**ETHEL TRUST COMMUNITY BARGE**

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Riva Project on Thursday 8th September 2016.**

**Present –** John Guymer, Malcolm Bratley, David Tuck, Keith Payling, Ernest Mackenzie, Dave Poulsom, John Batley, Phil Morgan, Pete Stevenson, Peter Furness, Pete Riggall, Rodger Baxby, Rob Wardley, Roger Barton, Keith Levy (Chair).

1. **Apologies**: Tim Miskell, Chris Dinsdale, Frank Richardson, Phil Harrison, Dave Peck.

Keith welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Trustees each introduced themselves and explained their role within the Trust.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting 22.10.15**: The minutes were agreed as a true record. It was noted that Pete Stevenson was present at the meeting.
2. **Matters Arising**

Twitter/Facebook – thanks were expressed to Rodger for his work on Twitter and to Tim for Facebook. Rodger reported that there had been thousands of ‘hits’ on the Twitter account, and encouraged volunteers to contribute to the account.

**4. Annual Report and Accounts**

Keith circulated the Annual Report and explained that the past year had been very successful for the Trust. The evaluations and comments from users following the trips were always positive and reflected well on the work of the Trust.

The current refurbishment of the boat had cost more than originally planned, but would result in an excellent outcome. The Trustees thanked all those who had worked to ensure the project was on track and on time.

Recently, training had been an issue, but Pete and Tim had now qualified as trainers with the National Community Boat Association (NCBA). As a result, a full training programme for crew and skippers was now being implemented.

The Trustees expressed their thanks to all volunteers, supporters and friends for their part in making the previous year such a success for the Trust.

Keith explained that circumstances beyond the control of the Trustees meant that the accounts were not ready to be presented at the meeting. As an interim measure an up to date summary of income and expenditure was circulated.

**5. Current Finances**

Keith spoke to the circulated summary which indicated that total income for the year to date was £21,165.77 and expenditure of £25,345.53,

although the Trust had carried over £39.273.79  from 2015-2016.

It was noted that the salaries budget had been adjusted due to the appointment of the new Training Manager. The income from paid day trips was considerably lower than expected in the budget, although this was to some extent affected by the demand for ‘Unlocking’ trips, and therefore the overall number of days available to ‘sell’. Overall, the Trust’s finances were in a very good position.

In response to questions and discussion it was agreed that the summary would be improved by the addition of an ‘outturn’ column, indicating the projected position as of 31.03.2017. It was reported that the very generous offer of interest free loans to the Trust from volunteers had not needed to be taken up.

Dave P reported that the Trust was about to change its banking arrangements and move to the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), a bank specifically set up to provide services to charities. This free service will provide electronic banking, debit cards, and a slightly higher interest savings account.

**6. Administration Manager’s Report**

John Guymer reported that there had been 78 day and 9 residential ‘Unlocking’ trips during the year. In addition there had been 39 ‘paid’ day trips. Eight bookings had had to be refused, mainly because the boat had not been available due to maintenance and the repainting project. There had been around 8 cancellations by users, but none by the Trust.

Currently there are 7 skippers and 18 crew, with 6 to 9 potential new volunteers who had expressed an interest.

John explained that there would be changes and updates to the website, which would include adding additional information for users. Bookings for next year had not yet been taken, although there had already been some enquiries. It was expected that Tim would soon be confirming the ‘Unlocking’ trips scheduled for the beginning of the season. A further session of Safeguarding training would be arranged in the next few weeks.

In response to questions, it was agreed that it would be very useful to have a ‘live’ demonstration of the Trust’s website, Twitter and Facebook accounts at the next All Aboard meeting.

John was thanked for his report.

**7. Training Manager’s Report**

Pete Riggall reported that during the year there had been Safeguarding and First Aid training. It was noted that all volunteers needed to have undergone Safeguarding training, and in fact it was a condition of receiving grants from some funders, e.g. Children in Need. One of the requirements of the Trust in achieving accreditation to be a training centre was that all skippers needed to hold a current a First Aid Certificate.

The NCBA Trainer’s training had been successfully undertaken by Pete and Tim in May, and since then the documentation had been prepared and collated which was a requirement in maintaining the Trust’s status as an NCBA accredited training centre.

Unfortunately the first round of crew training had to be cancelled due to technical problems with the boat. Skipper training was scheduled for November.

The minimum number of crew on any one trip was discussed and the meeting was reminded that the Trust’s Health and Safety Policy includes the statement that ‘a minimum of one, and preferably two, qualified crew members are assigned to every trip.’

It was noted that it was intended, as in the past, to offer extra ‘boat handling’ sessions to support volunteers in improving their skills and knowledge.

