

**CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM**

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, THE GUILDHALL, CAMBRIDGE ON THURSDAY 29 SEPTEMBER AT 9.30 am

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

Observers: Dr M Block, Mr D Bradley, Mr R T Bryant, Mr T Davies, Mr W Key, Mr G Parrish, Cllr H Smith, Ms E Witcomb-Vos, Cllr T Wotherspoon and Cllr M Wright.

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 J T McWilliam, Mr J Fowler, Mr X Marks, G Joseph, O. Skehol, E Latham, R de Roy, Mr J Macnaghten, Ms J Phelps, Mr S Elstub, Mr C Rees, Mr J Alier, Mr E Few, Dr J MacGinnis and Dr J Lyall.

**Action Required**

**By**

The Chairman opened the meeting at 9.30am.

1. Apologies for absence had been tendered by Dr G Brighty, Mr R Hardingham and Observer Mr Moseley. Cllr Ward raised a point of procedure regarding the late delivery of the hard copies of the meeting papers. The Chairman assured Conservators that one clear week would be achieved in the future.

River Manager

2. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2011:** Mr Brown had in fact given apologies; a correction was made. Conservators approved the amended Minutes and, subject to this amendment, the Chairman was authorised to sign the same.

Mr Leader entered the room

3. **Matters Arising from those minutes as reported (not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda):**

- 1 **Appointment of Conservators:** The City Council had formally agreed to the appointment of Cllr K Price to serve as a Conservator from 21<sup>st</sup> July 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012.

- 5.1 **River Cam Navigation Benefits' Assessment:** Copies of the inception note prepared by Ecorys Ltd had been circulated to Conservators. Ecorys Ltd had conducted initial interviews with key stakeholders. A contacts' list of registered vessel owners (Conservancy and Agency) had been passed to the consultants. Their questionnaire had been mailed to stakeholders in September. The deadline for responses was 7<sup>th</sup> October. The

consultants were conducting field surveys. The Chairman introduced Mr Walker, Director of Ecorys Ltd, who was observing proceedings.

- 5.2 H&S framework: see item 6.1, below.
- 5.3 Navigational issues at Garret Hostel Lane: see item 4.
- 5.4 Grazing agreement, 1.74 acres: Archer & Archer had been instructed to prepare the new Farm Business Tenancy.
- 5.5 Grazing agreement, Clayhithe Field: as 5.4, above.
- 5.6 Clayhithe House: Contractor A Williams had been selected on a best estimate basis to repair and paint the exterior window frames and doors. Works had commenced. SCDC had confirmed that these repairs did not require Listed Building Consent.
- 6.4 Tree management plan: A meeting about the safe management of riverside trees with City officers remained to be arranged. A tree branch had been pressing against the roof of Jesus Lock Keeper's Cottage since late spring; the City Council had not responded to letters. A private landowner in Chesterton had been asked to reduce their overhanging riverside willow. The River Bailiff's re-identification of trees along the Halingway was progressing. The River Manager was due to report on the Conservancy's tree management policy.
- River Manager
- 6.4 Regulation of punts on the upper river: Section 25 of the 1922 Act, paragraph 1(k) may allow the Conservators to extend the Code of Practice for Commercial Punt Operators to the upper river independently of craft registration. Further legal advice was recommended on this point.

**Matter agreed:**

4. Regulating the commercial punting industry: The Chairman introduced the paper, the output of a sub-committee group meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> August. Annexed to this was a report by Dr Lyall detailing punt movements and collision risk along sub-reaches along the College Backs. There was an accepted congestion problem at Garret Hostel Lane. The sub-group had assessed evidence of risk and proportional control measures to better regulate numbers of commercial punts available within the statutory framework. It was recommended that it should be a reasonable requirement for operators seeking a commercial registration to demonstrate that they had a suitable base for their operations, passenger safety being a foremost consideration. Six existing punt operating stations were deemed fit for purpose: Granta Mill Pond, Mill pit west, Mill pit east,

