

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

13:30Hrs Thursday 26th April 2018

At The Bond, 180-182 Fazeley Street, Digbeth, Birmingham B5 5SE

### MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 13.31

Meeting was opened by CBOA President Dr. David Quarmby, who warmly welcomed everybody present.

Guests – Julie Sharman Chief Operating Officer CRT, Stuart Mackenzie CRT, Mike Garratt MDS Transmodal, Chris Evans Project Director Freight CRT, Prof Rex Harris, Graham Wigley.

David then introduced CBOA Chairman David Lowe to conduct the meeting.

**1. Members present:** David Lowe, Andy Lomas, Mike Garratt, Stuart McKenzie, Nigel Cecil, John Jackson, Tom Foxon, Pat Taylor, Keith Astley, Mike Constable, Pat Davison, Patrick Moss, Sharon Taroni, Nick Hill, Bernard Hales, Peter Boyce, John Liley, Tony Phillips, Neil Tuvey, John Dodwell, Tim West, G. A. Whiteley, Richard Horne, David Hilling, David Quarmby.

**Apologies:** Brian Thompson, Peter Hugman, Noel Tomlinson, Les Reid, Mike Carter, Gerry Heward, Norman Mitchell, John Spencer, Graham Dixon, Paul Ayres, Tipu Parvez, David Morton, Sarah Pressland, Andrew Sanders, Michael Stimpson, John Habergham, John Branford, Richard Gray, Keith Mahoney, Antoon van Coillie, Graham Thompson, Colin Hetherington.

**2. Minutes** of the last AGM were approved and signed off by Chairman. No comment was received.

Proposed: John Jackson, seconded: Keith Astley. Agreed by all.

3. Matters Arising: None

4. Chairman's Report: (David Lowe)

The Chairman warmly welcomed everyone to the AGM of the Association. As well as our guest speakers we are very pleased to welcome the new Chief Operating Officer of the Canal & River Trust, Julie Sharman, who has kindly agreed to update us on the new structure for the Trust.

As usual we've been pretty busy this year on various fronts and my report will, I hope, demonstrate what the Association is doing to meet its Aims and Objectives (and more).

The principle role of the Association is to represent its members' interests in furthering the carriage of freight on the inland waterways and we do this in many ways – meetings and discussions with navigation authorities, user forums and waterway groups, planners, MCA and so forth. As an example we are contributing to the Port Connectivity Study through the UK Major Ports Group and we were represented at a ministerial reception in London only this week. But we do more than that – as far as our limited resources (financial and manpower) allow – we also promote water freight generally – via the website, attendance at events, large and small, feasibility studies etc, and by bringing parties together.

The Association was formed (in 1990) to promote carrying on the smaller waterways, and I pay tribute to the late David Blagrove, and also to Nick Hill, Andy Rothen and the others who worked hard to keep narrow boat carrying alive. In 2000, at the suggestion of British Waterways, the barge operators based in the four estuaries were invited to join us and we became CBOA.

Over the years we have, I believe, succeeded in keeping waterway freight on the agenda despite our limited resources. New general cargo traffics for narrow boats are elusive despite much work being done; for example we spent some time in discussions with a major logistics company interested in moving baled waste

from Colwick to Birmingham – the latter site being waterside. The director who was our contact was very keen and we almost got to the trial stage but when he moved on his successor had no interest and dropped the project. We also put a fair bit of time into a plan to move high quality aggregate from Garside's quarry at Leighton Buzzard to London (with backloads); there was support from the then BW but no wharf could be found in north London to handle the goods at the right price. We even looked into moving gas oil by tanker narrow boat from (say) Stanlow to the various boatyards that retail it – but that foundered because, although interested, the yards tended to 'shop around' and not purchase from the same supplier. All this does not stop us from continuing our quest for narrow boat traffic – and more recently we've had very encouraging discussions, initially with CRT (very supportive at the highest level), and the contractors tendering for construction work on the major Icknield Port development project – Richard Horne is leading on this and we think something may come of it – so watch this space! Richard is also leading on a project to move more lock gates around by water – initially from Bradley and this involves investigation into handling methods.

The most visible use of the leisure waterways in terms of freight is the carriage of coal, gas oil etc for wholesale and retail, which CBOA fully supports and this mostly involves narrow boats. In a 2013 study for CRT this, with various other cargoes, amounted to about 3600 tonnes per annum (more than you might have thought), with a public benefit of around £3300 in cash terms. But that ignored the colour, interest, vibrancy, spectacle and purpose this activity brings to the waterways, not to mention the value to the end user – the customer.