Pete was thanked for his report, and his extensive work in preparing the necessary documentation for the NCBA was acknowledged.

**8. Boat Manager’s Report**

Malc Bratley reported that the boat was currently at Thorne Boat Services where work was being undertaken prior to being moved to Castleford for painting. The lifts had been removed, the lift wells cleaned, checked and painted and the lifts replaced. The port toilet floor had been removed to trace an odour and had now been remedied. A faulty engine water pump had been replaced as well as the drive coupling to the prop. Work still to be undertaken included the engine service, a new valve on the calorifier, and the fitting of a new galley rooflight, gauges for fuel, water, waste tank and engine running time, and brackets to support the boat hook and pole.

Currently, the view was that all work would be completed ready for the boat to go to Castleford by September 26th. A preliminary meeting with the boatyard had been arranged for September 16th, attended by Malc, Dave P and John G, where the work specification would be confirmed and monitoring visits scheduled. Arrangements had also been made to have the hull inspected while the boat was in dry dock. Discussions were taking place with Stanilands Marina to rent a container to store the contents of the boat during the repaint project.

**9. Unlocking Confidence Project Co-ordinator’s Report**

In Tim Miskell’s absence, John G gave a summary of Tim’s report which had already been circulated to all volunteers.

Thanks were expressed to Tim for his continued work and enthusiasm, particularly in relation to the Unlocking Project. Comments were made about the change in the youngsters who came on the project, which could be seen within a few hours of them coming aboard. It was noted that the Sobriety Project, based in Goole, had made Ethel’s crew and passengers very welcome on recent residential trips, and it was agreed that the Trustees would write to the Project to express our thanks.

A suggestion was made relating to working with the Prison Service, and this was left to be considered sometime in the future.

**10. Trustees’ Reflections and Ideas for the Future**

Keith explained that the Trustees were keen to increase the numbers of crew and skippers with a view to expanding the Trust’s activities in the future. Dave P suggested that this expansion might include acquiring a second boat to cope with the demand for trips. David T outlined plans to create a promotions/recruiting ‘kit’ comprising a professional ‘gazebo’ with roll up and feather banners, displays etc. which could be used at public events to attract new volunteers and funders. Once the boat was painted photos would be available to produce these materials.

It was reported that a very positive meeting had been held with Doncaster MBC to discuss the possibility of the Trust tendering to provide day trips for the elderly. More information would be available later in the year.

Keith invited the meeting to comment on the draft vision statement that had been circulated.  It was agreed that there was a need to emphasise the enrichment and **therapeutic**benefits of our activities alongside the role of education and skills development.

**11. Any Other Business**

Relaunch and Xmas activities – assuming the boat was completed on schedule, it was intended to have a relaunch event at Victoria Quays in early December, and run some pre Xmas trips for special schools. Tim had made positive preliminary enquiries with the manager of the Quays. Interest had been expressed by Radio Sheffield. Reindeer and Father Christmas were ideas that had been suggested. It was expected that there would be more detail given at the Fund Raising Group meeting in October. It was agreed that the Trust needed to be sensitive to the commercial interests of others based at the Quays, and to discuss any plans in order to gain support for the activities.

Operations Group - The Trustees thanked the Operations Group for their excellent work in managing the day to day operation of the boat, and their work in managing the repaint project.

Waitrose - David T informed the meeting that Waitrose had chosen the Trust to be one of three good causes to receive a share of £1000 during September. Tokens were available at the tills, and shoppers were invited to choose the good cause they wished to see supported and place a token in the box near the exit. The more tokens that Ethel receives, the larger the share of the £1000.

Raffle Tickets – Tim had provided books of raffle tickets for volunteers to sell, 80% of the ticket sales being given to the Trust. Volunteers were asked to take some and hand the counterfoils and money back to Tim by the beginning of December.

Virgin Money – Roger Barton informed the meeting that the newly opened Virgin Money shop in Fargate were supporting charities, and it was agreed to follow up this lead.

Just Giving – It was agreed that the Trust would look at setting up a Just Giving account in addition to the local giving site already in use.

In response to questions, the Trustees acknowledged that the Trust always carried a risk that key individuals might no longer be able to support the organisation, for whatever reason. However, Trustees are confident that the there is sufficient knowledge within the Trust to enable activities to continue, while accepting that this would be very challenging.

Sale of Items on Ethel – It was agreed that this would be considered by the Fund Raising Group at their next meeting. Thanks were expressed to Peter Furness for his offer to organise this.

Social Event – It was suggested that there might be a social event/meal for all volunteers, possibly at Xmas. It was noted that one of the difficulties in the past was that the majority of the volunteers had to travel to Thorne for the event. It was agreed to consider the suggestion with a venue nearer to where most volunteers lived.