

**MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE SHREWSBURY & NEWPORT CANALS TRUST
Held at Wappenshall Wharf, Wappenshall, Telford, TF6 6DE
on Saturday 3rd June 2017**

Members in attendance: John Acres; David Adams; Margaret Adams; Adrienne Barnwell; Steve Bean; Alex Bielecki; Stefan Bielecki; Geoff Brown; Ken Buttress; Neil Clarke; Cyril Cowdrill; Jeremy Cragg; David Crow; Yvonne Crow; Mary de Saulles; Elaine Evans; Sherrel Fikeis; Julie Fox; Simon Fox; Heather Freeman; John Freeman; Ian Gaston; Julian Glover; Jean Hammond; Mike Hammond; Alan Harding; Marion Harrington; Jo Havell; John Haynes; John Heather; Diane Hirst; Tony Hirst; Roger Holton; B Howard; Anne Jones; Bernie Jones; Cindy Jones; Mike Jones; Philip Jones; Steven Jones; Edward Leetham; Sallie Lines; Mike Mee; Shirley Mee; Margaret Mitchell; Stephen Mitchell; Sam Myers; Brian Nelson; Dee Nelson; Ruth Otter; Terry Otter; Jennie Perks; Tony Perks; David Peters; Professor Timothy Peters; Alistair Price; Sue Price; Cynthia Rickards; C M Sheard; Roger Stanley; Mavis Stanley; John Stevens; Susan Tappin; Derek Taylor; Kevin Taylor; Brian Townsend; Chas Warren; Keith Watts; John Webster; James Weir; Marion Weir; Vaughan Welch; Ted Williams.

Guests in attendance: Cllr Denis Allen (Mayor, Wellington); Mark Cuthbert-Brown (Lord Lieutenant's Office); Edmund Thewles (Lord Lieutenant's Office); Cllr Stephen Reynolds (Mayor, T&WC); Emma Rogers (CRT).

The meeting opened at 12.05p.m.

The Chairman, Bernie Jones, welcomed all members and guests.

1. Apologies.

Apologies had been received from Chris Chambers; Tony Forrester; Janet Johnstone; Margaret Jones; John Myers; Edmund and Christine Supple.

2. Minutes of the Fifteenth Annual General Meeting held on 11th June 2016

These had been circulated with the last edition of the newsletter and there was no request that they be read out. There were no questions or comments arising. John Stevens proposed they were accepted as a true record, this was seconded by Mike Mee and agreed nem con.

3. Report of the Trustees & Financial Statement for year ended 30th September 2016

These had been circulated with the last edition of the newsletter and copies made available to those attending the A.G.M. There were no comments or questions arising. Jo Havell proposed they were accepted, this was seconded by John Stevens and agreed nem con.

4. Chairman's Report

The Chairman illustrated his report with photographs of some highlight events of the past year:

- June 2016 – extensive work was carried out by Derek Hillaby & Co to identify pertinent information from the IGMT's Telford Collection for use in our grant application to the Wolfson Trust; a WRG Camp was held at Forton to further the re-watering project.
- July 2016 – our volunteers worked to re-mortar the blue-nosed bricks under Forton skew bridge; the Trust attended Upton Magna Fete, where Derek Taylor won the "Town Crier" competition; the Trust took delivery of a JCB generously loaned by Ian Braine; Shrewsbury Work Party volunteers used the TIRFOR winch to remove tree stumps.
- August 2016 – the Welfare Unit, worked on by Dave Cant and Simon Fox over many months, had its first outing to support the WRG Summer Camp where WRGies/SNCT volunteers laid Bentonite at Forton and re-surfaced the Norbury Service Road.

- September 2016 – SNCT volunteers with JUSFASHOW supported Heritage England’s Heritage weekend at Shrewsbury Flaxmill.
- October 2016 – the SNCT stand was at CRT’s Annual Showcase event at Chester Racecourse.
- 28 December 2016 – even between Christmas and the New Year our volunteers worked to take down a large tree at Meretown Lock.
- January 2017 – the Trust stand was at another WRG weekend work party in Shrewsbury selling cake and making hot drinks for both workers and members of the public.
- March 2017 – Our local IWA Branch AGM was at IGMT and Trust volunteer Ian Gaston showed those present the work done on the canal there.
- April 2017 – more scrap metal from Wappenshall was on its way to the dealers - this had raised over £1,000 in the past year; Uffington Work Party volunteers took down a large dead tree.
- May 2017 – the HLF Team visited Wappenshall for a presentation and inspection, both warehouses were dramatically lit (courtesy of Callum Jones).

On Wappenshall funding progress, he reported that with the grants received and members’ pledges we made the target of £500,000 match funding required by the HLF to obtain their grant of £1.3M the bid for which went in on time in February. The result will be announced on 7 June.

On other progress, he reported that Shropshire Council’s Shrewsbury Big Plan will feature the restoration of the canal, as does the Stafford Borough Council’s plan. There was an ongoing battle with Telford & Wrekin Council to get a canal line Safeguarding Clause inserted into their Local Plan. The Examination in Public’s Inspector agreed that there should be such a clause included.

The Chairman then emphasised the amazing amount of work that Trust volunteers do. This was especially apt, since he could now announce some exciting news: The Trust has been given the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service (the MBE for groups). He warmly thanked all those that had made this possible. There would be a special ceremony later in 2017, the date of which is now to be fixed, where the Lord Lieutenant will present a special crystal and certificate. It would be for all members to attend and will be at Wappenshall. This would be announced via the website and Facebook and will also feature in the next edition of S&N News. Great news indeed.

Finally, he said that if the HLF bid was successful, the project will proceed with all haste and is planned to be completed by early 2019. This will mean that work will be in full swing by May 2018, so we would need another venue for the AGM. But he considered this to be a splendid problem to have!

Brian Nelson thanked Bernie for his report and for being the driving force behind the Trust that had got us to the current position. Those present showed their appreciation with warm applause.

5. Election of Trustees

As the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Company Secretary were all standing for re-election, John Heather took the chair for this item.

He explained that the Trust has 12 elected Trustees, of whom a third retire by rotation at each AGM. On this occasion they were Steve Bean, Sherrel Fikeis, Bernie Jones and Brian Nelson. Alistair Price had also decided to stand down as a Trustee. One nomination had been received from Vaughan Welch. There were therefore five vacancies and five candidates. He proposed that the five be elected en bloc; this was agreed unanimously by a show of hands.

At 12.35 p.m. the Chairman closed the meeting.