Trinity College frontage, Quayside and La Mimosa. Other issues, such as construction standards for commercial punts, would be reviewed in parallel with the draft national Hire Boat Code for manually-propelled craft. Conservators were invited for their views. Mr Ingersent declared personal and prejudicial interests; he took no part in discussions. Conservators discussed the conflict between the requirements of the 1851 Act to maintain public rights of access and the enforcement of mooring restrictions along the Backs. A viable operating base needed to provide safe moorings, storage space for records and equipment and maintenance facilities. The City Council had not yet taken a decision to claim the land at Garret Hostel Lane. The slipway there was not a suitable site for a fixed punt station but the loading and unloading of passengers there was permitted by statute. The sub-group recommended employing a seasonal bailiff to assist with the anticipated increase in enforcement needs with the implementation of these new proposals. Discussions were opened to the floor. The additional staffing cost was questioned in view of the high staffing costs of the authority. The seasonal appointment was proposed as a trial for one season only. The sub-group were applauded on their recommendations by Mr Macnaghten. In his opinion, the operations at Garret Hostel Lane were illegal and the proposed measures were a correct carriage of the Conservators' duties. As a result, professional standards would improve and the punting industry would become the pride of the City again. The Chairman drew the discussion to a close and asked the Conservators to vote on the following recommendations:

**1. As of 1 April 2012, owners and operators of commercial punts must be able to satisfy two criteria as a registration requirement: (a) that the punt to be used is to be operated from an officially-recognised punt station, and (b) that the applicant can demonstrate evidence that they have the permission of the landowner or occupier to use that punt operating station.**

**2. For the purposes of the above, that the following locations are recognised as authorised punt operating stations: Granta Mill Pond, Mill Pit (west and east), Trinity College frontage, Quayside and La Mimosa.**

**Nine Conservators voted in favour of these recommendations, nil against and one expression of interest was noted.**

The Chairman asked Conservators if they were agreeable to the employment of a full-time seasonal river bailiff in 2012, initially for a 6-month period (Apr-Sep), to assist with the enforcement of these new registration conditions.

**Seven Conservators voted in favour of this new appointment, one was against.**

5. River traffic monitoring at Riverside and implications for the Conservators' mooring policy: The Chairman introduced the paper which had its origins in discussions of 2009. Evidence was needed to test the hypothesis that moored craft at Riverside were unduly impacting navigation. The report summarised observations of river traffic at two locations, observed incidents and near misses over 2009/10. A graduate student, Ms Hall, had provided the analysis. The report concluded that most incidents involved rowing craft. Incidents tended to occur when the river was at its most busy, sometimes during events. Competency was contributory (e.g. steering errors, failure to keep to the correct lane, lack of positional awareness relative to other moving and moored craft). The moored craft reduced the overall channel width to 16-18 metres but masters' behavioural issues appeared to outweigh the argument for restricting or prohibiting moorings. A narrow-beam only mooring policy might be adopted as a precautionary measure. A letter from Mr Key, CRA, was annexed to the report. He stressed the need for a maintained navigation fairway of 18m minimum width, but 20m would be safer.

Dr Macginnis & Mr Few left the room

The Chairman opened the discussion. Mr Phillips declared an interest as the owner of a boat and as an employee of the University; he opted out of the discussions. Mr Key expanded on the content of his letter. Conservators gave their contributions. Riverside's reaches had required caution prior to the arrival of the moored craft. CUCBC cited a safe fairway width of 20m. It was not practicable to maintain an 18m fairway along the whole Cam. Mr Key asked for a review of pinch-points. It was an over-ambitious aspiration to expect novice crews to acquire sufficient competency before using the river outside their boathouses. Larger, deeper craft had to take the channel centre line. There was scope for better management of riparian vegetation but the Chesterton bank was, in part, a nature reserve. A step-wise process of vegetation reduction and moorings restrictions to narrow-beam only might improve the situation. This was a complicated stretch of river to manage. A balance was needed by enacting various complementary actions. Some steering issues related to rudder size; modern rowing craft had tiny fins, making low-speed manoeuvring very difficult. Cllr Wright declared her interests as a Ward Councillor. There had been a voluntary agreement brokered by Camboaters to re-arrange the wide-beam vessels. This had not happened. Visiting boats and hirecraft often came into conflict with large numbers of rowers. It was difficult to steer a rowing boat with accuracy; they needed at least 2 metres' tolerance beyond their blade tip-to-tip width. Prudent navigation was key to safety.