On the 'larger smaller waterways' (as it were) we've advised on a project to move aggregates from a proposed quarry near Horbury on the Calder & Hebble, and also to revive the carriage of sludge for Yorkshire Water between waste water treatment works, initially on the Leeds & Liverpool, in connection with an energy from waste project. We are also pushing hard at increasing the awareness of planners and other bodies regarding the potential for Last Mile deliveries – this could work well in London, Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and other conurbations.

As far as the larger waterways are concerned the comments about vibrancy and spectacle still apply – witness the huge popularity of 'Exol Pride' as it passes through Sprotbrough Lock (a tourist attraction and favourite spot for locals, relaxing, picnicking or taking a trip on the passenger boat). Of the major waterways the star performer has to be the Thames which is moving a colossal tonnage of waste and aggregates; aggregates are also a major traffic (albeit short haul) on the Severn, thanks to our member Graham Thompson – at 400,000 tonnes/annum probably the biggest single tonnage on the CRT system. In the North West, containers are being moved in increasing numbers between Liverpool, Ellesmere Port and Manchester. AILs have been moved successfully to the new wharf at Mode Wheel, run by our member Esprit, and barge traffics are being sought as well – though salt hasn't proved viable unfortunately (road haulage is very cheap). We hope the grain traffic between Liverpool and Stockport via Runcorn can be revived shortly; Nelstrops are keen but there is a problem getting the barges to Northwich for essential docking for survey – hopefully that can be sorted quickly (Julie can update us I hope).

In the north east it's business as usual for small ships to the various river wharves on the Humber, Trent and Ouse, plus tanker barges operated by member company Mainmast taking vegetable oils etc between the docks and the River Hull. A considerable success for the Association was brokering the recent revival of the traffic in base oil from Hull to Exol in Rotherham (also by Mainmast) and this seems to be running well at one or two trips/week or about 40,000 tonnes/annum, although the tanker is currently in dock having major refurbishment.

While in the north east, members will be aware that on its formation the Canal & River Trust formed a Freight Advisory Group to help determine whether freight should be encouraged and promoted on its waterways, or indeed whether there should be any freight at all. The group, chaired by David Quarmby (now our President), with CBOA representation, decided that yes there should be freight on the waterways

where it was viable for all concerned – but it made sense to concentrate the Trust’s limited resources initially on the north east waterways radiating from the Humber, (which were designated ‘priority freight routes’) as these seemed to offer scope for a reasonably ‘quick win’. A ‘Port of Leeds’ is being promoted to provide a destination for barge traffic from the Humber, carrying aggregates, timber, steel and ultimately containers (subject to some minor interventions at two locks and five bridges) and traffic to Rotherham and up the Ouse would also be promoted. CBOA welcomes and supports the proposals and the policy so long as it is clearly understood that freight users are still welcome on the other major waterways – and indeed on the leisure waterways too – and this was written into the report. (I’m sure David would be happy to answer any questions on this). As far as the NE is concerned I won’t steal Chris Evans’ thunder (he is the project manager and will be reporting after this AGM) but there is considerable interest and support (including potential funding) from players such as the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, port operators, and European agencies. We also hope that Fleet wharf at Woodlesford (Leeds) will be opening in the near future to handle aggregates once a major remediation of the site has been completed.

We are again grateful to the Canal & River Trust for partnering us this year, at the waste and recycling Exhibition at the NEC on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> September – and we hope some of you will be able to attend this event which is well publicised in the News and on our website. We decided to give Multi-Modal a miss this year – but I will be taking part in a panel session at that event – 10.30 on 2<sup>nd</sup> May – so maybe some of you will be able to get to that.

I should make it clear at this point that CBOA does support the Canal & River Trust in its efforts to operate and maintain its waterways, and to promote them for multi-purpose including freight. Of course we retain the right to be a ‘critical friend’ – and my Vice-Chairman doesn’t hesitate to have robust discussions with the Trust officers on matters of dredging, stoppages and vegetation etc. It’s generally known that the Trust is refining its brand in terms of generating greater public awareness of the waterways in order to secure the best possible deal from the government when the time comes. As part of this there will be strong promotion of ‘health and wellbeing’. There is no doubt that the Trust, in its promotion of the waterways for freight, will be able to demonstrate that as well as the more obvious waterway activities such as boating, walking, fishing, cycling or just enjoying the water, freight by water can also help support the government’s health agenda.

