

CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

9

NOTES FOR THE MEETING TO BE HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2012

Agenda

No

9. Health & Safety / Incidents

- 9.1 H&S policy and framework: Conservators were circulated with draft Safety Management Statements following the 29<sup>th</sup> September. Responses were sought by 31<sup>st</sup> October. Contributions from Conservators and Observers were merged into working drafts. Mr Brown and Professor Richards should be thanked especially for their time spent on this exercise. See Note 8, Other Matters for Decision.
- 9.2 Reportable incidents: There have been no reportable incidents on the Conservancy's landholdings in the last quarter. In spite of some particularly heavy winds, the Halingway trees have held firm.
- 9.3 Non-reportable incidents and near misses – staff: The River Foreman aggravated an old injury whilst leaning over to pick up a wooden stake in the Depot yard. He was signed off work by his GP for 2 weeks and he is now receiving physiotherapy. He is being restricted to light duties only.
- 9.4 Non-reportable incidents and near misses – public: A summary table of incidents for the period October 2011 to January 2012 inclusive is attached.

A missing person search commenced in the City on 29<sup>th</sup> October. Conservancy and EA staff assisted Police with the search in the vicinity of Riverside and Chesterton. With the permission of the Police and family, an e-mail circular was sent to river users asking them to remain vigilant. A body was found on 6<sup>th</sup> November by rowers.

Two moorers at the Penny Ferry public house in Chesterton have affixed poles from their vessels to prevent rowers from running into their vessels, in breach of byelaw 6.4. The River Bailiff spoke to one vessel owner who agreed to remove his dangerous projection. Contact with the other – an Agency-registered owner - is difficult. There have also been allegations of other byelaw infringements (e.g. illegal sewage disposal) at this site.

The 16+ boat (two eights lashed together) used by the 'Oarsome' crew for the 10<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Head Race was used on the navigation without permission being under the terms of approving this event.

- 9.5 Procedures/Risk Assessments: The River Manager contacted Prof Everson at Anglia Ruskin University seeking his assistance in finding a competent person to capture and transport wild birds (e.g. the swan Mr Asbo and mate). That person has been found subsequently. Arrangements to relocate the breeding pair will recommence this quarter.
- Darwin College has been in contact about allowing its students to use their kayaks in the hours of darkness. They were advised to check their insurance position.

The River Manager met with Mr Arnold, Environment Agency, on 2<sup>nd</sup> November to discuss operational safety matters. Mr Arnold is hoping to develop a 'strong stream advice' warning icon for publicity purposes, such as that already in place for flood warning. The River Manager prepared a proposed design (cruiser in heavy wash). The AINA Safety Issues Group has agreed to review this design as something which might become recognised nationally. Mr McDonald, Environment Agency, is drafting a Strong Stream Advice flagpole agreement for the Conservancy to adopt at Baits Bite.

There has been no further progress with the review of staff HAVS (Hand Arm Vibration) over the last quarter.

- 9.6 Safety Equipment: Strong Stream Advice warning signs have been purchased for Baits Bite Lock (one for each side of the lock). One was imperfect and had suffered damage in transit; it was returned to the sign manufacturers to put right. The warning beacon for Baits Bite guillotine gate remains to fitted. This is being arranged as part of the Agency's Area navigation improvements.

Thermal clothing has been purchased for the River Foreman to wear underneath his industrial drysuit (used for in-river works).

Two replacement 24 inch diameter lifebuoys have been purchased for Jesus Lock (one to be kept spare). The River Bailiff noted a missing lifebuoy at Riverside, a new housing fitted following the environmental improvement works by the City and County Councils. The asset owner is unknown. Its loss was reported to the County Council who promptly bounced back the report to the Conservancy.

**INCIDENTS: OCCUPATIONAL**

<b>Date</b>	<b>What happened</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Whose responsibility</b>	<b>Actions taken</b>
06/10/2011	A member of staff was harassed verbally by a boater with a bad attitude.	Baits Bite Lock	Conservancy.	None.
02/12/2011	A member of staff strained his back, aggravating an old injury, whilst leaning over to pick up a wooden stake for loading onto a truck.	Clayhithe Depot	Conservancy.	Recorded in accident book. Doctor's note obtained by employee. Manual handling training course being arranged.
03/12/2011	A member of staff was abused verbally by a boater who was feeling aggrieved following a public consultation on the running costs of the authority.	Clayhithe Depot	Conservancy.	Logged in database and identity of potentially hostile vessel owner relayed to staff.

