

LUCS Management Committee

Minutes – 22 October 2012

Present. Bob Wigley (Chairman), Pat McIntyre (Secretary), Duncan McIntyre, Barbara Mackenzie, Allan Melling, Stephen Nixon, Douglas Robertson (Treasurer) Mike Smith, Catherine Smith, John Aitken, David Shirres

1. Chairman's introduction

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone along. It was good to see a full attendance.

There was an enjoyable evening at the Deacons Court Quiz Night on Friday 5th October. Duncan, Pat, Ken and Colin came up against formidable opposition and finished well down the list. Owing to its success the Quiz night will be repeated.

Regarding West Lothian Leader grants programme, improvements have been made to the claims forms. We have not submitted any so far. Mike Smith and Mike Vickers to attend training session to introduce the improved formats.

LCVG environmental meeting on 3rd October. Stewart Liddle attended. Scottish Canals are concentrating on town sections only. The out of town sections and wild seed plating not being included in current remit. Proposal to erect information signs at the east and west approach to town. Signs will be similar to brown road signs. A proposal from Scottish Canals is that entire towpath within town stretch to be kept to the standard of the domestic patches such as opposite Roy and Hetty Redwood's house.

Town Management Group met on 19th September. Signs banning large lorries from canal bridge at the top of Manse Road are in hand. LUCS invited to participate in the torchlight procession on Saturday 24th November. Colin Galloway suggested procession could be persuaded to continue on to the canal. This was deferred from the last meeting. As the procession ends at the cross with a carol service it was decided not to pursue this. LUCS has been asked to improve the towpath and mark edges more clearly by marking the borders. John Aitken enlarged on this saying Burgh Beautiful would like the border to have a proper edge. This is being proposed to Town Management Group to fund this. LUCS asked what improvements are in hand for signage around the town. Mike Smith said that the sign from the slip road has now disappeared. We should ask for this to be reinstated. John Aitken said that the path from the County Buildings to the canal should be reinstated. Burgh Beautiful are in favour of this and to make it wheelchair friendly. The signage from the town to the canal should be improved. This is in hand. Catherine Smith mentioned the bridge across the railway has no wheelchair access and John Aitken said that Network Rail had proposed to remove the bridge and replace it with a modern one. Objections had been made and it is now being retained.

Re the Marjory Crooks video meeting on 10th October. Colin Galloway had sent apologies. Stewart Liddle and Barbara Braithwaite had met her and a further meeting was to be set up on 16th November.

LCVG final work party day here on Thursday 25th October and a meeting on 26th. LLB Town Management Group next meeting October 24. Lowlands Canal customer forum is on 27th October. LUCS will be represented at all of these meetings.

- 2 No apologies received as full committee in attendance.
- 3 The minutes of the last meeting were adopted. Minutes proposed by Duncan McIntyre and seconded by Douglas Robertson.

4 **DAMS** – there were no DAMS

5 **Actions from the previous minutes. Reports and issues for the following month**

Bookings and Education (Report from DAJS)

David Shirres reported that John Aitken has started with new booking system and this seems to be proceeding well. This should be ready towards the end of the year. People should log in with email address and risks will be minimal. The benefits are that everyone will be able to get up to date information on this. The calendar on the board is not always up to date. As far as Leamington is concerned the lock keepers are referring people to us and bookings have shot up. One proposal is hiring Leamington to the Falkirk Wheel. Some things need to be resolved on this. This should be discussed when the new Committee is in place next year. Brochure prices cannot be changed for next year. We should try to publicise vouchers for Christmas. The Chairman said that something should be put on the web site about availability of vouchers. John Aitken said it was a good idea. Further discussion about members discount for hiring Leamington was postponed until after the new Committee were in place. David Shirras proposed that amalgamation of all reference policy documents and procedure forms should be in one place. A proposal was put forward as to how this would proceed. The chairman happy to take this forward. John Aitken said he had a folder containing a lot of documents and he will pass these on to the Chairman. It would be a good idea to have a central repository or index. The committee were asked that any documents they hold should be up to date. Catherine Smith said that her documents were current and would be emailed to the chairman. It was agreed that the chairman would take this matter forward.

Action RCW

Premises (DM)

Duncan McIntyre said that the black hand gang had taken on board the cleaning of the premises and a good job had been done. They had experimented with an industrial floor cleaner. John Aitken suggested a local supplier for this. Last week the MGC had been repainted. The black hand gang have repainted the radiators with proper radiator paint. The windows in the tea room are to be enforced with steel bars. Mike Smith will supply these.

