

RCQ Meeting 22nd January

- Peter Nickol
- Keith Lewis
- John Monks
- Jane Evans
- Simon Goddard
- Dominic Houston

Apologies – Jean Hall

River & Canal User Group November 2017

David Bartram (Director of Place) with Steven Brimble at River & Canal User Group meeting. New posts and incumbents. They explained that ECC is short of cash, but posts not currently being lost. Continued lack of understanding about disjoint between canal income and expenses, as well as charges not being collected from e.g. pontoons. 1979 canal strategy unearthed; and DB & SB will focus on canal rather than estuary.

Other participants stated that if canal abandoned there would be significant consequences. EG speeding on canal side etc. Points well made. Part of the issue is new staff at ECC, all starting afresh rather than learning from earlier work. Strategy documents made available to DB & SB.

Investment being sought from government/lottery rather than through developers. Some indication that newer vessels not attracted to moor in the canal basin, with older vessels looking shabbier. One vessel sunk as ECC weight limit apparently exceeded – poor approach from ECC. ECC has some liability for users' impacts (such as pollution).

Overall impression is that DB won't necessarily sort issues out as politically not top priority.

ECC Canal Team:

- David Bartram Director of Place
- Cllr is Steven Brimble
- Steve Carnell is operations
- Colin Acton (Waterways Team Manager) + Andy + Kevin + Dale + Sarah Collinge (apprentice)
- Peter Stewart is engineer

Also - transfer of valley parks hasn't happened yet as result of staff changes. Dog walkers not respecting no dogs by private fishing ponds by Double Locks.

FESC

Three priorities:

1 Development Plan

Plan is to revitalise development plan(s). Recast document so that it can be pushed forward again. Steven Brimble anticipated to be part of this. May require redrafting (like Grand Western Canal Strategic Plan). Sarah Wards management plan for navigation needs to be considered as part of this (with amendments). There is a need to reconcile the various plans. Some concern that documents disappearing from ECC website – resolved to put on Civic Society website/FESC website in

replacement. JE has structure for pages and hard copy e.g. Canal Act, links to tide times, ECC leaflets etc.. JE will send whatever available to JM.

2 Slipway

With IWA push for slipway. Waterway Recovery Group would be behind it. To be pursued in 2018.

3 Carnival Autumn 2018

Autumn Carnival to become an annual event. Procession to be current users, and waterborne. From Double Lock to Basin, with activities at each end. Was originally to be in partnership with the Bike Shed but this may be subject to Bike Shed plans. But JE through User Group may be able to recruit waterborne carnival? May need some logistical planning to get waterborne participants back to start point.

PN – may be difficult to get off the ground for 2018 – now 2019 may be more feasible. JE – note that Paul Wilson at rowing club knows about event management plans (including traffic, first aid, insurance etc.). Note that rowers have regatta season, but September should be ok.

KL – Exeter Active?

JM – FESC has funding application for project manager for Carnival, but this is vulnerable to Bike Shed plans.

JM and JE to discuss further. Needs to have incentive for User Group to participate and this isn't always easy as many clubs have capacity issues with coaches' time and are not seeking new members. JE suggested different focus – e.g. funds for a weed cutter.

FESC other - Increase Membership

Issue that once ECQT funds spent then FESC subscription. Would like slot at Civic Society open morning. KL noted that time tight at Civic Society open mornings. PN to speak at slot when available.

JE – Possibility that User Group and Canoe Club to join as corporate members. JE to investigate.

JE – rubbish between Salmon Pool Lane and motorway bridge to be cleared by boat. So – suggest FESC working party to turn up at same time as canoe club and use as recruitment event as well as completing the task.

Planning

- OTW tent still there. Management to be contacted that tent has overstayed temporary if overstayed again next winter without planning approval.
- Parking by Maclaines - controls proposed, to be introduced in April 2018.
- Rockfish – slow progress.
- 8 Colleton Hill. SG has written to planners about poor uPVC windows. But issue unlikely to go any further.
- Headweir House information board –to require inputs. Mike Walker likely to know history, and PN to contact him or Dave Adcock.

KL meeting with GESP highways officer (William Pratt) to ask about study regarding 2nd railway bridge to alleviate traffic. Combined with new feeder lane opposite Riverside to increase junction capacity.

Flood Prevention

Paul Downs BMMJV can provide update.

ECS Walk 7 April 2018 am.