The Chairman brought the discussion to a summary: (i) there was insufficient evidence for a total ban on moorings; (ii) more research was required on alleviating pinchpoints by re-configuring moored craft and/or piecemeal marginal vegetation removal and tree management in conjunction with the City Council. Conservators discussed the merits of introducing a narrow-beam only mooring policy at Riverside. This motion was proposed by Mr Ingersent and seconded by Mr Brown. Dr Walker did not believe there was sufficient evidence to put this motion forwards. The Chairman gave an alternative proposal: that there should be a review of the distribution of narrow and broad-beam moorings relative to pinch-points along Riverside with a view to reducing the impact of moorings on the adjacent navigation. Dr Walker proposed this motion and it was seconded by Cllr Nimmo-Smith. Six Conservators were in favour and two were against.

River Manager

A report was to be brought to the next meeting.

Mr Sparkes left the room

6.1 Conservators' H&S Framework: The Chairman had signed the final version of the Employees Safety Management Statement following the 14<sup>th</sup> July meeting. Statements for Public Activity and Fixed Assets had been circulated to Conservators for their comments. The Chairman thanked the H&S sub-committee group for their assistance in preparing these drafts with Mike Barrett. Three more Statements were being prepared to complete the suite. Conservators voiced concerns that they had been given insufficient time to review these Statements thoroughly. Some text corrections were required. The Chairman therefore proposed re-circulating the drafts to Conservators and Observers, seeking their feedback on the two documents by 31<sup>st</sup> October and the remaining three before the January 2012 meeting.

River Manager

Mr Sparkes entered the room

6.2 Conservators' website: The website maintenance agreement with Honey Web Design was due for renewal by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011. The webmaster was seeking a 2-year renewal term at £350 per annum plus an estimated £60 per annum for external hosting.

**Conservators agreed to enter into another 2-year maintenance agreement with Honey Web Design (expiring 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013).**

River Manager

## 7. H&S / incidents:

7.1 H&S policy and framework: The sub-committee group met on 20<sup>th</sup> September to review the Safety Management Statements (see item 6.1, above) and other items of health and safety.

7.2 Reportable incidents: There had been none on the Conservancy's landholdings in the last quarter.

River Manager

- 7.3 Non-reportable incidents and near misses - staff: Pigeons roosting underneath Jesus Green footbridge were posing a hazard to health (possible eye injury, disease). The EA was in correspondence with the County Council about fitting screening to this Listed structure.
- 7.4 Non-reportable incidents and near-misses – public: A summary of incidents for the period mid-July to mid-September 2011 was annexed to the report. A child's finger had been crushed between two punts near the Wren Library on 9<sup>th</sup> August requiring hospital treatment. The punt operator had submitted an accident report as per the Code of Conduct for Commercial Punt Operators. A member of the public slipped whilst crossing Baits Bite lock footbridge. A formal inspection routine was required for this asset.
- 7.5 Procedures/Risk Assessments: Staff had completed initial assessment questionnaires of Hand Arm Vibration (HAV) in accordance with the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005. Further advice was to be taken from the EA on mitigating measures. COSHH folders had been updated for all premises. The River Foreman and his Deputy had completed a one-day training course in confined risk on 5<sup>th</sup> September. A half-yearly operational safety meeting with Mr Arnold of the EA had been rescheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> November.
- 7.6 Safety Equipment: Strong Stream Advice warning signs had been ordered for Baits Bite Lock. These were to be deployed once the EA had installed the warning light on the guillotine gate.

## 8. Finance Report:

- 8.1 Registration income: Income as at 31<sup>st</sup> August was approx. £200k, below the budget for 2011/12 (£213k). The shortfall was to be made up by a batch of non-registration prosecutions. An approach had been made to the EA to buy-in to their expertise for debt recovery procedures. Small payments had been received via the Court for previous year's non-registration convictions (Mssrs How and Reid).
- 8.2 A budget comparisons report to 31<sup>st</sup> August was tabled. Income from the interchange agreement was awaited.
- 8.3 Audit: The costs of preparing the year-end accounts (£1,140) and audit (£3,078) had been paid to Peters Elworthy & Moore.
- 8.4 Business Debit cards: These were being used for ease of purchasing.

