

Notes from Hi Ya Meeting 7th August 2024

The meeting was attended by 14 of our volunteers.

David and Sarah Beauchamp have relinquished their roles in relation to the Trustee and Steering Committee in order to prioritise their Avoncroft activities. They will remain with the Pamela May group and participate in crewing etc. but will no longer take an active part in the running of the group. We gratefully recognise their hard work and dedication over many years, particularly in fundraising for PM2, and wish them well in their new endeavours.

Throttle

We are still waiting for the new throttle to be made available.

Control Panel

Some strange solar panel readings have been noted on the Control Panel, although it seems to be ok at the moment. Reset the Panel to correct the readings.

Water Pump

The water pump has been producing a ticking sound which has been getting more frequent. The cause is thought to be a failure of the accumulator membrane, which will have to be replaced before it adversely affects the pump.

Red Ropes

New eyelets have been fitted to allow the red safety ropes to be located in a higher position. Use of the ropes is still at skippers' discretion.

Cool Box

The old cool box is still available for use on trips, together with ice packs, both stored in the portacabin.

Cake Forks

Some of the cake forks have gone missing from the boat. It is assumed they were used for fish & chips in the absence of plastic cutlery but got mixed in with the rubbish and discarded. They will be resupplied for the cream teas but please make every effort to prevent these items being inadvertently thrown away.

Mooring Ropes

The frayed mooring ropes are due for replacement. This is not critical but should ideally be done before the end of the season.

Membership

Approx. three quarters of our long-standing patrons have not acted upon the invitation to become members. 37 membership forms have been completed (with payment) out of 60 under the old patron scheme.

Training

Of our new volunteers, 12 are in active training; 2 are expected to qualify in September and another 4 in October, with some potential for becoming skippers. Possibility of training trips in September.

Bookings

The end of August will get busier. There have been some enquiries for trips at short notice which had to be turned down. In practice at least two weeks' notice is needed to allow the trip to be organised and crewed. The website will be updated to show this.

Crewing

We have a new skipper! Congratulations to Joe Smith. Crewing is ok through to September apart from two bookings. Conversely, it is sometimes difficult to find enough slots for the new volunteers.

Environment

There have been discussions with Paul Wilkinson (CRT Senior Ecologist) over removing more reeds from the canal and replacing with designated reed beds. Reeds urgently need severe cutting back if the canal is to remain navigable. Description of 'stunning views' on the website should be revised.

There is a plan to place baffles in the Body Brook to reduce silting of the Junction canal.

Saltfest

On this occasion, only experienced volunteers will be crewing the boat. However, there will be opportunities for trainees to act as host. Banksmen are to concentrate on managing people queuing on the bank and helping with the bridge while boat crew handle the mooring. More help might be needed to man the stall this time. A rota is being produced and will be distributed shortly. Helpers are also needed on the Thursday to load the boat, and possibly erect gazebos. Helpers are to be organised for the Duck Race.

AOB

- Tickets used for the short trips are looking well-used and need replacing. David Hatfield has kindly offered to provide 100 adult and 100 children's tickets to a professional standard.
- Proposal for a 'money card' for routine maintenance expenses. It was felt that the current system worked well, where Andy makes the claim on behalf of the maintenance team. Reimbursement happens very quickly.

- Maintenance crew will normally do pumpouts. The new electric pump has been tested and works well. Pipework has been upgraded. The facility at the Marina can still be used if required.
- Duck Race tickets. Completed counterfoil stubs must be returned to Margaret Rowley by 30th August, preferably with payment.
- CCBM standards. Considerable effort has gone into applying CCBM best practice and consistent boat handling standards during the training programme. There have been reports from some of our newer volunteers that these standards are not being applied consistently across the group. We were reminded to maintain consistent standards and to this end, Paul Mobey will construct some 'aide memoir' notes and continue to drip-feed tips and run refresher training.
- Lynda Gillespie appealed for help to try to understand and resolve some problems with Dropbox. This should be from someone without administrator access.
- It was confirmed that new volunteers are required to become members.
- Looking forward to the Christmas period, it was expected that Carol trips would be run as in previous years, but Santa trips were in doubt as they represented a lot of work without much return, although good PR for the Pamela May. The question would be discussed at the next Steering Committee meeting.