



Association of Waterways Cruising Clubs

A summary of the AWCC N. W. Region Meeting, held at the Watch House C.C. Stretford, at 7.30pm during the evening of Thursday 9 November 2023.

John Suggitt, Vice Chair (South) A.W.C.C. North West, N/B Evenlode



The AWCC NW regional Meeting was attended by over twenty people, representing eleven of the seventeen North West Region Boat Clubs, apologies being received from the remainder. This, was the final meeting to be held in 2023. The numbers attending were increased by a number of Lymm Cruising Club members who were in transit to Castlefield to attend the Armistice Day Ceremony in Manchester City Centre this coming Saturday.

Following the Apologies and the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held in September, the following reports were delivered.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman advised of two events having occurred since our September meeting as follows.

Meeting with CRT NW held at Anderton on Friday 13 October 2023

Ten items were raised during the meeting which included the following:

1. It had not been possible to host a trial run with CRT staff on board the Presidents boat whilst transiting Barnton and Saltersford Tunnels. A slide show of photographs taken from the helm of his boat were used as a substitute to demonstrate the lack of visibility encountered and the risks posed by oncoming canoeists and paddleboarders. C&RT accepted we were justified in raising our concerns and are going to discuss the situation with their Health and Safety staff. The photographs indicated also poorly sited signage often obscured by moored boats.
2. Anderton Lift to remain in use for all of next year.
3. Coombs Reservoir is now back in service but Todbrook will be out of use until 2025.
4. There have been operational difficulties with powered swing bridges on the Leeds Liverpool during most of the year thus suggestions for improvements were made.
5. Dean Lock has a single mooring bollard above the lock very close to the upper gates which results in difficulties in operation. Below the lock the single mooring ring also acts to serve the water point.

6. Boaters Services are likely in future to feature less showers but more water points. Pump outs are to be converted to contactless card readers as are powered swing/lift bridges.
7. Bridge 18 (L&L) collapsed wash wall is scheduled for repair in 2025.

Meeting with AWCC National Executive held via zoom on Saturday 4 November 2023

The following items were noted:

1. AWCC Club fees are to remain the same for one year.
2. The proposed campaign cruise on the Thames as part of the 'Save Britain's Waterways' initiative has been cancelled due to a lack of response and the presence of Spring Tides causing safety issues.
3. AWCC represents 83 individual Clubs yielding the following boat numbers in each region. London 398, Midlands 1370, North East 831, North West 795, South East 598, South West 302.
4. Due to a lack of volunteers to assume the officer positions the South West Region is to be disbanded. The Clubs therein are to be approached as to which region they would wish to join
5. To comply with the Trust registration and money laundering scheme, Crooke Cruising Club has registered on line which took about three hours and proved to be somewhat onerous. There are 99000 clubs representing different types of organisations nationwide, and the registration process applies to all form of activities, thus some questions which relate to the storage of footballs are irrelevant to boat clubs.

Secretaries Report

The Weaver User Group met with C&RT NW to discuss local issues. C&RT were fully represented, all their relevant staff being present. NW C&RT Chief John Horsfal expressed an intent to look into the absence of booms, the non-operation of Weston Point Dock, this offering a far more encouraging response than in the past. The Anderton Lift is to be closed for a month.

Treasurers Report

Current Account £1556.92; Savings Account £2927; Cash in hand £48.91.

When invited to do so, the **Vice Chair (South)** offered some information on the Macclesfield and Peak Forest Canals which had been suffering from low water levels for much of this year. Restricted reservoir capacity has resulted in lock flight restrictions leading to boat queues on a number of occasions. The Marple Lock Flight is currently closed for repairs to Lock 7 until early next year and there are ongoing difficulties with the Powered Lift Bridge 24 on the Upper Peak Forest Canal which sustains frequent damage from the heavy agricultural vehicles which use it regularly. The number of 'live aboard' boaters who populate the Marinas and never sail is increasing, which gives cause for concern as they hand over their licence fees but have no interest whatsoever in the upkeep of the canal.

AOB

Harecastle Tunnel has been closed recently due to a damaged rudder on the rescue boat.

Wide beam craft are to face greater Licensing charges than narrow boats.

Through no fault of their own, Lymm CC are still no nearer to settling their dispute with Warrington Council regarding to the rates they are now expected to pay.

The sandstone bank edges at the lagoon between Barnton and Saltersford Tunnels is unsafe for mooring.

C&RT have under estimated the effect of weed growth and it is clear that their contractor management needs to be reviewed.

The 2024 Federation of Bridgewater Cruising Clubs Rally is scheduled to occur at Sale CC during the Spring Bank Holiday. Registration is now available.

NB this is a brief resume of what occurred during the meeting, a full set of minutes is available upon request.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 11 January 2024 at 7.30pm.

John Suggitt, Vice Chair (South) A.W.C.C. North West, N/B Evenlode