- 8.5 Barclaycard Payment Acceptance: Boat owners had been taking advantage of payment by this method.
- 8.6 Capital reserves: There was £200,000 invested in Barclays Treasurers Deposit providing 0.41% maturing 05/10/2011, held in addition to £199,746 in the Barclays current account (as at 31/08/11) and £250,000 on a Cambridge Building Society Hallmark Account earning 0.75% AER. The position was very similar to September 2011.
- 8.7 Capital expenditure: As at 5.07.11 £44,564 had been paid to contractors Drake Towage Ltd in respect of works to Clayhithe. Interim engineering consultancy fees of £5062 were due for payment.
- 8.8 Cash Flow forecast: Cash reserves were predicted to fall to c.£370k by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 (as compared to £670k at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011). This base figure excluded any income gained from early payment of 2012/13 registration fees.

9. Chairman's Report:

River Manager

The Chairman reported on the busy summer period involving progress meetings with Ecorys Ltd and the novel approach of using benefits as a basis for charging. He had enjoyed attending the Town Bumps by invitation of the CRA. An update on the new waterways charity was to be circulated to Conservators.

The charity was to come into being on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012. There had been delays with the interchange agreement payment for this year; the sub-group and officers were reviewing the agreement with the Agency. Other Conservators were invited to join the sub-group. It was important that Conservators took note of the customer feedback from the Benefits' Assessment before the January meeting.

10. River Manager's Report:

**The Conservators noted her report on:-**

10.1 Administration

The EA Regional Navigation Group met on 23<sup>rd</sup> September. The Anglian Region Paddlesports Group was due to meet on 3<sup>rd</sup> October. There had been further disruptions to emails. Cambridge Canoe Club had issued an invitation to the opening of its new clubhouse at Newnham on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

10.1 Archiving: A member of the public had enquired about the construction date of Byron's Pool weir and sluices (unknown).

10.1.2 Business Plan: Nothing to report.

- 10.1.3 AINA/BW: A Memorandum had been published setting out recommendations for the governance and financing of the new waterways charity on 18<sup>th</sup> July. A supplementary consultation on the proposed Transfer Function had been announced. Apologies were tendered for the 13<sup>th</sup> September meeting of the AINA Executive Committee.
- 10.1.4 Insurance: refer to 10.3.7 below.
- 10.1.5 Office Supplies: Nothing to report.
- 10.1.6 Staff: The River Manager had taken leave in July and September. A graduate student, Ms Hall, undertook a short placement to work on specific projects (Riverside traffic monitoring data, COSHH records, map of mooring zones).
- 10.1.7 Licensing Act: Nothing to report.
- 10.1.8 Grant Applications: Cambridge City Council had issued details of its new application procedure for Sustainable City funding. Sources of funding to re-stock trees along the Halingway in Chesterton were being researched.
- 10.1.9 EA flood warning service: Staff contact details had been re-affirmed with the EA.
- 10.1.10 EA visit: David Jordan, EA Head of Operations, visited the Conservancy Area in August, to gain an overview of joint asset management.
- 10.1.11 Declarations of interest: A draft document was in preparation.
- 10.2 Property management
- 10.2.1 Jesus Lock Keeper's Cottage: An Energy Performance Certificate was to be arranged. Tenants had changed over in August. Lapsed student Exemption Certificates had resulted in a Council Tax Bill being received. The gas cooker developed another fault. A broken banister was repaired. Alan Wisbeach, Painter & Decorator, had cleaned and re-painted all exterior paintwork (cost £1450 plus VAT). The Landmark Trust Director had written following his visit in May.
- 10.2.2 Baits Bite Cottages: Tenants in No. 1 Cottage agreed to the Bumps Trolley being stored in their garden for the duration of the event. The upstairs smoke alarm was faulty; a replacement was purchased. An electrical safety inspection was undertaken in No. 2 Cottage in July. The oven in this Cottage developed an electrical fault, causing fuses to trip. The letting agent reported poor housekeeping. The wooden fence between the two gardens was dilapidated and required repairs.

