification for the building plinth to be placed 600 mm above flood level. A s15 licence was not deemed necessary for the building extension, being beyond the immediate shores of the main river.

The BBC's Strictly Come Dancing production coordinator tended to film 'Vox Pox' on the Backs, 11th November. They were instructed to purchase a standard Film Permit from Scudamore's on the day.

The River Manager met with the City's Engineer, Chris Robertson, and Mr Bill Key (CRA) on 22nd December to discuss a possible mooring for the City's Lottery-funded wide-beam 'playboat' opposite Riverside on the former Simoco site. The River Manager had discussed possible mooring sites with Cllr Clare Blair previously. The CRA was preparing a report for Cllr Cantrill, seeking additional boat storage space on City land.

11.4.5 Rubbish Clearance (City): The Conservators' 'mud barge', used for the temporary storage of items of rubbish collected along the Backs, was returned to the Depot before Christmas. The link tip loader at the Depot has been emptied by Cambridge City Council on 4th November (cost £173).

11.4.6 Third Party Rechargeable: Nothing to report.

11.4.7 Tree Pollarding: The River Manager met with the County Council's Rural Surveyor, Ms Beth Minter, at Clayhithe, 21st October, to discuss winter tree works along the driveway leading to Waterbeach. Their tree surgeons, South Angle Farm, offered to remove a dead tree adjacent to the visitor moorings

at the same time. Their paperwork being in order, and the quotation satisfactory, the tree was removed on 7th January.

Acacia Tree Surgery, on behalf of Crickmore Developments, asked for permission to pollard the willow trees to the rear of Fen View, Chesterton (tree no's 804 to 813). Their insurance and working methods being satisfactory, permission was granted and the works were completed in early January.

Local residents at Fen Road, Chesterton, had been enquiring about the start-date for tree pollarding works, believing that they had priority over other locations. They were assured that a survey was to be undertaken and works would commence once the outcome of the survey was known. Mr David Davison, independent arboriculturalist, was commissioned to walk the Halingway to provide a risk-based classification of the trees, indicating works required and a rotation plan. The River Bailiff accompanied him, taking notes which were later appended to the master spreadsheet. Of the 800 + trees identified in the survey, 250 were identified for either immediate removal or pollarding in year 1 of the cycle (i.e. by mid-March 2010 before the bird nesting season). Removal of dead and diseased trees was anticipated to leave some gaps; the appearance of the Halingway in the future demanded a replanting programme also. New tree identification tags have been purchased, to be affixed by the river crew as he undertook his post-works survey. The City Council's Tree Team was notified of the first batch of works at Chesterton as well as a notice beside the towpath and courtesy letter to local residents. These elicited a number of responses. The river crew commenced pollarding those trees less than 3m above ground level at the Chesterton end of the towpath in December. The SCDC Trees and Landscape Officer has also been forewarned of works to trees within the Baits Bite Conservation Area (6 weeks' notice required). The Halingway tree data (including GPS coordinates) had been transferred to the Cambs & Peterborough Biological Records Centre, under the terms of SCDC's Wildlife Enhancement Grant granted in 2008.

- 11.4.8 Weed cutting: The EA Operations Delivery team sprayed-off patches of floating pennywort along the length of the Cam in October. Mr Trumper (EA) circulated a briefing note about pennywort eradication in view of criticisms from the boating lobby. The cost of the proposed 3-year clearance programme was projected to be in the order of £95k.
- 11.4.9 Bank Maintenance: Soft bank piling, using wooden stakes and coir-filled rolls supplied by Salix Living Solutions (purchased with Housing Growth Fund monies), had been carried out downstream of Baits Bite Lock. Back-filled areas behind the new soft revetment were to be re-sown with wild wetland grass seed mix purchased from Emorsgate Seeds. A small stock of coir rolls remained, so another consent application was made to

the EA to protect a 30 m length of bank further downstream (ref. L09/C/154). The EA MOU Supervisor, Darren Trumper, commended the river crew on the high standard of the works. The river crew retrieved a 10 ft long cast-iron pipe downstream from the riverbed near Clayhithe. It had probably been lying in the Cam for decades.

