

River Stour Trust Council Meeting (virtual via Zoom) Monday 17th October 2022.

The meeting was recorded.

7.30 pm

Minutes

Present: Paul Brewerton, Emrhys Barrell, Catherine Burrows, Steve Durham, Jim Lunn, Mike Finch, Lisa King.

Also attending Maggie Gardner and Richard Blay, who have applied to become Trustees.

1. **Apologies for absence**, Jane Rogers. James Parkinson who had announced he is standing down as a Trustee. Thanks were recorded for his contributions to the Trust over many years, including his practical expertise.
2. **Minutes of last meeting**. Approved.
3. **Matters arising** Nothing that was not covered later.

4. Reports

Financial. The latest figures show that we are back to making a small profit. The Covid Bounce Back Loan is costing us £50/month in repayments, but it was agreed that it was useful to have it in reserve for any special needs.

AGM

Manager's Report. The fishing platforms at **Cattawade** were discussed. There is some difference of opinion who is responsible for these – RST or EA, but it is probably RST as ownership was passed to us in 2015, as we own the picnic site. They are there for disabled anglers, but have never been used and are fenced off as they are not safe. It was agreed we should investigate the cost of repairing or removing them. It was stressed that the aim of RST was restoring the Stour for all to use, not just boaters, and this is an important element when we apply for grants these days. It was also pointed out that in the Mobiboat we now have a craft suitable for wheelchair access, which in the future could operate from Cattawade. It was also pointed out that RST now own or manage most of the public access points to the river. Also we have a £950 grant from the AONB to repair or replace the picnic tables at Cattawade, which we must spend by March 2023. One of these must be accessible by wheelchairs. We have also been offered two child's picnic tables free of charge which we could use at the VEC or Cattawade.

Swan Lock, Wormingford. There is a group being set up locally to investigate the ownership of this stretch which used to be part of the navigation, and included Swan

Lock and Wormingford Lock, but is now dry. It was agreed that RST should join this group. PB said he would approach the group offering our support.

Suffolk Walking Festival. It was agreed we should offer our support.

Insurance. We have been asked by our Insurers to update our agreed values for our property and boats. There was discussion as to whether the boats should be insured for new price or replacement secondhand, with it being assumed the latter was the case you were allowed with boats.

SBOC Still looking for a secure place to store our boats for the winter. As a fall-back we could store them at the Granary or VEC. John Constable work still in progress, with plans to make a winter cover on a frame to reduce condensation. Probably will not launch till Spring if advice from Brian Kennel agrees. A new crew training programme is underway for this winter. Santa Cruises back again this year.

DVB Water levels still low this summer, a combination of factors including the lack of rain, but complicated by the owners of the Flatford sluices not understanding how to manage them. We should offer to assist them. Blanket weed has died down naturally, though the flushing operation did not help much. EB said that at the Thames Electric Launch Company they were trialling a new range of propellers that were thicker and stronger, so less likely to bend if they hit something. It was suggested that we should purchase new stronger props for each boat, with the existing ones being kept as spares. Cost around £240 per boat. This was agreed.

Dedham Lock The lease has been signed by PB and EB on behalf of RST. This has been returned to solicitors for DMMCL to sign.

5 **Health & Safety** . The report has been circulated and read. No major incidents.

6. **Environmental.** The report has been circulated. No major incidents. The meeting with Sudbury Town Council to discuss water quality in the river has been postponed for one week. RST will be attending this.

7. **Lock Lintel** is being progressed by Catherine and Michelle.

8 **AOB.** AGM invitations went out. The Zoom meeting for this has been set up for 2nd November.

Next Meeting. Monday 28th November, 7.30.