- 10.2.3 Baits Bite Office: The air conditioning unit and security alarm had been serviced under maintenance agreements.
- 10.2.4 Clayhithe House and Depot/Workshop: Renovation of the frontage was ongoing. An interim payment had been made to the contractors (£74k). The supervising engineers were paying weekly visits. Drainage and utility arrangements to the frontage had incurred further costs. The slipway was to be commissioned in early October. UK Power Networks had issued notice of tree works near Clayhithe.
- 10.2.5 Jesus Lock: Volunteers planted spring bulbs on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.
- 10.2.6 Baits Bite Lock: An intermittent electrical fault had been affecting the guillotine gate. A housing had been ordered to cover exposed cables and hoses on the side of the lock-keeper's cottage to deter vandals. Works to the landing stage had been delayed to October. The half-yearly M&E inspection was to take place 20/21 October (navigation to be suspended).
- 10.2.7 The Halingway: Chain-link fencing underneath the A14 road bridge had been breached in July allowing illegal access by mini-motos and quad bikes. A report was received of an unstable willow tree on the driveway between Grassy Corner and Fen Road. A local resident made it safe. Traxeyes Ltd had been asked to correct a misleading website article about their luminescent discs. Samples had been attached to the towpath bollards. Mr McKee visited on 2<sup>nd</sup> August to check the barn owl nesting boxes. The Sustrans Ranger cited concerns about dog faeces on the grassed areas in Chesterton. A request for a student to use the towpath to commute to College by horse was declined. A swarm of wasps was reported near the Gun Shead before the Town Bumps. A rowing crew had been attacked. Old Chesterton Residents were meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October to discuss issues relating to Chesterton Fen.
- 10.2.8 Lease of Fishing Rights: A rogue fisherman was reported in a paddock off Green End, Fen Ditton, in July. The EA was due to undertake its annual population surveys. The half-yearly rental had been received from CFPAS Ltd (£1065).
- 10.2.9 Grazing, 1.74 acres Fen Road: See Matters Arising.
- 10.2.10 Grazing, 4.69 acres Fen Road: The half-yearly fees had been received late; interest was applied under the terms of the tenancy.
- 10.2.11 11.3 acres Clayhithe Field: See Matters Arising.
- 10.3 Plant and equipment

- 10.3.1 Computer: Another PC had been installed at Baits Bite for use by the river crew. The rear rooms were still being commissioned as office/storage space.
- 10.3.2 Conservators' Boats: The Chairman gave consent for the two barges to be renovated by Drake Towage (c.£2k). Pete Maskell was due to fit an isolator pin to the Berky lifting arm to prevent 'creep' when the engine is idling.
- 10.3.3 Vehicles: A new exhaust and tyres were fitted to Transit truck in order to pass its MOT. The Mitsubishi truck had been serviced.
- 10.3.4 Mobile phones: Competitive deals were being sought.
- 10.3.5 Portable Appliance Testing: Nothing to report.
- 10.3.6 Tools: A petrol leaf-blower had been purchased.
- 10.4 River Work
  - 10.4.1 Bishop's Mill SLA with the City Council: Payment had been received for the period Apr-June. A power failure had affected the Canoe Club's use of the sluices in August. It was not possible to re-set the system after hours because the fuse box was located inside Scudamore's Boatyard building. A fee proposal for services 2012/13 had been submitted to the City Council. Site issues had been brought to their attention (no lifebuoy, lack of lighting, inadequate guardrails).
  - 10.4.2 EA Memorandum of Understanding (SLA): Payment had been received for the period Apr-Jun.
  - 10.4.3 Towpath - grass cutting: Contractors had cut the banks in August (£1k). A habitat margin on the reaches between Baits Bite and Clayhithe caused problems to the river crew when installing soft revetment.
  - 10.4.4 Miscellaneous Applications: A licence was issued to Selwyn College for riverbank renovation in front of the Combined Boathouses. Producers of BBC's Saturday Kitchen programme made enquiries about filming from a punt on 10<sup>th</sup> September.
  - 10.4.5 Rubbish Clearance (City): The City Council had been alerted to the build-up of rubbish generated by liveboard boaters using the Penny Ferry moorings at Chesterton. The City Council had enquired about rubbish clearance responsibilities from drains adjacent to Queens' and Clare Colleges.
  - 10.4.6 Third Party Rechargeable: Meetings had taken place with Cambridge Motor Boat Club to discuss repairs to their river