Expressions of interest were sought from the EA and the County Council to submit a joint application to WREN for landfill funding (deadline 31st January 2010). Grant monies could provide further materials for riverbank protection where water depths were suitable. It seemed unlikely that the EA could support a business case for providing more steel piles in 2010/11 using flood defence monies.

The River Foreman noticed damage to the banks and cycleway shuttering, possibly caused by burrowing rats, near Clayhithe in October. The River Manager has asked a pest control expert for advice.

Mr Phillips (Camboaters) expressed his gratitude to the City Council for the completion of works to improve riverside access along Midsummer Common.

- 11.4.10 Miscellaneous: Prof Everson (Anglia Ruskin Uni.) had put his miniature remote control survey boat through its 'sea trials' at the Pike & Eel, Chesterton, over the Christmas vacation. Barring a few technical hitches and interruption by passing rowers, the boat appeared to be a success. Prof Everson proposed to undertake a series of trial transects near Baits Bite.

11.5 Acts / Byelaws

- 11.5.1 Breaches of mooring policy: Mr Moseley noted narrowboat 'Rosie' double-moored at Brown's Field, Fen Ditton, 27th September; the vessel had moved when an enforcement visit was made the following day (Monday). A letter was sent to the operator of 'Rosie' to remind her that this obstruction to navigation was in breach of the byelaws.

The new owner of narrowboat 'Davros' double-moored with his old vessel 'Bustopher Jones' on the upstream landing stage at Baits Bite overnight without permission, having earlier disrupted the University Fours Races by failing to heed marshal's warnings to pull over. A warning letter was sent to the owner, Mr Cook, reminding him that as a City Mooring Permit holder he only he three 'strikes' before he was out, and he had achieved to commit two breaches of the byelaws on the same day.

- 11.5.2 Incidents: A table of incidents for the last quarter was tabled, 45 in total being brought to the River Managers' attention. Mr Eva had reminded CUCBC that with the start of the new academic term, university rowing coaches were cycling along

the pavement without paying due care and attention to other members of the public.

Cllr Wright drew two particular incidents at Riverside to Conservators' attention involving cars losing control in icy conditions and crashing into the railings, in one instance breaking through them.

11.5.3 Overloading of punts: No reports had been received.

11.5.4 Prosecutions: Archer & Archer had taken a long time preparing the prosecution proceedings against Mr Middleton (incident 22nd July) and more statements were requested at the eleventh hour before the deadline for submission of papers to the Courts in January.

11.5.5 Navigation: Members of the Regional Navigation Group were invited to comment on the EA's new Visit Great Ouse website. The River Manager and Mr Wakefield attended the EA's Great Ouse Tidal River Strategy event at Denver Complex, 1st October. Experts were on hand to discuss the potential implications of the consultants' recommendations on water level management up to the year 2080.

EA-registered narrowboat G17887 'River Spirit' requested permission to access the head of navigation via Jesus Lock on 7th November. Users of the middle river were notified of the visit by e-mail.

Organisers of the Winter Head, 21st November, took it upon themselves to change the normal pattern of traffic flow on the river at Chesterton to aid their marshalling arrangements. They had not sought permission to do this. Other rowers using the navigation were confused when confronted with crews on the wrong side of the river. Fortunately, there were no collisions. On the same day, a resident moorer at Fen Ditton had also observed the Cantabrigian BC motorised coaching catamaran speeding along the river; its wake broke over the towpath. The River Manager wrote to Club highlighting their lack of compliance with the speed limits and lack of thought for other river users and the environment given problems with bank erosion.

The owners of narrowboats 'Stourbridge' and 'The Fox' requested permission to motor along the Backs on Boxing Day; they aborted this visit on account of high flows.

The office had received a number of navigation restriction and closure notices from the EA.

