

CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

6

NOTES FOR THE MEETING TO BE HELD ON 14 APRIL 2011

Agenda

No

6. Health & Safety / Incidents

6.1 H&S policy and framework: Mike Barrett (BRM Consultancy Services) is working on the 6 sub-policy statements. He has produced a draft Safety Management Statement to cover the activities of Employees. The H&S sub-committee group will review the project output in the next quarter.

6.2 Reportable incidents

There have been no known reportable incidents since the last meeting.

6.3 Non-reportable incidents and near misses: staff

The River Bailiff was subjected to verbal abuse and threatening behaviour by a member of the public who had been prosecuted in the past by the Conservators. The member of staff reported this hostile behaviour to the Police (incident 612, 6th April 2011) and he provided a formal statement at the Police Station the same day.

6.4 Non-reportable incidents and near misses: public

A summary table of incidents for the period mid-January 2011 to early April 2011 inclusive is annexed. It excludes data on rowing incidents. An e-mail from Roger Croome, Eastern Region Water Safety Advisor, dated 20th January has confirmed British Rowing's position regarding the release of data on rowing incidents:

'At a recent meeting at British Rowing HQ in Hammersmith, London, the subject of Incident Reports and Confidentiality was discussed.

'British Rowing wishes to encourage the clubs to report incidents with confidence that the reports remain confidential. Any issue to a Third Party would undermine that confidence and thereby inhibit clubs from reporting.

'Therefore British Rowing Incident Reports can not be issued to any Third Party.'

The Chairman, Dr Brighty and the River Manager met with town and university rowing club Safety Advisors on 8th February at the Cambridge '99 Boathouse. Items discussed included night rowing, the main hazards facing rowers and possible solutions. The Minutes of that meeting have been circulated to Club Safety Advisors (available to Conservators upon request). The group has agreed to meet on an annual basis henceforth.

The River Manager was taken out on a night row in an eight on 8th March by arrangement of Mr Allen, to witness first-hand the need for a local system of

navigation lighting for rowers. The CRA constitution currently allows provision for crews to attach an additional red light to the craft's stern to help others to discern the direction of travel.

The River Manager has written to a number of vessel owners in the last quarter who have motored upstream from Baits Bite without fully raising the guillotine gate (narrowboats in particular). This dangerous practice could result in a vessel colliding with the gate whilst entering the lock in the hours of darkness, causing damage to the gate, vessel or personal injury.

6.5 Procedures / Risk Assessments:

The River Manager met with Nathan Arnold, EA Waterways Team Leader, at Hermitage Lock, 22nd March, to discuss risk assessments, industry best practice updates, asset inspections, strong stream advice and other navigational issues of mutual interest. The River Manager has provided comments on the draft Strong Stream Advice procedure for the River Cam being prepared by Mr Arnold. To harmonise with the EA sites, Strong Stream Advice warning signs will need to be purchased for Baits Bite Lock. A quotation has been sought from the same sign supplier as used by the EA. A red warning light will also need to be fitted to the upstream guillotine gantry warning that the lock is reversed for flood discharge. This will require some electrical panel modifications. The EA Operations Delivery team has offered to arrange for electrical contractors to provide a quotation to the Conservancy to ensure that consistent standards are achieved (estimated costs of installation £2k).

6.6 Safety Equipment: Econoguard has recently serviced all fire extinguishers on the Conservators' premises. An additional unit will be ordered for the rear rooms at Baits Bite.

An industrial drysuit has been ordered for the River Foreman for him to wear whilst undertaking river bank restoration works. The method requires him to stand in the water for long periods of the day whilst guiding the hydraulic driving of wooden stakes into the river bed.

April 2011

River Manager

INCIDENTS: PUBLIC (NAVIGATION)

Date	What happened	Location	Whose responsibility	Actions taken
22/01/11	A group of 7-8 racing kayakers were on the rowing course during a major regatta. They refused to oblige the marshals' instructions and continued upstream onto the course during the race. One rowing crew nearly hit one of the kayakers at racing speed.	Baits Bite	Individuals and Canoe Club	Event organisers asked by River Manager to confirm descriptions of craft involved (no details were noted). Complaint forwarded to Chairman of Canoe Club and matter discussed. The Club has a number of new members who are unfamiliar with protocol on the navigation. Agreed that the diary of events should be sent to the Club electronically for display in the Clubhouse at Newnham.
22/01/11	A rowing competitor suffered an heart attack during a rowing regatta. The crew and marshals responded quickly and gave resuscitation. The Air Ambulance attended and took the competitor to hospital within the 'golden hour'. The competitor survived.	First Post Corner, Fen Ditton	Event organisers, Emergency Services	Rowing clubs have reviewed emergency responses; CRA has organised first aid training for its members.
30/01/11	A small RIB was speeding on the river and the wake caused a narrowboat to rock violently, making plates fall off shelves.	Plough Reach	Conservancy	Unable to identify vessel. No action taken.
17/02/2011	A barge was deliberately released from its moorings in the early hours of the morning (in darkness) and it drifted downstream towards a weir where its progress was halted by a safety boom. The River Foreman fended a call from the Police at 3.30am. The vessel owner was on board and woke up to find that the vessel had moved.	Jubilee Gardens	City Council, vessel owner	Vessel owner complained to City Council about lack of secure mooring points.
25/02/2011	An Agency-registered narrowboat owner (no fixed moorings) refused to comply with rowing marshals' instructions and proceeded to navigate downstream along the rowing course at a slow rate (1-2mph), delaying the start of the next racing division by 40-45 minutes. The River Manager challenged the vessel owner at Baits Bite Lock; he claimed he couldn't hear the instructions given by rowing marshals.	Long Reach	Conservancy, CUCBC	Warning letter to be sent to vessel owner once address details extracted from EA licensing department. CUCBC has identified names of witnesses. Statements to be prepared by River Manager/Archer & Archer.
10/03/2011	A liveaboard moorer complained that a rowing eight proceeded to spin next to his vessel and bumped into it, early morning. The cox of the eight made no attempt to apologise for the error. Likewise, the coach on the opposite bank made no acknowledgement.	Stourbridge Common	Conservancy, College boat club (coach and cox)	Liveaboard moorer knew the coach and would 'have a word'. River Manager offered to send warning letter.
20/03/2011	A rowing eight was attacked by an aggressive cob swan during a routine morning outing and the cox was put in considerable danger. The eyewitness reported that the cob was pursuing almost every boat that went past its territory.	Ditton Corner	Conservancy, Natural England	River Manager explained to the eyewitness that the matter of relocating the birds was being pursued via Natural England.
28/03/2011	A small workboat was subjected to an attack by an aggressive male swan.	Ditton Corner	Conservancy, Natural England	Relocation of the birds being negotiated with Natural England.