moorings. A private landowner in Fen Ditton was expressed an interest in engaging the river crew's services to clear out his cut and repair its sides.

10.4.7 Tree Pollarding: Professional reduction of a large ornamental tree in St John's Fellows Garden was postponed at short notice owing to another college event. A new date was fixed (14<sup>th</sup> August) and punt operators were notified by e-mail.

10.4.8 Weed cutting: For the first time, the EA used its own Berky weed harvester to cut Reach and Burwell Lodes (income loss c. £8k to the Conservancy). The river crew cut the Waterbeach reaches before the CSC Moth Open Week and Junior Sail Training.

10.4.9 Bank Maintenance: Soft revetment was being installed between Baits Bite and Clayhithe using Water Framework Directive monies from the EA.

10.4.10 River Lowering: The County Council had expressed interest in using the biennial lowering to repair Robinson Crusoe Bridge.

## 10.5 Acts / Byelaws

10.5.1 Breaches of mooring policy: Vessels had been observed in the no mooring zones at Riverside, Chesterton and Fen Ditton. Double mooring was happening more frequently. Owners had received notices and letters reminding them of requirements of the policy.

10.5.2 Incidents: Police attended a fracas between Mr Middleton and some rowers on 14<sup>th</sup> July. There had been a number of minor oil spills on the river, sources unknown. A members' conduct was questioned in association with a boat release incident on 8<sup>th</sup> August. The Clerk of Fen Ditton PC raised concern about alleged crimes associated with the moorers at the Plough public house. The rowers' Gun Shed was stolen on 31<sup>st</sup> August. Mr Key, on a river outing, observed the thieves in action. He received abuse when he challenged them.

10.5.3 Overloading of vessels: No reports in the last quarter.

10.5.4 Prosecutions: Witness statements were being taken in relation to an incident on 4<sup>th</sup> July when a sculler was pursued by a speedboat and deliberately capsized and barred from returning to the City. Mr Middleton attended a Trial at Cambridge Magistrates, 16<sup>th</sup> August. The defendant received legal aid. Guilty pleas were entered (obstruction of 9<sup>th</sup> June 2010, abusive behaviour 26<sup>th</sup> November 2010). He was ordered to pay penalties and costs amounting to £6871. The Police had been approached for the release of witness statements relating to an

assault in June which was linked to a boat-based party at the A14 road bridge.

- 10.5.5 Navigation: No EA navigation closure/restriction notices had been received due to ongoing e-mail problems.
- 10.5.6 Obstructions: A large willow bough collapsed into the river, 18<sup>th</sup> July, from the former Pye's field, Chesterton. The river crew attended to its removal. The City Council was notified that further land-based works were required to make it safe. A willow branch collapsed late afternoon 10<sup>th</sup> August near Chesterton Footbridge. The debris was cleared the following morning.
- 10.5.7 Pontoon licences: Payment had been received from Mulberry Ventures (Granta Punts) for the disabled walkway (£1,255).
- 10.5.8 Registration numbers: Byelaw observed continued to be poor. Notices had been served.
- 10.5.9 Sunken Boats: Reclaimed vessel 'Jester' remained at Clayhithe. One bidder asked to lift her off the water for a hull inspection before agreeing to submit a tender. The proposal was declined. A number of small craft were reclaimed from the wooden boardwalk in July after service of notices. Police were notified. Two operators instructed solicitors to claim costs from the Conservancy. Reduced penalty fees were negotiated.
- 10.5.10 Vehicles on the Halingway: An angler was granted permission to park at Chesterton to support children's fishing sessions during the school holidays. Rob Roy BC was granted permission to station a safety vehicle beside the towpath for their events (1<sup>st</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> October). Quad-bikes and mini-motos had been making a nuisance over the summer.
- 10.5.11 Noise: A letter had been sent to a Riverside moorer about the late running of their engine, deemed disturbing to residents.
- 10.5.12 Disposal of sewage: A Member of SCDC enquired about boaters' sewage disposal arrangements. A complaint had been received about alleged pollution by the operator of a large hireboat.
- 10.5.13 Diving operations: Nothing to report.
- 10.5.14 Swimming: Nothing to report.
- 10.6 Environment and Planning