Mr Alan Rootham, the Commissioners' Lock Keeper at Stanground for 40 years, died in December.

11.5.6 Obstructions: The Queens' Boatman complained about bushy growth along the length of Logan's Meadow LNR; visibility and two-way traffic flow was impaired by the encroachment. Mr Selway, City Council, arranged for the Perse Boys to clear

the areas in front of the fishing platforms in September. He had also arranged a day in February with the Wildlife Trust to trim back encroaching branches. The river crew's assistance had been offered.

Rowers had made repeated complaints about the overhanging branches of a protected willow tree opposite the Fort St George public house (end of Pretoria Avenue) at the start of the Michaelmas term. An application to undertake works to the tree had been submitted in July but the City's Principal Arboricultural Officer was on long-term sick leave and the relevant department was dealing with an administrative backlog. Consent to trim a tree to the rear of Banhams Close tree was finally granted late September and the works were completed by the river crew in early October. The City's Tree Team gave verbal consent to cut back the Pretoria Avenue tree in late October.

Cambridge Canoe Club reported problems with bushy encroachment at Grantchester; they had asked for the Conservancy's assistance. Being a non-statutory navigation, the deployment of staff resources could not be justified. It was suggested that a volunteer clearance effort with local stakeholders might be arranged before the Cam Canoe & Kayak Marathon in March.

A wide-beam narrowboat was forced to pull in to the bank when two rowing eights raced past at Plough Reach. The boat became ensnarled in the branches of a willow tree and its aluminium chimney stack was knocked off and lost. The River Manager wrote to the publican asking if they could trim the tree back over the winter.

- 11.5.7 Pontoon licences: The Chairman and River Manager met with City Officers (Mr Doggett and Mr Prinsep) and Scudamore's Directors (Mr Ingersent and Mr Macnaghten) for 'without prejudice' discussions at the Guildhall, 8th January, to discuss pontoon licences and land ownership at Quayside (see Matter Agreed).

HM Revenue & Customs had made enquiries about the number of craft registered and owned by one of the independent commercial punt operators.

The River Manager and River Bailiff met with Mr Roberts (Head of Safer Communities) and Ms Mackender (City Enforcement Manager) to discuss the punting issues at Hobson House, 10th December. Regulation of the Garret Hostel Lane was an ongoing problem; large numbers of touts were working on King's Parade. The River Manager's interviews of commercial punt operators at the start of the season had achieved some general improvements in standards of behaviour, as had the heightened enforcement presence by the City Council's team.

11.5.8 Registration numbers: A resident moorer at Fen Ditton had numbered his boat with a registration-style plate bearing profane text. An enforcement notice was posted on the vessel. The SCDC Planning Enforcement Officer was also notified. Monitoring of vessel movements at Riverside had identified that a significant number of rowing craft had been using the navigation without registration markings.

11.5.9 Sunken Boats: Sunken vessel 'High Safari' (G7602) was recovered from Riverside to Clayhithe following service of notices. Abandoned vessel 'Jester' (G16475) was recovered from Fen Ditton to Clayhithe, 11th September. The owner had faced non-registration prosecution proceedings in 2008/09. Abandoned sail-cruiser 'Vlaanderen' was recovered to the Clayhithe from Stourbridge Common, 5th October, notice having been served. The vessel had appeared on the Cam without any trace of an owner or identification. The Police had been notified of the Conservancy's action. No-one had come forwards to reclaim these vessels; they were therefore being advertised for sale.

Solicitors Ginn & Co, acting on behalf of Mr Tom Goode (former owner of 'Bidean') claimed that the Conservators had failed to follow due process in the sale of the vessel; he was seeking compensation for his loss. Archer & Archer responded on behalf of the Conservators providing the chronology of actions taken.

Sunken narrowboat 'Helena Knowsley' was reclaimed to Clayhithe, 7th January, the owner having failed to raise it within 24 hours of notice being served. The river crew's attendance was commendable given the adverse weather conditions.

