

AGM 2019

The Chairman introduced John Liley – water freight carriage in France

John had been in the hotel boat business for 41 years. On a friend's freight barge in France a few weeks ago. The main commercial routes include the Seine, Rhine and Saonne. Freight on the major routes was in decline until Voies Navigables de France (VNF) started promoting it; now it is increasing. 650 tonne barges were shown of a type that could use the A&CN. The Canal Seine-Nord is the bottleneck on the route from the Seine to the Netherlands. The Upper Seine above Paris is being enlarged. Malted barley is carried in containers with a plastic lining. The electronic AIS system used to advise skippers of whereabouts of other craft. Clearance under bridges can be minimal. Radar also used but is not always very clear with the interference inland.

John said convincingly that more promotion is needed for UK water transport. Promotion is required for all new major freight events on our waterways. All opportunities for new water transport should be pushed. David Lowe agreed completely, illustrating when a few years ago a barge was on display at a Leeds event with good effect, with great public interest.

It was suggested that the VNF slide of a table showing barge/lorry/rail comparison by the Studies d'APS Seine-Nord Europe could be put in the CBOA News, which shows the direct costs and external costs (congestion, noise, accident and pollution) of the three transport methods.