- 10.6.1 Biodiversity: The NT Wicken Fen newsletter, July edition, had been received at the offices containing a summer programme of events and activities. Mr Suess, Ditton boathouse user, asked for the 'swan screens' to be removed, no longer being fit for purpose. Fen Ditton PC was to discuss this item in September. Apologies were tendered for the July and August meetings of the Cam Valley Forum. The manager of Sheen Mill, Melbourn, had sought advice on the removal of an aggressive swan in light of the 'Mr Asbo' experience on the Cam. 'Mr Asbo' had received veterinary treatment for a leg injury and was recuperating at a wildlife sanctuary near King's Lynn. Byron's Pool fish pass was opened officially on 25<sup>th</sup> August. A strange bloom on a backwater at Newnham was identified as a cyanobacterial mat. Bourn Free Project hosted a guided walk along Bourn Brook on 13<sup>th</sup> September. The Project was eradicating mink from the sub-catchment. The Friends of Stourbridge Common held their Autumn Talk on 16<sup>th</sup> September.
- 10.6.2 Cambridge City Council Local Plan: AINA's guidance document on planning and residential boating was passed on to Mr Moseley. The City Council had submitted an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for improvements to Jesus Green. Comments were submitted on the Open Space and Recreation Strategy document. A prospective house buyer requested information about flood risk in Horningsea. They were directed to the EA. A consultation had been issued regarding a proposed City mooring site for the CHYPPS Playboat.
- 10.6.3 Cambridge Sports Lakes: Milton Country Park had hosted various summer events. Mr Woolhouse approached the Conservancy for a qualified boatman to provide safety cover for an event on 24<sup>th</sup> July. Blue-green algae was detected in the lakes in late August.
- 10.6.4 CamToo Project: The Guided Busway opened officially on 8<sup>th</sup> August.
- 10.6.5 Planning Consultations: The City had launched its new online Consultee Access system. Suggested Changes to Site Specific Proposals (Cambs and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan) had been opened for comments before 19<sup>th</sup> September.
- 10.6.6 SCDC Towpath: Nothing to report.
- 10.6.7 Water Framework Directive: see item 10.4.9 above.
- 10.6.8 Waterspace Strategy: The Bedford Strategy launch was taking place on 30<sup>th</sup> September.

10.6.9 Sale of punt tours: Visit Cambridge was exploring options to expand its selling of punt tour tickets on behalf of operators. Visit Cambridge had also undertaken a survey on the impact of punt touting on visitors, residents and business owners. A meeting of officers, chaired by the Leader of the City Council, took place on 31<sup>st</sup> August to discuss issues around punt touting.

## 10.7 Moorings

10.7.1 Camboaters: The group organised a World Rivers Day River Festival on 25<sup>th</sup> September in the City. The River Foreman attended to steward boats at Jesus Lock.

10.7.2 Clayhithe 48 hour visitor's moorings: The river crew were making regular checks of moored boats and structural condition.

10.7.3 Mooring Arrangements with Cambridge City Council: Public enquiries about residential moorings remained steady. A number of Licence Holders had outstanding registration issues. Continuously cruising vessel owners had been abusing the time limit on the City's 48 hour moorings and also 'fly-mooring' on the Commons. Many visiting boats to Cambridge had failed to stop overnight in the City owing to the lack of moorings.