11.5.10 Vehicles on the Halingway: A dumper truck had been observed on the Halingway. It was being used to collect logs. Mr Topham's, a keen fisherman with limited mobility, had been granted consent for a further year to park his car beside Baits Bite Lock (up to September 2010). This arrangement had been instituted by the former Engineer.

Organisers of the City RC Winter League had been granted permission for their safety vehicle to park beside the A14 road bridge on 3 dates in early spring.

URS Corp had requested vehicular access to the Halingway using a Land Rover mounted with an access platform for inspecting the A14 bridge soffit.

11.5.11 Noise: The City Council had received a complaint about very loud music being played from the Goldie boathouse from 7am onwards in October. Requests to turn the music down had been met with 'loud whooping noises'.

Clare College and Trinity Hall, had requested greater Conservancy enforcement of noise and boorish behaviour along the Backs,

especially during the examination period. They suggested that the Conservators might consider setting higher registration fees or fixing a quota on the number of commercial registrations issued to each operator. These complaints followed a presentation made by Mr Roberts, Head of Safer Communities, at a joint City Centre Management/University meeting. The River Manager has volunteered to join the next meeting of the group to improve relations.

Mr Barton (Long Reach House) has asked if the Andy Silk memorial bench could be removed from outside his property because it was a magnet for anti-social behaviour in the early hours of the morning. The River Manager contacted the CUCBC and CRA regarding its possible relocation 30 metres upstream at the site of a derelict bench. The rowers asserted that the bench was located at a significant point on the rowing course. The River Manager would discuss its relocation with the Silk family.

A Chesterton resident complained about generator and engine noise from three liveboard vessels moored beside the former Penny Fenny public house. On one occasion the noise had not abated until 1.35am. The vessels were moored with the landowner's consent until the site was redeveloped. Letters had been sent to the vessel owners requesting more display of consideration to their neighbours. The matter was also brought to the attention of the local Ward Councillor, Clare Blair.

11.5.12 Disposal of sewage: See 11.7.3.

11.5.13 Diving operations: WYG Consulting, acting on behalf of Tesco Stores, had enquired about permissions required for divers (Red7Marine) to fit a new valve flap at the storm outfall point, Riverside (dates to be confirmed). Moored boats would need to move to allow access. A Conservancy 'no mooring' sign was to be fixed above the outfall in accordance with the byelaws.

11.6 Environment and Planning

11.6.1 Biodiversity: Under the EA Fisheries' Classification Scheme, the Cam had fallen from Class 'C' in 2008 to Class 'E' status in 2009. Five survey sites showed significant population decreases. Roach remained the dominant species by standing crop. A possible explanation for the change was that clear water conditions at the time of sampling had forced fish to shelter elsewhere.

A lady enquired about permissions for trapping signal crayfish for personal consumption. The Conservators had a licence to trap crayfish; Peter Carter (Eel fisherman) had been attending to the Conservators' traps and had reported good catches. The EA licence expired 31st December; a new licence was required for the next calendar year.

Mr Mungovan, SCDC Ecology Officer, arranged a tour of the River Cam Habitat and Access Enhancement Project at Trumpington Meadows, 16th October. Prof Richards and the River Manager were amongst the attendees.

The River Manager attended a meeting of the Cam Valley Forum on 9th November, Grantchester. The Forum had been awarded a community award and prize (£300) by the Cambridge News. The River Mel Group won an award (£1000) from the Wild Trout Trust for its habitat restoration work. The Forum had submitted a proposal for an aquatic macrophyte monitoring project under the EA's Anglian Region River Basin Management Plan. A meeting was to be convened with Mr Freeman, EA, to agree a monitoring strategy. Andrew Chapman, Senior Environment Planning Officer (Water Resources) had agreed to provide a keynote speech at the Forum's AGM, 29th March.

The office had received a copy of the Autumn edition of the Wicken Fen Vision newsletter which included a piece by Conservator Dr Geoff Brighty. The River Manager was due to join the EA's Regional Director and others at a launch of the Anglian Region's first River Basin Management Plan, 29th January in Cambridge.