So I turn now to the question of green issues, and emissions in particular – this has become a topic of major interest over the last year or so. We have tended to ‘take the moral high ground’ (and rightly so) as inland waterway transport is demonstrably better in environmental terms than road, or even rail. However I urge caution! The first electric trucks are being developed; battery electric trains likewise (my friend Adrian Shooter is converting an underground train). Our barge and boat diesel engines tend to be old and dirty – we love them of course as historic artefacts – but we will need to up our game and embrace cleaner technology whether it be Euro 3b diesels or some kind of bi-mode arrangement with hydrogen or electric power – and that will be whether in narrow boats or 1000 tonne barges. I’m looking forward to Prof Harris’s presentation on the topic and also a contribution from our guest speaker Antoon Van Coillie who has a considerable interest in the subject. There was much discussion at the recent Rail Freight Group conference in London; even with cleaner diesels (and electric traction) rail still cause pollution with dust from brake blocks, and steel on wheel – not a problem for barges! You can read all about this in the latest issue of ‘Modern Railways’.

The Transport for the North draft strategy document was a bit of a disappointment for us with minimal reference to water freight. But it has given us an opportunity to refine and develop our submission – which you can read on the website. The Canal & River Trust has also responded robustly and we’ve compared notes to ensure we are (generally speaking) ‘singing from the same hymn sheet’. We’ve also responded to a serious threatened change in government policy which is to remove reference to protection of wharves and railway sidings and terminals as part of its minerals policy. We understand that protection may be contained within other policies but planners are very concerned that this will undermine their efforts to protect such

sites – one can only assume there has been considerable pressure from land owners and other vested interests. I'm grateful to Richard Horne and colleagues for diligently and efficiently responding to planning and consultation matters as they arise.

With the assistance of the Canal & River Trust we commissioned a study from Hull University into wave heights and conditions in the Humber to see whether a case could be made for retaining the Partially Smooth water Limit at the summer line all year – thus making it much easier to operate barges with minimal restriction below Hull, to Immingham in particular, during the winter months. The study showed a case could be made. The Maritime & Coastguard Agency have, not surprisingly, challenged the study findings and asked for further information, so the work continues.

On CBOA matters - you will all be aware of the new general data protections regulations which come into force later in May. Your Committee has decided that while most of our communications (e.g. membership information and the News) are already acceptable under the regulations we ought to ask you all to indicate your agreement to being contacted by us. If you've not done so we have forms available today – please do complete and return them to us. You will see that we are proposing some minor amendments to the Constitution later in the agenda. The Constitution was drawn up when CNOA was formed and is largely unchanged. The world has moved on and the Committee will be debating potential changes to bring it into line with what CBOA actually does and can realistically do, for your consideration next AGM.

**5. Treasurer's Report:** (John Dodwell for Peter Hugman) Income is stable at around a £6k yearly. The Multimodal cost is shared with CRT. We have received a contribution for the Humber tidal limit project. The CBOA News costs vary due the point of receiving the invoices. Donations cover various activities including the Humber tidal limit project. There was just under £5k in the bank at year end.

Proposed: John Dodwell, seconded: Tom Foxon. Agreed by all.

**6. Other Officer Reports:** Patrick Moss, SW CBOA Representative: ABP Swansea and Cardiff (a client of his) see it as desirable to trade to Bristol and to destinations up the Bristol Channel. But no wharves exist however in Worcester now. He hopes to progress a Port of Worcester with ABP and other parties. Unfortunately Patrick often gets asked by clients for advice as to how get out of using water freight!

Richard Horne gave a brief summary on planning activity recently. Activity has significantly changed from commenting on planning applications to commenting on draft proposals, feasibility studies and future plan strategy documents. This is likely to be ultimately more beneficial as it gets the right message about use of water transport into the top level documents, to hopefully be fed down into planning procedures and the subsequent consents from thereon.

**7. Proposed Amendments to the Constitution:** (David Quarmby) We need to bring the Constitution up to date to reflect our current organisation and operation. The items that need changing today are some of the 'mechanics' and are in addition to a further broader review of the Constitution which will take place over the next few months, to be a subject at another AGM.

Today we propose to:-

- adjust the maximum number of committee members from 13 to 12, with a minimum of 8.
- Para 8 – election of any co-opted member is to be at the next AGM.
- Para 9 – adjustment is required so that too many do not retire at once.
- Para 11 – inclusion of the Regional Representatives.
- Para 16 – inclusion of the President and vice Presidents.

Keith Astley asked what are defined as Trade members? This is not mentioned in Constitution. The Chairman responded by saying it was any member, corporate or individual, who is in business on the waterways. This point will be included in future Constitution changes.

