

**MINUTES OF THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE SHREWSBURY & NEWPORT CANALS TRUST**

**Held at Rodington Village Hall, Rodington, Shrewsbury, SY4 4Q
on Saturday 8th June 2019 at 12:15p.m.**

Members in attendance (Bold text = Trustees):

David Adams	John Anwok?	Adrienne Barnwell	Alan Bason
Alex Bielecki	Stephan Bielecki	Jon Birchall	Sue Blake
Carole Cameron	Colin Cameron	Peter Cann	Dave Clarke
Laurence Cooper	Cyril Cowdrill	Yvonne Crow	David Crow
Tom Currie	John Duffield	Elaine Evans	Sherrel Fiekis
Julie Fox	Simon Fox	John M Freeman	James Gollins
Jean Hammond	Mike Hammond	Alan Harding	Marian Harrington
Dominic Harrington	John Haynes	John Heather	Derek Hillaby
Dian Hirst	Tony Hirst	Anne Jones	Bernie Jones
Cindy Jones	Cris Jones	Freeman Jones	Mike Jones
Phil Jones	S Jones	Steve Jones	Stephen Kearney
Mike Mee	Andrew Mitchell	Margaret Mitchell	Stephen Mitchell
John Myers	Sam Myers	Brian Nelson	Dee Nelson
Julia Olsen	Ruth Otter	Terry Otter	Lois Pattison
Jennie Perks	Tony Perks	Dave Peters	Roberta Phillips
Mark Pollard	June Prater	Michael Prater	Alistair Price
Sue Price	David Pulford	Peter Rawlings	Ian Rushworth
???	Sue Sharpe	W Sharpe	Christine Sheard
Jeremy Simpson	Maria Simpson	Jo Smith	Keith Smith
Keith N Smith	John Stevens	Susan Tappin	Capt Phil Tarrant
Steve Taylor	Martyn Vincent	Michael Ward	Chas Warren
Keith Watts	John Webster	Jim Weir	Marion Weir
Vaughan Welch	Ted Williams		

Guests in attendance:

Andrew Pattison (Guest Speaker)
Jason Jordan (Sundorne Estate Manager)
Lezley Picton (Councillor for Shropshire Council)
Cllr Stephen Reynolds (Mayor, Telford & Wrekin Council)

The Chairman, Bernie Jones (BJ), welcomed all members and guests.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from **Steve Bean** (Co. Secretary and Treasurer), Steve Bristow, Roger & Betty Carlyle, Tony Clayton, Susan Gould, Edward Leetham, Geoff Loadwick, Maggie Phillips, David Stevens, Barbara Tyler. BJ commented that this was the first time that Steve Bean had missed an AGM in 18 years.

2. Minutes of the Seventeenth Annual General Meeting held on 2nd June 2018.

BJ explained that there had been a problem with the Trust's website since 4th June 2019 and this meant that the Minutes had not been available electronically. However, the Minutes had been published 30 days before the meeting as required by the Trust's Articles of Association. Paper copies were available at the meeting. There was no request that they be read out, but it was pointed out that in Item 4, Chairman's Report, in "Other areas of progress" the correct title is "Institution of Civil Engineers", not "Institute of Engineers. There were no other questions or comments arising. Brian Nelson proposed that they were accepted as a true record, this was seconded by John Stevens and agreed nem con.

3. Report of the Trustees & Financial Statement for year ended 30th September 2018

These had been made available on the Trust website, subject to the difficulties with the website mentioned above, and copies were available at the meeting. There were no comments or questions arising. The Report had been agreed by the Trustees and filed with Companies House.

4. Chairman's Report

The Chairman, Bernie Jones (BJ) said that it had been a very eventful and busy year and gave a presentation of some of the highlights:

- June 2018 – Terry and Ruth Otter held an open day in their garden at Ticket House Lock, Newport.
- June 2018 – Telford and Wrekin Council visited Wappenshall to produce a 3D on-line tour of the site as part of the “Telford at 50 Celebrations”. They also used a drone to photograph the site in 4K quality.
- June 2018 – Telford and Wrekin Council launched the “Twincl” lottery to support local good causes of which SNCT is one. For every £1 that is paid into the lottery you have a better chance of winning the top prize of £25,000 than winning anything in the National Lottery. For every £1 paid in, 50p goes to SNCT, with a further 10p being paid to the top causes. At the moment we are selling almost 130 tickets and remain the top cause.
- July 2018 – Himalayan Balsam Bash. BJ thanked John and Sam Myers for their persistence in trying to eradicate this invasive plant from the canal in Newport.
- July 2018 – John and Sam Myers organised a work party to clear the canal bed at Forton of ragwort.
- August 2018 – Volunteers worked on the stop gate display, whilst John Haynes removed a large metal tank from the water under the transshipment warehouse, using one of the JCBs on loan from Ian Braine. The tank had to be cut up into smaller sections before it could be taken for scrap.
- August 2018 – Work began to uncover the original road bridge over the canal at Wappenshall which is part of the garden of Wharf House.
- August 2018 – The laid hedge at Meretown Lock was strengthened with whips supplied by Telford & Wrekin Council.
- September 2018 – Shrewsbury Support Group volunteers worked on the towpath from Widows Bridge towards Berwick South Portal.
- September 2018– Former Trustee, John Freeman, unveiled his Thomas Telford Trail display funded by Telford & Wrekin Council.
- September 2018– The preservation and display work on the Wappenshall Stop Gate, funded by Tesco Bags for Life, was completed.
- October 2018 – Scaffolding was erected around the small warehouse at Wappenshall in preparation for repairing the roof and associated timbers.
- October 2018 – Alistair Price was interviewed by BBC Radio Shropshire about the Shrewsbury canal.
- November 2018 – Work continued on the building and towpath at Berwick North Portal.
- November 2018 – John Heather showed how much of the small warehouse roof timbers had to be repaired.
- December 2018 – Mid-week Shrewsbury work parties commenced each Thursday either at Berwick North or South Portal.
- January 2019 – Volunteers worked on the support timbers for Crane No. 2 on the small warehouse at Wappenshall.
- January 2019 – The construction of a composting toilet began at Berwick North Portal.
- March 2019 – A new water main for the small warehouse was dug across the car park at Wappenshall. This involved cutting through up to 10” of ferro-concrete.
- March 2019 – A Newport Work Party tidied up the boundary fence between Meretown Lock and the adjacent land.
- March 2019 – Widows Bridge to the Berwick Tunnel South Portal was finally cleared of undergrowth.
- April 2019 - IWA/CRT held the annual Restoration Workshop to promote their “Waterways in Progress” programme to celebrate canal restoration work. SNCT have been awarded £3,000 by the IWA and there is a further £100,000 in the form of a legacy, part of which SNCT will be applying for.
- April 2019 – Work continued on the restoration of the roof timbers using the scaffold tower purchased with funds from our IWA Branch and also held their AGM at Wappenshall.
- May 2019 – Peter Scott, Mayor of Newport, presented the prize for the Best Dressed Boat at this year's Norbury Festival to the Pirate Boat.

BJ reported that the small bridge adjoining Wappenshall Wharf and on the land in front of Wharf House has been cleared of ivy and weeds and is now visible to anyone passing. Wharf House itself will be demolished and the owner, Sonny Singh, will be having a property built in the style and character of Wappenshall wharf's warehouses. The grey wall between the two properties will be demolished.

Questions from the floor:

(Tom Currie) Are there any plans to work on the canal at Rodington?

BJ – At the moment, no, as the land is within the Diocese of Lichfield and we do not have permission to work on it. It would require an informed plan of work and would need ongoing maintenance.

(Stephen Kearney) Could we have an update on the planning application for Wappenshall?

BJ – The application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent has been with Telford and Wrekin Council for the statutory 8 weeks consultation period, which ended on 6th June. However, the planning officer in charge has been off sick and only returned to work on Monday, 3rd June and then sent an email to our Architect late in the evening on 5th June, requesting further information. A reply was sent that same evening only to receive an "Out of Office" reply stating that the planning officer was on holiday until 17th June. The Conservation Officer has made some minor comments and is happy with our application. John Heather and Dirk Van Rensburg (Architect) are going to be taking the matter further with the Council in the coming week.

Is there any synergy with the Flax Mill?

BJ – Historic England, Friends of the Flax Mill and Shrewsbury Council have received £22,600,000 for the restoration of the buildings but this does not include the restoration of the canal. A later phase will include this but at the moment it is not funded.

What is happening with the restoration of the canal at Forton?

BJ – The Aqualate Estate has denied us access to the land. We have carried out maintenance work but are unable to get any diggers, dumpers or materials on site. The funding for the work is available, but this is now an ongoing issue between CRT, who own the land, and Aqualate Estate. CRT need access to maintain the skew bridge and the aqueduct and it may be necessary for CRT to take the Aqualate Estate to court.

(David Adams) The Norbury Festival was very successful but the key to whole project of restoring the canal will be crossing the A41 in Newport. How are we going to get under that road?

BJ – It is planned to have a fall and rise lock which will cost approximately £890,000, so if you know someone with plenty of money please point them in my direction!

As there were no more questions from the floor, BJ once again stressed the need for even more volunteers. There were opportunities for those perhaps not so keen on physical work in such areas as fundraising, taking minutes, manning the trust stand, liaising with councils, editing the website, editing S&N News or keeping our social media presence up to date.

5. Election of Trustees

BJ explained that the Trust has 12 elected Trustees, of whom a third retire by rotation at each AGM. On this occasion they were David Crow, Sherrel Fikeis, Brian Nelson and Steve Jones. All four were happy to stand for re-election.

John Stevens proposed that the four be elected en bloc and this was seconded by John Freeman. On a show of hands the four, David Crow, Sherrel Fikeis, Brian Nelson and Steve Jones, were elected unanimously.

6. Any Other Business

There were no other matters raised proper to the AGM and the meeting was closed.