

Minutes of Meeting on 3rd April 2009 at Slough Arm of Grand Union Canal

Those Present: Sam Thomas (British Waterways)
Tony Haines (Friends of Slough Canal)
Malcolm Hellings (Slough LAF)
Margery Hitchman (Slough LAF)
Jacqui Wheeler (Slough Borough Council)

1. The Basin –

- 1.1 ST will report back about the three parking spaces having “reserved parking” signs up. He said that these were not British Waterway’s parking spaces and the signs should not be there. TH said that the builder’s merchants had put them up for their customers. ST commented that British Waterways (BW) would not be able to enforce any signs that said “no parking” due to lack of resources.
- 1.2 It was agreed that promotion/signs were needed which clearly indicated to members of the public that the area was in fact meant for public parking in order to access the canal towpath.
Suggestions to be put forward/discussed.



- 1.3 Travis Perkins is investigating a move to alternative premises with the leases for the BW land due to expire in 2010. TH stated that BW have said they will only permit short term leases thereafter of a year or two in length to allow the development of the basin land to provide amongst other things, improved public access.
- 1.4 The jetty would be removed completely if the basin were to be developed.

Suggestion – a letter from the LAF to support the redevelopment of the basin along the lines explained by Tony Haines.

- 1.5 New information boards are currently being produced to be put in place soon at the Basin and at the Uxbridge Rd Bridge. Louise Fisleigh of BW will be consulted for approval of the final proof of the new board via ST.

2. **Litter/Dog Fouling**

2.1 ST stated that BW litter pick once every fortnight.

2.2 There have been problems with normal rubbish being forced into the tops of the dog bins causing them to appear full. The current dog bins are due to be replaced by open bins, as these are considered to hold more rubbish. They will be emptied fortnightly.

Suggestion – LAF needs to investigate further ways of dealing with the dog mess issue on the towpath particularly around the basin where the path is narrower. Contact Community Wardens to see if they can hotspot this area for PCN's.

2.3 Litter under the Wexham Road bridge was identified as a major issue. The litter is hard to reach especially for volunteers. ST confirmed that the land on the western embankment below the pedestrian bridge walkway is not owned by BW and therefore the litter here is not for them to deal with.



Suggestion – LAF recommends that SBC clear this area of rubbish and install netting to catch any further litter

3. **Surface Problems**

3.1 BW aim to reinstate towpath surface to 1.5m width which will allow wheelchair users to access the canal and also allow buggies and cyclists to pass more easily. BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) in partnership with BW are due to work on the Slough Arm to widen the towpath on a monthly basis for six months.



3.2 ST also stated that BW under take monthly length inspections identifying defects. These are recorded on a spreadsheet by BW and dealt with according to prioritisation policy. This would include, trip hazards caused by cable TV services.

4. **ASB**

4.1 ST is in contact with Sadie Broadbridge, Community Safety Warden of SBC about these issues who has powers of enforcement for anti-social behaviour on the towpath.

5. **Accessibility**

5.1 BW is committed to working within MSS Minimum Safety Standards. This would mean that the ramps giving access to the canal towpath could be looked at in terms of providing handrails. BW owns the land between Goodman Park and the canal by Uxbridge Rd Bridge.

Suggestion: LAF encourages BW to provide handrail on the ramp leading up to towpath from Goodman Park.

5.2 The access point from Wexham Road Bridge does not comply with DDA requirements; with iron bollards preventing reasonable access. ST agreed and will look at possible improvements to this entrance.

5.3 The access points to towpath from Bowyer Playing Fields were noted as inaccessible and hazardous to children. It was agreed that self closing gates should be maintained at these points. JW would arrange with SBC Parks section.

6. **New Access**

6.1 ST acknowledged that the north bank of the towpath could be opened up as a potential access route and for leisure mooring. If it is proposed as residential mooring though the towpath would have to be gated. ST said there is increasing demand for residential moorings.

Suggestion: LAF requests a copy of BW future plans for Slough Arm of Grand Union Canal.