For the above changes as listed; proposed: Keith Astley, seconded: Tim West. Agreed by all.

**8. Election of committee members:** To re-elect Tim West, Bernard Hales, Pete Hugman, John Dodwell.

To elect David Hilling (who was co-opted) Sharon Taroni, Keith Mahoney and Gerry Heward (Southern Rep). Keith Astley asked if absence of 3 or more meetings without an apology (per the Constitution) has caused release from the committee? The Chairman replied that absence as stated has not been without apologies received.

Proposed: Andrew Lomas, Seconded John Liley. Agreed with one abstention.

**9. Re-election of President:** David Quarmby agreed to continue for 1 more year. Nick Hill agreed to continue for 5 years. Tom Foxon wishes to stand down.

Proposed: John Jackson, seconded Keith Astley. Agreed by all. Chairman thanked Tom for his support over many years as Vice-President.

**10. Any Other Business:**

Keith Astley proposed that committee meeting minutes should be posted on the web site. The Chairman responded that we will be doing this in future and that this had been agreed in the committee meeting before the AGM.

Keith also said that the Secretary should report at the AGM with effectively what is a statement of compliance by CBOA with its objectives. The President said that broadly speaking it is reasonable to comment on the committee's action, but it should be the Chairman to do this. However the Constitution needs reviewing first. Keith disagreed with the President; a 'second pair of eyes' should do this. Patrick Moss said that there is a difference with doing something beneficial that we are not constitutionally obliged to do, and not doing something we are obliged to do; also, there is the usual manpower issue with unpaid work, meaning that not all desired activities can be achieved. Bernard Hales said that after all this was what the AGM is for – to comment on activity. The Chairman added that we carry out additional functions broadly in line with the aims in the Constitution but these are not mentioned; for example planning contact and comment which is not in the Constitution.

There being no other business the Annual General Meeting closed at 14.30.

The Chairman then introduced the first of our five speakers:-

**Antoon van Coillie, Blue Line Logistics, Netherlands** (via Skype connection)

Antoon offered apologies for his absence – he had to be at a meeting with the authorities this morning. He is proud to be part of CBOA.

There are considerable opportunities for water transport in the UK aided by the current road congestion and traffic density compounded by future economic growth.

The Thames, the Humber, the MSC all could support modal shift for pallets, big bags etc, but not so much for bulk transport. In order to reduce loading and unloading costs, we need to load and unload at deck level – lifting in and out of holds is slower and more expensive with the necessary lifting gear. Our vessels have no accommodation on board, due to the short nature of the trips – if overnight operation, then a relay crew will take over the next day. Our vessels are 50 x 6.6m. Propulsion and steering is with a swivelling propeller, and bow thrusters. With beer and bricks, up to 300 tonnes can be loaded in 3 hours. Plasterboard has been carried, also concrete blocks. Small Pallet trucks are used for loading/unloading. The truck can go on board directly at deck level. Propulsion is hybrid and diesel. How practical and how near is this? Hydrogen is available now for the internal combustion engine, from an Essex company. Now stored under

the deck at 50 bar, not 350 bar. More sources of hydrogen are available now. Diesel electric with battery is proposed for inner city inner city areas. The MSC is being examined for full electric operation.

The Thames, the Humber, the MSC. Thames – within M25 – we are looking at within the London area for wharves. Also the Grand Union with a smaller barge. Humber – 46m length. The freeboard requirement is different for different waterways – the barge design is being examined, with the design then to be adapted. The MSC – most similar to Euro waterways – connects major cities with a huge congestion problem on the roads around it, with several industrial areas along it. Manchester is no. 39 in congestion world ranking! We are identifying goods that can be moved and have had 2 firm enquires. Potential cargoes/customers could be: building materials, IKEA, B&Q etc. Agents/consultancies – ESPRIT for example. We are in discussion with naval architect designers. The next steps are business cases on the MSC which then are to be finalised; then designs, then by winter contracts with clients. Vessel build 2019, 2020 operational on MSC.

Firmly behind CBOA's objectives and operation. Happy to be contacted if required.

### **Mike Garratt, MDS Transmodal**

Has 40 years experience and with consultancy in transport and modal shift. Has worked in public sector operations, and is about to start work on MSC. Water freight is a tough industry to be in! Port throughputs are down by 14%, and other negative statistics were given which demonstrated the difficult situation. Coal is little used now, so a historical major cargo has vanished. Aggregates supply is increasing and up by 19%, construction materials by rail up by 32%.

