

Notes from Hi Ya Meeting 5th March 2025

The meeting was attended by 14 of our volunteers.

Festivals

With Easter being so close to St Richard's this year there are still some spaces to fill on the manning list. Please reply to Steve's email with your availability if you have not already done so. We will be using two gazebos at the Easter event. Help will be needed to load the boat on the Easter Friday and Thursday 2nd May for St Richard's, both meeting at the yard at 2.30pm. St Richard's might potentially be a single shift, running from 12.00pm to 4.00pm.

For Easter, the possibility of embarking at Waitrose Bridge was discussed, using a purpose-built step to mitigate the height difference. There were various advantages and disadvantages, but a quick show of hands indicated an overall preference for Bridge 17. As there have been occasions where passengers had difficulties locating the boarding point at Bridge 17, it was suggested that a 'boarding' sign in large lettering be set up by the bridge, or use of a spare gazebo as a reference point. It was also agreed that a new megaphone would be useful.

There have been repeated requests for our involvement in the Rick Mayall week running from 31st May to 7th June, which has the potential of being a big event for the town. There was discussion of how our activities might connect with the festival, whether the boat would be mobile or static, issues around performing artists, ticketing, pricing, etc.

Boat Issues

- Throttle.
Ortomarine have the replacement throttle which is yet to be fitted despite several reminders. In the meantime the old throttle is performing well. The cable that was replaced appears to have been to the correct specification so the reason for the failure is unclear, possibly a loose connection.
- Life Jackets.
7 were sent for testing, only 3 were returned. A further 3 have been purchased so 6 adult jackets are now available for use. We should consider purchasing more children's jackets.
- Boiler.
The gas-fired boiler is due for a service and a change of the heating system's antifreeze.
- Cleaning.
Arrangements are in hand to clean the boat inside and out.

Metal Storage Container

We have quotes and specifications for purchasing a new metal container once we have clarification from the local authorities about placement on the concrete hardstanding. Materials stored in the existing containers are to be sorted and a skip will be provided to dispose of unwanted items.

Training

Two training days have been booked and it is hoped to have five new trainees qualified by the end of April. Online training materials should be in place by the end of March including videos. There will be

a skippers' check list, also with videos. Some filming will take place on Wednesday 19th and Saturday 22nd March travelling to the marina and extra crew will be needed to help with the locks. Practice sessions for the weed hatch procedure will be arranged. There is unlikely to be an increase in skippers this year.

First Aid training, valid for three years, is due for renewal starting in June. The course date will be decided at the next Steering Committee meeting, with possibly a further date to follow.

Bookings

The Seniors Club have booked 2 x 2 hour trips on the same day with an hour's break in between. New bookings are coming in steadily.

The trustees have authorised two free trips, these will probably be offered to Challengers and Carers groups; to be finalised.

Crewing

Some of the newer volunteers have supplied availability dates. No appeals for crew have been sent so far.

AOB

- Uniforms are being made and will be ready for the Easter festival.
- Supplies of tea/biscuits etc. are nearing their use-by date. Replacements are to be organised. Close Down sheet to show Emma as the contact.
- Donations are requested for the Easter tombola and can be brought to the next HiYa meeting.
- Reference was made to a recent article in the Droitwich Advertiser stating that the towpath from Vines Park to Salwarpe Is to be resurfaced, although no dates were given. It is hoped that the reeds will need to be cut back for the work to proceed.
- Extra help will be needed on special trips. Jobs include serving Cream Teas, Fish & Chip ordering and couriers. We now offer a three hour Fish & Chip private trip to the marina. One of the public trips is already fully booked.
- The cratch cover is in need of repair or replacement; this will be an agenda item at the next Steering Committee meeting.
- Crew list categories are under review. New supporters will be invited to become members. A full updated list will be made available.
- Dropbox renewal is imminent. There is a vacancy for a paid-for full access user who can provide bookings/crewing cover when Jim and Lynda are away.