**INCIDENTS: PUBLIC (NAVIGATION)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>What happened</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Whose responsibility</b>	<b>Actions taken</b>
16/10/2011	A single commercial punt was observed giving a tour on the navigation carrying 6 passengers instead of 5, in contravention of the Code of Practice for Commercial Punt Operators. This operator had been warned about overloading previously.	Garret Hostel Lane	Operator. Conservancy.	River Manager obtaining witness statements
20/10/2011	A hireboat was stuck inside a lock pen; the guillotine gate would not operate. The message was relayed to the owner of the lock (Environment Agency).	Bottisham Lock	Environment Agency.	EA notified of problems.
23/10/2011	A double scull collided with a moored vessel and it capsized, sending both crew into cold, chest-deep water. Becoming quickly exposed, the crew were slowed in their efforts to recover the vessel. Two residential boat owners came to their assistance, one was able to flip the vessel over and another launched his kayak to tow the scull back to the opposite bank. The double scull was slightly damaged (broken footplate). Cause of the collision unknown. Strong gusting winds and traffic intensity may have been contributing factors.	Riverside	Sculler.	None by Conservancy.
31/10/2011	The owner of a Cam residential barge was cruising and the skipper made a deliberate attempt to steer towards a novice rowing crew. The coach exchanged words with the skipper of the	Chesterton	Skipper of barge.	River Manager spoke to rowing coach seeking further details. Witness

	barge.			statement prepared. Aggrieved failed to respond to invitation to provide formal evidence.
31/10/2011	A narrowboat was moored in a no mooring zone in a narrow reach of the river. The owner was making repairs below decks during daylight hours and a local resident complained about the (i) illegal mooring and (ii) noise nuisance. The River Bailiff was asked to visit and serve an enforcement notice.	Riverside	Vessel owner. Conservancy.	Vessel identified and notice served.
31/10/2011	A narrowboat was moored in a 'no mooring' area, in contravention of the Conservators' Mooring Policy and causing a hazard to other river users in a confined stretch of the river.	Riverside	Vessel owner. Conservancy.	Vessel had moved on by the time enforcement visit was paid (3 hours later).
12/11/2011	A rowing eight veered into a coxed four which was heading in the opposite direction at moderate pace. The cox of the coxed four managed to steer and take avoiding action. The cox asked the crew of the rowing eight to stop. Although the cox of the eight asked the crew to pull their blades in, they failed to do so, and a collision followed. One blade hit the bow position crew member of the coxed four on the head. The blade of the rower in position 2 of the coxed four became entangled with one of the eight's oars and dug into the water. The handle bounced back violently and struck the crew member in the body, throwing them backwards, hitting her head on the boat. Both felt unwell and the outing was abandoned. They attended A&E and concussion was diagnosed.	Cutter Ferry Bridge	Cox of rowing eight and cox of four.	River Manager and Clubs involved investigated the cause for the incident. Matter was resolved at Club level.
12/11/2011	A single commercial punt was observed loaded with 6 passengers instead of 5, in contravention of the Conservators' Code of Practice for Commercial Punt Operators.	Garret Hostel Bridge	Punt operator. Conservancy.	River Manager obtaining witness statements.
13/11/2011	A narrowboat was observed heading upstream and the people on board were acting aggressively towards the rowers on the river. A rowing eight was receiving instructions from their coach opposite their boathouse. It was stationary on the navigation in the correct lane. The narrowboat steered for the rowing eight. The coach yelled to it to stop. The narrowboat deliberately rammed the rowing eight at full speed. An oar was broken in the collision and the steering system was damaged. The people on the narrowboat were abusive and appeared to be inebriated. They continued upstream and made no apology. None of the rowers were injured but all were extremely shaken. The incident was reported to the Police.	Stourbridge Common	Narrowboat skipper. Conservancy. Police.	Police investigating. Statements obtained. Skipper may be brought in for formal interview.
14/11/2011	A narrowboat came adrift from its moorings and came to rest	Riverside	Vessel owner. City	River Manager obtained