The next job will be to fix leaks in the tearoom ceiling.

Action DM

Boats and Driver Training (MJS)

Mike Smith had a list of things to be done but no particular crises re boats. Alex Inglis work has now been started with scraping and painting. Problems are being reported in the appropriate manner. Time sheets are to be kept. Mike Smith has met with the funders on Wednesday re timetable. A meeting should be convened re new boat. Mike to send round email. Re driver training Mike needs to ask Andy Milner as to what would be a minimum extent of experience. Hours are being logged at the moment. David Shirres asked if we should train more new St Magdalene drivers. John Aitken asked if we could have a list of crew who have been trained and a training certificate be made available.

Action MS

Tea Room (CAS)

Catherine asked if the Committee would agree to the purchase of new table cloths and this was agreed. Soup and sandwiches are being organised for the work party on Thursday. Anne Mackie had offered to take over the rota for the tearoom. The cleaner (Diane) had recently told Catherine of the death of her mother and Catherine had sent flowers and a card on behalf of the society.

Marketing (JSA)

John Aitken said that it had been a good season on the whole. Both Linlithgow Palace and Annet House Museum had reported visitor numbers down, the weather playing a large part in this where tourists are concerned. Leamington hires have been very good with 92 bookings. Is there any likelihood that we could completely own Leamington. This was not advisable. It would be good to have another boat on the same lines. Next year's charges should be recommended by next year's committee. We are promoting the use of the canal and prices have already been printed and these should not be changed. Every second year it should be considered whether or not we are changing our prices. David Shirres asked if it was possible to monitor the new central heating costs. Duncan McIntyre said that the heating is now costing less with the new system. Catherine Smith is very much against increasing the prices of bookings for the tearoom. We are building up a reasonable clientele. Leaflets are now running low. These are being reprinted. John Aitken will bring some up to date leaflets. Catherine Smith asked if we are using an agency for distributing leaflets. John Aitken said that 6000 leaflets had been distributed. We are indebted to Colin Galloway for his help with this and all members should distribute leaflets wherever we can.

Website

Elsbeth has been doing this and is maintaining the up to date status.

Workshop (AM)

Allan Melling reported that some of the tools were now needing replaced. It was agreed that any dangerous tools should be replaced as soon as possible. He is still putting together the report on health and safety re power tools.

Treasurer's Report (DSR)

Douglas said that the Current account amounted to £36,130 and Savings Account remained unchanged at £58,705.59. He has put out a provisional financial total from his spreadsheet and hoped this was useful. This will be done before the season starts and at the end of July and August (3 times per year). He is now preparing figures for accounting and may ask the committee questions on this. John Aitken handed over £257 proceeds of the Celebrate Linlithgow cruise along with the invoice. Still proceeding with cheque book signatories.

6 Correspondence

John Aitken received a letter in July from Alex Salmond congratulating LUCS on receiving the Queens Award for Excellence.

7 Any other business

Annual General Meeting.

The key issues are committee for next year. We have a form whereby people are nominated and this needs to be done preferably by the next meeting. The Chairman said that he is not going to be on the committee next year. Who would be happy to be nominated for next year's committee. Douglas Robertson said that regarding nominations from members this could be met by a paragraph in LUCS Report. If there is a demand for change the membership should be given the opportunity to do this. John Aitken said that if a maximum term of three years is placed this could cause a problem. He did not think three year maximum term was a good thing, continuity is needed. David Shirres asked how long is one elected for on this committee. The Committee resigns every year and those willing to stand again may be re-elected. The articles of Association would need to be changed. The Chairman will prepare suitable wording for inclusion in the Annual Report and send this to the Committee for approval. Duncan McIntyre said that we should put in place some form of succession planning.

As far as the Committee is concerned the Chairman put together a list of people who are willing to stand for the next committee. Conveners do not have to be on the Management Committee and the Chairman said that he asks those concerned when he would like them to report to the committee.

A notice will be put in the Gazette giving three weeks notice before the AGM to give the general membership time to put forward any motions that they wish to be carried out.

The Chairman to ask Judy Grey if she would like to do a presentation at the AGM. David Shirras suggested that each of the committee show their own section in photographs. John Aitken suggested we do highlights of the year as there have been many notable occasions this year.

David Shirras reported that a member had taken Leamington out without prior notice and she was gone for over 24 hours. David (as the booking secretary) should be informed if any boat is taken out. Mike Smith asked how much notice was required when boats have to be taken out of commission.

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 20th November 2012.