Devolution – there is increasing pressure for this. TfN and others have been given Statutory Powers as have the new Combined Authorities. Therefore a changing environment has been produced. TfN found resistance initially towards making changes, but now they are succeeding. DfT are involved with evaluation of projects; DfT monitor TfN, however there is no mechanism for this with freight. Freight is seen as getting in the way of moving people!

There is a case for developing a distribution centre on MSC. Waterways cannot be seen just on their own; they need to be connected to estuarial ports. Ports need to demonstrate connectivity to inland areas. A port connectivity report says that funding is required for the inland links.

### **Chris Evans, Consultant to CRT on Implementing the Freight Strategy**

CRT has produced several strategy documents for freight in recent times. One of the Priority Freight routes the Aire and Calder, will be reinvigorated with a target of 200k tonnes pa by 2020. When uprated to Euro II, the Euro II sized barge will accommodate 2 containers side by side in the hold.

Part of the Freight Strategy in the north east – 2 wharves provided at Stourton at the Port of Leeds; 200k tonnes construction traffic into city Leeds centre. Aggregates, timber, steel. Future expansion is then planned into other services such as consumer goods, eco deliveries, refuse derived fuel (RDF), containers.

Power stations are now more likely to take fuel from the ports by rail. The Humber region is the second busiest inland waterways region after the Thames. With Crossrail in London, 1.8million tonnes out of 5.3 million tonnes was concrete.

The A&C needs bridges lifting and 2 locks need widening. Potentially smaller craft could be used for local deliveries. Cleaner barge engines are required. Bigger vessels are required which need investment.

Recycled waste from city centres is also possible. Also Biomass/RDF, import/export steel, grain, timber, containers.

We should be helping to 'green' the cities, by removing bulk movements from roads. Greener construction traffic is required. It is a low cost option for Government to take advantage of water transport. Additional employment would be provided.

Which barges are available? Branford and Humber barges have said they are interested. Gerald Whiteley said there were enough barges available for work to start with, over several companies. Fleet Lane wharf is being rejuvenated.

Graham Wigley asked about the Upper Trent. Chairman replied Nottingham is still a possibility for cargo origin or destination but the smaller size of the waterway (400 tonnes) is a challenge.

### **Julie Sharman, CRT Chief Operating Officer**

Management changes within CRT were announced recently. There is a significant change in CRT Strategy and once again a logo change. CRT is now seen to be able to offer more to the public. Improvement of health of the nation is of keen interest to the Government, which CRT can partly provide. The change will be to become a 'Waterway and Wellbeing Charity'. Waterways offer therapy. CRT needs to appeal to a new/wider audience, hence the need to change the identity and brand, and how to appeal more to people. Julie is accountable for delivery of the new strategy. CRT has to provide this service for securing future Government funding. Regional Directors are under Julie.

15 year subsidy plan; Tim West said that we need to keep in mind the freight need for funding. Julie confirmed that this was the case. Stuart Mackenzie added that he has many more allies with the freight cause now, compared to several years ago. The Chairman commented that shifting lorries from roads to the waterways, thus reducing emissions and congestion, would contribute to the Government's aims and tie in with CRT objectives under its new strategy.

### **Prof Rex Harris.**

Hydrogen as a form of fuel for motive power is now a necessity to aid the worldwide reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> produced. The project started in 2006. Boats are excellent as vehicles for development and use of the technology due to their weight and volume. In respect of how we are treating the planet humans are such destructive creatures! Manufactured CO<sub>2</sub> has been around for 200 years. Also the excellent magnetic properties of the element boron have been discovered, which in magnetic terms makes a more efficient electric generator or motor, so more power is obtained or further distance achieved for the same power used.

Boats are inherently efficient when the energy needed to move them is considered. Weight and volume of the hydrogen store are small fractions of the total volume of the vessel. Nickel-metal-hydride (NiMH) rechargeable batteries now used, not lead acid. NiMH can be deeply discharged without problems. Currently the fuel cell which converts hydrogen to electricity is 1kW, but will be 5kW in future. A future induction motor will provide 95% efficiency. A boron permanent magnet motor (magnets instead of coils in either the rotor or the stator) is more powerful and more efficient.

Diesel engine efficiency is around 35%, hydrogen overall 60%.

Hydrogen can be manufactured and stored in metal hydride from wind or sea generation plants when the demand is low.

The Chairman thanked all our speakers for their interesting and excellent presentations.

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President: Dr David Quarmby CBE Vice-President: Nicholas Hill