The River Manager attended a meeting of the Friends of Stourbridge Common, 7th December, in Chesterton.

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation and Peterborough and Cambs Biodiversity Partnership were gathering information about priority ponds in Peterborough and Cambs. They were advised to contact the Sport Lakes Trust at Milton Country Park and Friends of Stourbridge Common (both areas having permanent and ephemeral standing water bodies).

The office had received copies of the RiverCare Autumn e-bulletin and Issue 3 of 'The Natural Level', a newsletter produced by Middle Level Commissioners' Environmental Officer, Mr Carson.

2010 had been declared International Year of Biodiversity. A series of events and projects were being planned across the City. The River Manager tendered apologies for a meeting of the City's Nature Conservation and Biodiversity Advisory Group on 1st December, but agreed to join their Biodiversity event on 13th June.

A Cambridge University student, Mr Butler, had contact the office with the results of his dissertation study of water quality and sediment chemistry along a 10-mile stretch of the River Cam. The data showed distinct patterns of contamination and some significant point source inputs.

11.6.2 Cambridge City Council Local Plan: The River Manager attended a meeting of the Jesus Green Working Group at the Guildhall, 26th October

The Community Reserves Officer, Mr Selway, had circulated stakeholders with proposed Tree Works at Byron's Pool LNR

under the terms of the City's Tree Protocol. The River Manager raised no objection to the proposed works.

- 11.6.3 Cambridge Sports Lakes: Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust (CSLT) was making progress with its proposed facility. A final draft of the Section 106 Agreement had been provided to the Parish Councils in Milton and Waterbeach respectively; SCDC was assimilating their responses. CSLT was continuing with its fund-raising activities. The refurbishment/extension of the Visitor Centre was due to be completed before Easter. CSLT were pursuing a number of accreditations for MCP, including registered Country Park status under a Natural England-led scheme. The Trust and local Police had set up a neighbourhood watch scheme, 'Parkforce', to counter vandalism and anti-social activity. CSLT was delivering a sports development programme focusing on Rowing and Triathlon with coached activity sessions for local children and youths.
- 11.6.4 CamToo Project: Cambs County Council had made its bid for £25M to build the new guided busway station at Chesterton Sidings. Mr Moseley had gained City, District and County acknowledgement that the camToo Project was to the priority rowing project for the sub-region. The Facilities Development Manager of British Rowing was due to present the benefits of the project to the sub-regional Sports Facilities Strategy Implementation Group and the project team was to request funding from that Group for a benefits-value study. Data from the EA's recent bed level survey of the Cam (see Minutes, 24 September 2009) were to be used to validate the new EA flood prediction model. The team's own predictions had indicated that the camToo flood relief channel would have a greater than predicted flood-attenuating effect. Cllr Nimmo-Smith had checked with the Leader of the County Council and they had not formally recognised the project although it was fact that Cambs Horizons was preparing a major sports facilities strategy.
- 11.6.5 Planning Consultations: The Secretary of State's Draft Orders for the A14 Ellington to Fen Drayton Improvement had been opened to consultation and objections up to 6th January 2010. Professor Richards submitted a letter of objection to Ms Smyth, the Project Coordinator. She replied, assuring that the Secretary of State would only resort to the acquisition of land Title if other negotiations, by means of an Essential Licence and Rights, failed. The River Manager also submitted an objection to any compulsory land purchase on behalf of Conservators. Milton Parish Council held a meeting about on 9th December. Mr John Clarke (Costain Skanska) and Mr Mike Wright (noise specialist, Atkins Group) attended and answered questions about the potential impact of the scheme on the local area. The Parish Council agreed its final response on 4th January.

Milton Parish Council provided the office with a copy of their response to SCDC regarding the s106 application by Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust.

EERA had published a consultation on its plans for growth up to 2031, inviting responses before 24th November. The River Manager gave apologies for the Jesus Green working group meeting on 24th November, being absent on annual leave.