03/04/2011	A commercial punt (licensed by the City Council) was deliberately released and pushed over a weir to take it out of operation.	Jesus Green	Commercial operator, Conservancy, City Council	Moorings are insecure and open to members of the public.
03/04/2011	A commercial punt was deliberately damaged by someone who pushed their foot hard down on its bottom deck, causing it to spring a leak. It was alleged that an individual did this as retribution for the operator stealing trade from Garret Hostel lane.	Jesus Green	Commercial operator, Police, City Council	Moorings are insecure and open to members of the public. City officers and Police notified. There is CCTV coverage of this area.

INCIDENTS: PUBLIC (TOWPATH)

Date	What happened	Location	Whose responsibility	Actions taken
10/01/2011	Three 20 litre oil containers were dumped in a drainage ditch beside the towpath. It is suspected that a passing boater had deposited them there because vehicular access to this part of the towpath is restricted.	Horningsea	Environment Agency	Oil containers removed and returned to Conservancy depot. Pollution reported to Environment Agency.
15/02/2011	Horses were ridden/walked along the towpath in contravention of the Conservators' byelaws and they left a large amount of manure on the cycleway surface along a mile's length, causing a hazard to cyclists and pedestrians.	Plough Reach	Conservancy, Police	Reported to local Police using e-cops
19/02/2011	Vandals made a fire inside an empty storage container for rowers' equipment beside the river. A member of the public alerted the emergency services and the Fire Services attended and put the fire out.	A14 road bridge	Emergency Services, CRA/CUCBC	The Gun Shed is now a dangerous structure and it needs to be removed and scrapped.
07/03/2011	A mini-moto was being ridden along the towpath in contravention of the Conservators' byelaws.	Horningsea	Conservancy, Police	Reported to Police.

INCIDENTS: OTHER

Date	What happened	Location	Whose responsibility	Actions taken
18/02/2011	The Environment Agency received a report that a residential barge had been seen directly pumping effluent into the river. The inspecting officer sought information on the registered owner from the Conservancy.	Chesterton	Environment Agency, City Council	Actions by Environment Agency unconfirmed.
20/01/2011	Water levels fell below normal between two control structures, approx. 20 cm over the course of 1.5 hours, leaving a narrowboat stranded on the river bed, leaning over at a precarious angle. The problem was traced to an obstruction in the sluice gates at the next control structure (Bottisham Sluices). Once cleared, water levels were restored to normal.	Baits Bite	Conservancy and Environment Agency	Environment Agency operatives cleared the obstruction at Bottisham Sluices

02/02/2011	River levels fell quickly between two control structures. A group of EA operatives had only just left the site upstream, apparently looking at the sluice gates (obstruction?). Water levels were subsequently restored but fell again by late afternoon. The EA was contacted and operatives were sent to the control structure downstream to trace the fault.	Clayhithe	Environment Agency	Environment Agency restored water levels.
23/02/2011	A member of the public reported an oil spill on the river which appeared to be coming from a moored vessel. The vessel moved off shortly afterwards, heading upstream towards the City.	Riverside	Environment Agency	Conservancy staff attended to confirm vessel identity. Reported to Environment Agency. Letter sent to vessel owner with oil absorbent pads and leaflet about the correct disposal of oil. Owner advised to check for oil leaks in the engine bay.
26/02/2011	A rower noted a very strong smell of chemical effluent in the vicinity of the river.	Ditton Corner	Environment Agency	Reported to EA.
27/02/2011	A local rower noted a strong smell of chemical toilets in the vicinity of the river during a normal morning outing (second consecutive morning).	Plough Reach	Environment Agency	Reported to EA.
	A 4x4 driver was launching a punt and had reversed down a grassy slope with a trailer. The vehicle went into a skid. The 4x4 and trailer jack-knifed, leaving the front of the vehicle hanging over the edge of the riverbank. The driver removed his seatbelt in haste and evacuated the cab, jumping into the river. The Fire Services winched the vehicle and trailer clear. During the retrieval exercise, a bowline was borrowed from a nearby barge. This was not replaced afterwards. The barge swung out from its moorings, held fast by its sternline only, approx. 50 metres upstream of some sluices.	Jubilee Gardens	Emergency Services, City Council	River Manager advised City Council officers to review access arrangements to the river bank by members of the public. City Council has installed a new bollard between the gap in the handrails adjacent to Chesterton Road to prevent unauthorised vehicle access to Jubilee Gardens
03/04/2011	A commercial punt was deliberately pushed over a weir to take it out of operation.	Jesus Green	Punt operator, Police	Operator recovered punt.
03/04/2011	A commercial punt was deliberately damaged by someone who pushed their foot hard down on its bottom deck, causing it to leak.	Jesus Green	Punt operator, Police	Operator contacted Police.