PN will lead walk as part of ECS programme. Custom House to basin, Trews Weir bridge and back to Customs House. Will focus on current issues rather than history and will promote FESC. JE to organise access to Maclaines canoe club and boat yard. Also JE and GP to talk about boat activity on canal. PN/JE. Also Haven Banks climbing tower and mock cave. PN to contact Ben Hedden. Likely capacity c.16.

Other Events

- 'Flow' tree planting 21/1/18. Planted fruit trees in linear orchard Exwick to Double Locks. More planting still to come. Included procession and entertainment.
- Exeter Green Spaces Network – workshop 27/1/18 on social media and websites for community groups. FESC has signed up. Sharing of tools and expertise.

St James Weir

Looking to make progress on situation. May form a trust to take ownership of the weir, and then make Lottery funding bid for repair. KL having various suggestions and to be raised at ECS committee meeting. Concern about amount of work that may be involved. Part of the process is contacting the Earl of Devon about ownership.

Trews Weir Hydro Plant

Exeter Community Energy (established group with some solar schemes). If successful will need to be commissioned by April 2019. ECOE will be in contact with Canoe Club as well as fishermen/User Groups.

JE noted that some schemes can be designed so that water can be diverted for canoeist use when required.

AOB

- Marsh Barton station still awaited. But delay may allow separate bridge for walkers & cyclist over the railway. Also opportunity to move car park under the pylon rather than have it in current location by changing rooms.
- Other AOBs
 - Bollams Fields – what current position? Still in flood defence construction use. What will post-construction leisure use be? Paul Downs to be asked.
 - Boat building. New cruiser Spirit of Loch Ness built by Exeter Fabrications.
 - ECS communications reform.
- Paving outside Puerto Lounge and Samuel Jones – poor state. ECQT £s? But will be DCC's statutory responsibility so ECQT may not be keen. Also pavements still subject to damage from flood prevention construction works. PN to approach local councillor.
- ECQT to take responsibility for Canal? Or other mechanism to use ECQT money for canal directly. But ECQT would need skilled team to run canal.
- ECQT meetings would be an opportunity to make RCQ presentation to the meeting. 5th March/2nd July at 4.30pm at the Civic Centre. Alan Williamson is the chair.

RCQ Meeting

5th April 2018, White Hart, South Street Exeter 7:30pm

Present

- Peter Nickol (Chair)
- Jane Evans
- Simon Goddard
- Keith Lewis

Apologies

- Jean Hall
- Dominic Houston
- John Monks
- Guy Parker

[Action](#)

Notes of last meeting held on 22 January 2018

No comment

1 Canal Management

David Bartram, Director at Exeter City Council will be attending the AGM of the Exeter Port User Group on 12 April 2018, being held at 7:45pm at Topsham Sailing Club, and should be available to discuss the latest strategy document. Formal comments on the strategy need to be submitted before 23 April 2018.

Councillor Stephen Brimble, currently portfolio holder for People & Place, is not standing at the local council elections in May. Exasperation was expressed at the high turnover of councillors and officers responsible for the canal.

2 2015 plans for Quayside area – recent correspondence

The recommendations of the Task & Finish Group to the Scrutiny Committee - Economy on 18 June 2015 were sound, but little has been followed through. This should be brought to the attention of the Port & User Group.

JE

3 Water Lane Master plan – possible new bridge over canal

Will Pratt at Planning & Transportation Devon County Council believes that increased traffic congestion will be an issue if up to 800 new homes are built in this area. The focus will be on walking and cycling, and another bridge may be built across the canal. This would be a further impediment to navigation.

A further concern is that the site will be developed piecemeal with no overall plan, if the site is sold to separate developers who apply separately for planning permission for housing, and the opportunity to restore the whole area in a coherent way will be lost.

A letter will be sent to Andy Robbins, the City Development Manager at Exeter City Council about the bridge issue.

PN

4 Car parking at Clapperbrook/Salmonpool bridge

Exeter City Council talk of building two pay & display car parks in this area, with the income going into the canal account, one of which would be on the yard used by the flood works contractors BMMJV. The Valley Parks Master Plan was for only one car park, between the canal and the railway. To write to David Bartram, Director at Exeter City Council for clarification.

PN

5 Planning issues – Colleton Crescent Gardens railings

As there was no overall consensus, members will make individual submissions.

6 ECS walk, 7 April

This walk around the Canal Basin and Quay on Saturday 7 April will focus on current use, rather than the history and will be led by PN.

PN

7 Flood prevention works - update

It is a shame they have used concrete paving slabs on The Quay by the Transit Shed to replace the reconstituted stone ones which were there before. It was noted that the new steps at the end of the transit shed are precipitous and a hazard to pedestrians and cyclists who can easily miss that there are any steps there.