Ms Ficarra, Housing Officer, had circulated a consultation options for the removal or retention of a large ash tree in front of the Engineers House on Riverside. Tree roots were deforming a wall, with safety implications for the tenants. The River Manager recommended the removal of the tree and replanting with a smaller specimen.

The City Council had announced ambitious plans for a £2.6M regeneration of the Riverside 'promenade', backed by its West/Central Area Committee.

11.6.6 SCDC Towpath: The annual invoice in respect of a contribution towards the cost of litter clearance had been issued to SCDC (sum of £4,100).

11.6.7 Land Registry application, at Quayside, by Scudamore's: See 11.5.7.

11.6.8 Miscellaneous: Completion of the Wicken Fen Spine Route was moving forwards. East Cambs District Council supported the proposal for a bridge across Reach Lode at its meeting on 7th October. Construction of the new crossing was due to take place in early 2010. The new crossing and cyclepath across Burwell Fen would provide a virtually traffic-free connection between Wicken Fen and Anglesey Abbey, also integrating with Sustrans National Cycle Route 11 (Cambridge to Ely).

A team from Mouchel conducted flow gauging measurements on the Cam in October to provide data for an EA groundwater study. The river was experiencing very low flows at that time.

The River Manager was due to attend a meeting of the Old Chesterton Residents' Association Chesterton Fen sub-group meeting on 26th January.

11.7 Moorings

11.7.1 Camboaters: EA navigation notices had been forwarded to Camboaters for information purposes. At their AGM in November, Ms Toni Rogers was elected Chairperson for the year ahead. The River Manager and Active Communities team met with Camboaters at Hobson House, 6th January, to discuss moorings' related issues. A provisional list of the first quarter's events for 2010 was provided to Camboaters for their January newsletter. Mr L Phillips, Conservator and resident moorer, became a father on 16th November.

11.7.2 Clayhithe 48 hour visitor's moorings: Nothing to report.

11.7.3 Mooring Arrangements with Cambridge City Council: The River Bailiff continued to make weekly observations of boats moored on the Commons. Monthly invoices had been issued to the City Council; payment had been received. Mr Whitehead, a Cambridge resident, submitted a letter of complaint to the office about the proliferation of permanently moored boats on the publicly-owned banks of the Cam, seeking further information about the membership of the Conservators' committee and responsibilities as regards moorings and disposal of sewage. A response was sent to Mr Whitehead.

Following a meeting about Riverside (see 11.7.5) Active Communities was asked why three boats, believed to be holding Mooring Permits, were using the railings instead of the Commons, thus denying others the chance of moving up the waiting list. Ms Durrant confirmed that only one of these vessels (Charlie) retained a Permit; the others ('Suzie Q', 'Another World') had surrendered theirs. The enjoyment of free moorings at the railings was undermining the City's paying scheme. The City Council was undertaking a pricing review of its mooring charges for presentation to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee in the spring.

Moorings in Zone B, upstream of Jesus Sluices, was continuing to attract complaints from members of the public who viewed the vessels as an eyesore, denying members of the public the right to enjoy the riverbank. Six vessels were moored there in November; their combined lengths (131 ft/113 metres) being in excess of the 75 m zone permitted for mooring under the City's Policy. This had been brought to City officers' attention; one or more vessels would be required to move off.

Mr Thomas, owner of 'Hippo', faced imminent eviction from the Penny Ferry frontage; the site was due to be redeveloped. He had requested a wide-beam permit from the City Council by queue-jumping, citing extenuating circumstances. Mr Thomas already held a Permit for his narrowboat. All fifteen wide-beam permits had been allocated and his request was denied by the Executive Councillor.

During the period of river lowering in January, Zone B vessels would be required to move downstream of Jesus Lock. The City Council had agreed to relax the 48-hr time limit at the visitor moorings to accommodate the displaced moorers temporarily. GOBA were agreeable to this proposal.