10.7.4 Conservators' Mooring Policy: A map of zones using publicly available satellite imagery was in preparation.

10.7.5 Moorings at Riverside: Riverside Action Group met on 19<sup>th</sup> September. Mr Brown gave legal advice on the application of byelaw 6.10. An archive document gave credence to the City Council being the owner of the sub-soil. A legitimate application could be made to HM Land Registry. Council Members were to make this decision. Officers had clarified how local residents could report complaints for action by the City Council.

## 10.8 Registration

10.8.1 Boat Standards: The City Council had been informed that one of its operators at La Mimosa had not completed his 2011/12 registration. Quotations were being sought for the new signage for commercial punts. Certain insurers had contacted the officers about policy holders who had not responded to their renewal invitations.

10.8.2 EA Interchange Agreement: The annual boat count remained to be agreed with the EA.

10.8.3 Non-registration prosecutions: See Finance Report, above.

10.8.4 Interchange agreement with the British Canoe Union: The Canoe England website was displaying incorrect information about licensing requirements for the Cam. Mr East, Canoe England, had agreed to rectify the error.

#### 10.9 Events

10.9.1 Events: CUCBC had provided a provisional list of 2012 events. Dr Hedgeland had taken on the role of Chair for the academic year ahead.

10.9.2 Town Bumps: Mr Allen, Bumps Secretary, paid great attention to the smooth running of the races. The River Foreman patrolled the river each evening to safeguard the swans, assisted by local resident Mr Austin.

10.9.3 Other: Amgen Ltd visited Baits Bite to discuss setting up a volunteer programme in the Conservancy Area. Horningsea residents organised a mini River Festival on 24<sup>th</sup> July. The Berky weed harvester took part in the boat parade. Cam Sailing Club's Optimist Week took place in July. The annual Hiroshima-Nagasaki floating lanterns memorial event took place on 7<sup>th</sup> August. Thousands of people partook in the Bridge the Gap walk in the City on 11<sup>th</sup> September. There was speculation of the Olympic Torch passing through the City by punt. Cambridge RAG requested a charity duck race along the Backs, 8<sup>th</sup> October.

#### 10.10 Publicity

10.10.1 Notice boards: The Cambridge Cancer Walk, 2<sup>nd</sup> October, was advertised via the noticeboards to encourage entries.

10.10.3 Publications: Cam characters featured in the August edition of the Cambridgeshire Journal. The offices had received the summer edition of GOBA News. Copy had been provided about the Conservancy for the Cam Valley Forum's leaflet.

10.10.4 Presentations: A presentation on conservation management of the Cam was to be given to members of the Cambridge Natural History Society on 13<sup>th</sup> October.

10.10.5 Media: Following the 14<sup>th</sup> July meeting, the Cambridge News had published an article about swan marshalling for the Town Bumps. Comments on arrangements were also provided to the Cambridge Student and BBC Cambridgeshire. Cambridge First published a piece on Mr & Mrs Russell, Baits Bite lock garden volunteers. Cambridge News reported on Mr Middleton's conviction and costs. There was speculation that bird populations were under attack by ruthless persons. The City

Council's Jesus Green Heritage Lottery bid received publicity. The Ecorys Ltd survey had generated an early reaction to increased charges upon boat owners.

- 10.10.6 Website: The 'org.uk' domain had become null and void. The website was available only at [www.camconservators.co.uk](http://www.camconservators.co.uk) The Future Finance Options survey had been made available via a link which redirected readers to the Ecorys Ltd website.

The River Manager took a questions on item 10.7.5, Riverside. Cllr Ward qualified that if the City Council were to become the landowner, then it could develop its own policy on moorings there. Dr Block enquired about the EA weed spraying programme against floating pennywort. Re. item 10.4.5, the River Manager confirmed that the matter of drain ownership had been resolved with City officers.

11. Any other business: The Chairman reported that 24 hours previously a request had been received to film these proceedings. That request had been declined on account of insufficient notice. Conservators were asked for their views. Conservators were concerned that other members of the public present might not agree to being filmed. Reference would be drawn from the City Council's protocol.

12. Dates of Next Meetings:

The meetings for Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2012, Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2012 and Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> July were confirmed and Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012 was agreed.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 11.25am.