	broadships across the river. A rowing pair had just set off from their boathouse and were heading downstream at light pressure and rounding a corner. The leading crew looked over his shoulder and saw the barge across the river, stern in to the bank and blocking half the river width, approximately one metre away. The rowing boat collided with the narrowboat, sustaining damage but no capsize or personal injury. The owner(s) of the narrowboat were not on board at the time of this incident (there were no lights showing). The rowers assumed that the bow line had become loose or it had been untied deliberately.		Council (landlord).	vessel owner's details from EA and notified vessel owner of potential claim against insurance policy. Club advised to write to EA for vessel owner information and pursue claim for damages via their insurers.
27/11/2011	A single commercial punt was observed overloaded with 6 fare-paying passengers instead of 5, in contravention of the Conservators' Code of Practice for Commercial Punts. Evidence was taken in the form of a camerphone picture. This particular chauffeur had received a warning letter about overloading earlier in the summer.	Garret Hostel Bridge	Punt operator. Conservancy.	River Manager obtaining witness statements.
28/11/2011	A sculler capsized on the main river next to a moored narrowboat approximately 50 metres away from his boathouse. The occupants of the narrowboat was able to assist recovering the sculler from the water, offering him a jacket to keep warm. Air temperatures were cold after an overnight frost, but there was little wind. The scull was stowed on the roof of the narrowboat until the sculler could recover it.	Riverside	Sculler.	None by Conservancy.
05/01/12	A boat came adrift from its moorings during an overnight storm.	Elizabeth Bridge	Vessel owner.	Police responded to call.

N.B. List does not include any submissions made by rowing clubs to British Rowing via their online reporting system

#### INCIDENTS: PUBLIC (TOWPATH)

Date	What happened	Location	Whose responsibility	Actions taken
12/01/12	Delinquents espied a recently exposed inspection cover for a river water level sensor. They removed the cover and pulled the cables out and disturbed the pressure transducer. The cables carried a low voltage but were essential to controlling the nearby sluices.	Baits Bite Lock	Environment Agency. Police.	Agency personnel attended and recalibrated the sensor. A tamper-proof hatch cover has been ordered.

**INCIDENTS: ENVIRONMENTAL**

<b>Date</b>	<b>What happened</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Whose responsibility</b>	<b>Actions taken</b>
21/10/2011	There was an oil spill on the river. The source could not be ascertained exactly but an eyewitness fishing on the riverbank suggested that it had come from a residential barge at its moorings upon engine start-up.	Penny Ferry	Vessel owner. Environment Agency.	Reported to EA.
16/11/2011	There was a detergent pollution incident on the river, great flocs of bubbles being visible downstream of a weir over a distance of approximately 100 metres. Source unknown but the bubbles had been generated overnight.	Baits Bite Weir	Environment Agency.	Reported to EA. Pictures passed on.
20/11/2011	Rowers noted a strong smell of chemical effluent during a morning outing on the main river, possibly coming from a nearby field drain.	Ditton Corner	Landowner. Environment Agency.	Reported to EA.

**INCIDENTS: OTHER**

<b>Date</b>	<b>What happened</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Whose responsibility</b>	<b>Actions taken</b>
29/10/2011	There was a naked man wading in the river, presumed drunk. He was assisted out by a companion.	Stourbridge Common	Police.	No further action.
29/10/2011	The Police commenced a search for a missing person whose body was presumed to be in the river between two control structures, separated by a distance of approximately 2 miles.	Riverside	Police.	Conservancy and EA assisted with search. Missing person was found by rowers on a morning outing.
01/11/2011	Thieves broke into a temporary storage area overnight and stole three fuel cans. One was filled with petrol in readiness for boating operations the following day. Another was half-filled with petrol. The theft and damage was reported to the Police.	Clayhithe yard	Police. Conservancy.	River Foreman reported theft to Police. Fuel tanks not replaced. EA alerted as theft may have been linked to a suspicious boat seen mooring nearby.
26/12/2011	River levels fell steadily to approximately 40cm below normal retention level owing to debris being trapped in a sluice gate. Moored boats along a 4km long reach were stranded on the river bed and others were listing and straining at their mooring lines. The automatic low level warning alarm was activated. Personnel attended, flushed the material through and returned the gates to their normal mode.			