11.7.4 Conservators' Mooring Policy: The River Manager wrote the Senior Bursar of Trinity College regarding 7.4 ha at Chesterton Fen. The land had been ear-marked for use as a household recycling facility under the Minerals and Waste Plan Additional Sites, then withdrawn for reasons unknown. The site offered enormous potential as a marina basin. Mr Crouch intended to

refer this suggestion to the College's property consultants, Bidwells.

11.7.5 Moorings at Riverside: Misunderstandings had arisen in respect of the request for moorers to rearrange their vessels (see Minutes, July 2009). The River Manager met with representatives of Camboaters and Cllr Wright and Ms Gilbert (Riverside Area Residents' Association) at the Green Dragon public house, 20th October, evening, to agree berth-swapping. Camboaters requested another Conservancy letter-drop along Riverside to communicate the desired changes, plus another public meeting for boaters to discuss the issue face-to-face with the River Manager. There has been no further opportunity for these actions to take place. Any voluntary agreement was doomed to failure; each vacated berth was rapidly filled by another vessel and the process of notifying owners to swap wide- with narrow-beam would have to start from scratch. Boat observation data being collected by the staff remained to be analysed. Observations were to continue over the next quarter. The River Manager wrote to the Government of the East of England asking if, in its opinion, the City Council was meeting its duties as a local planning authority in allowing the unregulated development of residential moorings at Riverside. The Government officer's reply was non-committal and riddled with jargon. The River Manager agreed to circulate it to Conservators.

A local Police officer contacted the office trying to establish contact with Mr Jolly, resident of Riverside Place, following allegations of harassment from a Riverside moorer.

A car lost control on an icy roadway and crashed through the railings on 19th December. The car was left overhanging the river above a moored barge. By good fortune no-one was injured or killed.

Mr Brown left the room

11.7.6 Miscellaneous: Cheffins auctioned a plot of land (5.42 acres) with 275 metres of river frontage off Burgess Drove, Waterbeach, 30th September. The guide price was £15-16k; it was purchased by Cam Sailing Club and GOBA for £83k. A section of that land was to provide moorings for GOBA visitors, their first mooring in the Conservancy Area. CSC was delighted by the success of their bid; they had feared further encroachment of moorings affecting their sailing course.

A riverside property at Chesterton, complete with 50 ft of river frontage had been advertised for sale (offers in the region of £425,000).

11.8 Registration

11.8.1 Boat Standards: Nothing to report.

11.8.2 EA Interchange Agreement: Payment had been received from the EA (£43,158) for the annual boat count which took place 6th August (264 boats counted) The Chairman and River Manager met with Mr Wilkinson and Mr Lyons at the EA's offices in Peterborough, 7th January, to discuss the future of the Agreement. EA Waterways teams were facing challenging times in view of substantial budget cuts by government. See also Matter Agreed.

11.8.3 Non-registration prosecutions: Two boat owners (vessels 'Narrow Escape' and Good Vibrations') had been issued summonses to appear before magistrates for failure to attend to their annual craft registrations. A second batch of prosecutions was in preparation.

11.8.4 Interchange agreement with the British Canoe Union: Nothing to report.

11.8.5 Interchange agreement with the Amateur Rowing Association: Nothing to report.

11.9 Events

11.9.1 Events: A provisional list of approved events for 2010 had been circulated with the meeting papers. City RC had requested two back-to-back events, 8th & 9th May 2010. In view of objections in 2009, key stakeholders were consulted; no objections were received. Permission was granted with the proviso that other river traffic was to be allowed to navigate between race divisions.

11.10 Publicity

11.10.1 A.I.N.A. directory and bulletin: Nothing to report.

11.10.2 Notice boards: The new City notice-board at Stourbridge Common was proving to be useful, being well-placed for moorers and passing pedestrians and cyclists

11.10.3 Publications: Canoe Focus, the Canoe England magazine, had published an article on the opening of the 'flippers' for canoeists at Bishop's Mill Sluices. The Winter 2009 edition of GOBA News had been received at the office. Milton Village View (November issue) had published the River Manager's piece about 'soft' bank protection works along the Cam. Cambridge Canoe Club had re-launched its quarterly club newsletter and had invited submissions for its first issue in December. The River Manager arranged for a copy of the second edition of E N Wilmer's book 'The River Cam' to be sent to Lacy Anderson, a former Conservator.

