

# MELKSHAM AREA WATERWAYS GROUP

## *A theme group within the Melksham Community Area Partnership*

Minutes of the meeting held at the Adventure Centre, Melksham  
March 9th 2010

<b>Present:</b>	Colin Goodhind	Interim Group Chair, MACP Vice Chair
	Colin Fletcher	Wilts and Berks Canal Trust
	Rolf Brimble	Melksham Without Parish Council
	Steve Petty	Melksham Without Parish Council, Berryfield TARA
	Rob Jones	Chair, Melksham and Calne branch of W&B Canal Trust
	Brian De'ath	Melksham and Calne branch of W&B Canal Trust
	Ian Cardy	Conigre Nature Reserve
	Chris Holden	MCAP Chair
	Ken Oliver	Canal Officer, Wiltshire Council
	Miriam Zaccarelli	MCAP
	Kath Hatton	Melksham and Calne branch of W&B Canal Trust

### 1. Welcome and Apologies

Colin welcomed the group and everyone introduced themselves. Apologies were received from Terri Welch, Jon Glover and John Webb

### 2. Verbal Report

Colin reported that a small group had met to discuss things on February 25<sup>th</sup> where it was agreed to get Ken Oliver involved as there is a degree of urgency regarding the planned Melksham Link, the new stretch of the Wilts and Berks Canal. There is a need to expand the group to be more representative of the Melksham Community Area.

**Action: ALL**

### 3. Terms of reference

As this had not yet been prepared it will be deferred to the next meeting.

**Action: MZ**

### 4. Group Membership

Colin asked if anyone present could think of any other key people who should be involved with the group and it was suggested that someone from the Chamber of Commerce should be invited. The group will be publicised in Melksham News and Wiltshire Times.

**Action MZ and CG**

It was agreed that it is important not to go into issues that are already being dealt with by other groups e.g. the W&B Canal Partnership or the W&B Canal Trust but to establish contact and share information.

### 5. Venue and timing of meetings

It was agreed that providing the Adventure Centre can be sufficiently heated it serves as a good meeting venue. The first Tuesday of the month at 6.30pm was agreed as a regular time for meeting.

### 6. Melksham Link Consultation – *Ken Oliver, Canal Officer at Wiltshire Council*

Ken stated that he is very keen to get the CAP involved on the consultation on the proposed Canal project through Melksham. He gave the same presentation given at the Melksham Area Board meeting on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, outlining the following details:

- The Canal partnership currently comprises 20 partners.
- The Melksham Link project provides a new two-mile stretch of the Wilts and Berks Canal from the Kennet & Avon at Semington to the outskirts of Melksham via Berryfield. This could ultimately link to the restored canal north of the town via the river flowing through the town centre.
- The project would open up opportunities for volunteering, leisure, education and commercial activities as well as providing additional wildlife habitat.
- The plan should be deliverable within 5 years with work potentially commencing by the end of this year.
- A weir would be needed.
- Public consultation is necessary and this has to be fully inclusive, in particular with the involvement of landowners and the residents of Berryfield and the surrounding area.

Dr Cardy raised the issue of water supply and Ken explained that there is a calculation of 20 lock uses a day using 6.4 megalitres of water. ~~3.5~~ **2.5** will be supplied from the Kennet and Avon Canal **at Claverton** and the rest from the River Avon **at Melksham**. British Waterways have a license to abstract a certain amount but they are not using their full allowance. The Environment Agency are happy in principle for water to be pumped from the river (*amended as agreed 15/4/2010*).

~~Ken explained that this water would be taken from the River Avon at Claverton.~~

There are plans to include a weir and there could be an opportunity to include a power generation source e.g. Archimedes Screw turbine to generate some power for the community. This would be something to consult on after the technical team have checked to see if it is a viable option.

Chris mentioned that Wiltshire Wildlife Trust will be involved and Bill Jenman will be invited.

It was agreed that where appropriate, the consultation exercise will include explanations that the project can only go ahead if the issue being referred to is resolved to the satisfaction of the majority of people involved and/or affected by it. Challenges will be fully explained as well as what has been done so far to address them.

A question was raised regarding Wiltshire Council's Spatial Plan and the proposed industrial development in the area planned for the Canal development and it was agreed that this would be looked into.

**Action: KO, MZ and CG**

Consultation will take place at Berryfield and then within the town.

The consultation was agreed to run throughout May, with the outcome of the survey to be published in late June or early July and presented at a public meeting. As the CAP is taking it on board the website can be used as well as a paper questionnaire being circulated.

It was decided to agree another date to plan the details of the consultation on the canal, which Colin will email options for.

Funding for the consultation was discussed and it was agreed that the CAP has funding available for consultation.

**Action: CG**

## 7. Any other business

Dr Cardy brought the attention of the group to an article in a national newspaper on canals becoming part of the National Trust.

## 8. Date of next meeting

The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May, the first Tuesday of the month as agreed, but consultation planning meetings will be held as required and Colin will advise dates for these.