11.10.4 Presentations: Mr Brown and the River Manager gave a joint awareness-raising presentation to University novice coxes at Peterhouse, 28th October, evening. Some students were taken aback to hear of occasional assaults, stonings and air gun attacks upon crews.

The River Manager gave a presentation on the history of the River Cam and Cam Conservators to the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History, 7th November and a talk about managing the Cam to the St Andrew's Tuesday Club, Cherry Hinton, 17th November; the speaker fees were donated to the RNLI.

The River Manager attended the CRA AGM at Milton Country Park Visitor Centre on 2nd December, evening, providing a short report on the year's events and answering questions from the floor.

The River Manager provided an overview of the Conservators' activities to the University of the Third Age, Cambridge, 11th December.

The River Manager had make bookings to speak to the Linton & District Historical Society on 16th February and an after-dinner speech at the Cambridge Motor Boat Club, 13th March.

11.10.5 Media: IWC Media asked for background information on punts and tourist revenue for the programme 'Rory and Paddy's Great British Adventure Part 2'. According to The Times newspaper, the punting industry generated £2.5M p.a.

Cambridge Evening News published a short piece about a cygnet being beaten to death by a group of children near the Penny Ferry, Chesterton.

A programme on 'wild swimming', featuring the Cam, was televised on 15th December.

The media seized upon the story of stricken narrowboat 'Helena Knowsley'. Cambridge News published a damning report on the alleged inactivity by the authorities concerned. Ms Kaye (Head of Active Communities) gave a radio interview about the sunken boat on BBC Radio Cambs, 5th January. An article and video link was published on the Cambridge News website showing attempts to recover the vessel by its purported new owners, 7th January. The river crew ultimately reclaimed the vessel to Clayhithe.

Cambridge News published an article about the trial strong stream advice warning system 'new plan to save lives on river', 1st January and an online piece about Ben Hervey-Murray's specimen fishing along the College Backs by punt (principally for chub, perch and pike), 8th January.

11.10.6 Website: A link had been added to the newly-formed Friends of Stourbridge Common. Membership details had been updated following the appointment of Prof Richards. Suspensions of navigation had been published on the homepage. The new Canoe England Canoeist's Environmental Charter had been

added to the section 'Rules of the River'. A number of minor amendments had been made to event listings, including cancellation of CFPAS matches in December. Honey Web Design had submitted their annual invoice for website maintenance, period Jan-Dec 2009 (sum of £300).

- 11.10.7 Miscellaneous: Perudo shop-fitters asked for a small rowing boat to be loaned to them for a shop display in Peterborough. The request was passed on to the CRA and CUCBC.

12. **Appointment of Observers:**

There were five official Observers in 2009 who had indicated interest in being re-appointed. Other stakeholders had also contacted the office about appointment. Conservators recognised the contributions that Observers brought to discussions at the meetings. To reduce costs it was agreed that Observers would receive their meeting papers electronically.

On the proposition of Mr Ingersent, seconded by Cllr Walker, Conservators were unanimous in re-appointing Mr Key, Cllr H Smith, Mr Bradley, Mr Bayliss-Smith and Mr Bryant, and appointing for the first time Mr Wilkinson (EA Waterways Development Manager, Anglian Region), Mr Parrish (Chairman, GOBA), Mrs Block (Cambridge Canoe Club), Mr Moseley (CamToo project/Eastern Region Rowing Council), Mr Davies (CUCBC) and Cllr M Wright (Abbey Ward).

13. **Dates of Next Meetings:**

The meetings for Thursday 15th April, Thursday 8th July and Thursday 30th September were confirmed, and Thursday 13th January 2011 was agreed.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12.10pm.