8 St James Weir

A letter was drafted to be sent to Lord Devon to request the hand over of ownership of the weir to a trust to be formed by the residents of Old Abbey Court, who overlook the weir. However there has been little interest from those residents in following it up. The precarious state of the weir and what should be done will be discussed with the Exeter Civic Society Committee meeting.

PN

9 FESC — activities and update

Input was provided to a report on the future of the canal prepared by Steve Carnell and David Bartram.

For the planned canal carnival, Exeter Canal & Quay Trust have advised that they require match funding for any proposals now. There is insufficient time to raise such funds this year, so the carnival has been postponed to 2019. A meeting has been arranged with Mike Walker, one of the trustees, at the time of the next trustees meeting scheduled for 2 July 2018, to discuss the best way forward.

JM

A slipway is needed for the launching of trailer boats into the canal, and the Waterway Recovery Group of the Inland Waterways Association is willing to provide support through their volunteer workgroup to build one if Exeter City Council can provide the materials. The best location for this will be discussed with the Canal User Group, probably at Gabriel's Wharf. The existing "slipway" at the mouth of the basin is of little use as it has a sheer drop-off at the water's edge.

JM

The next volunteer activity scheduled is painting the railings along the river between the Port Royal and Trew's Weir.

JM

10 AOB

Consideration needs to be given to how best to arrange to clear out the reeds in the mill race that serviced Trew's Weir Mill.

RCQ Meeting

1 August 2018, White Hart, South Street Exeter 7:30pm

Present

- Peter Nickol (Chair)
- Jane Evans
- Simon Goddard
- Keith Lewis
- John Monks

Apologies

- Jean Hall
- Dominic Houston
- Guy Parker?

[Action](#)

Minutes of last meeting held on 5 April 2018 and matters arising.

2015 Plans for the Quayside: Discussed report and recommendations of spring 2017 ascertained by KL. It was noted that traders group are established and in communication with ECC – KL has contact details. Noted that suggested extended bus service to quay is now in place. Disappointing that the report suggested that the quay masterplan (or canal basin?) is not a priority because of limited ECC resources. Noted that the traders had called for culling of seagulls, and SG feels this should be pursued as they are a nuisance (noted that cormorants seem to have disappeared from river) – SG to discuss with DWT. We agreed that the Canal Commercialisation work could result in a revision of the Canal Basin Masterplan, and that PN has been given assurances by David Bartram of ECC that RCQ and interest groups will be involved with consultants at an early stage. JE advised that ECC seem to be looking to appoint two consultants with budgets of about £40K each to avoid procurement procedures. FESC applying pressure to ensure canal basin buildings and canal activity financially linked for Canal commercialisation plan. SG concerned that there is no signage advising that the quay area is within the PSPO (Public Space Protection Order) Area and talking to authorities to have signs erected so trouble makers can be advised of this.

It is noted that Cllr David Harvey is now responsible for the river/canal area as Portfolio Holder for Place & Commercialisation.

Car Parking at Clapperbrook/ Salmonpool Bridge: PN has exchanged emails with David Bartram of ECC which recognises RCQ concerns, but also set out reasons for considering carpark on Bromham Fields (tarmaced area already there which is easier to white-line and to introduce car parking controls), and said ECC and DWT are in discussions. We agreed that car parking between river and canal should be avoided.

St James Weir: Confirmed that ECS chairman has written to the Earl of Devon in respect of ownership of the weir.

2 Water Lane Master plan.

Nothing new to report other than cllr Rachel Sutton is Portfolio Holder for Economy and Culture and chairs the planning committee. KL will write to her asking to meet regarding the masterplan.

3 Planning issues

Cellar Doors: PN has discussed this application with Pamela Wootton of ECS planning sub-committee. Agreed it is disappointing that this second application for replacement doors has been submitted

after the doors were replaced, and that its fixings are not as the existing door, despite ECS agreeing with the planning officer that fixings for the previous application were not appropriate. Planning sub-committee will follow-up. JE advised that paintwork on previously replaced doors is deteriorating already. PN pointed out that many cellar entrances have been changed over the years leading to irregular appearances.

Mallison Bridge replacement: Initial discussion considered the design of the bridge and conflict between pedestrians and cyclists, as well as the quality of the design for the bridge and decked area. Discussed whether cyclists should use the alley to the side of Puerto Lounge premises, and differences between commuter and leisure cyclists. Unclear whether planning sub-committee has considered the application, but one concern for them is the view from the opposite river bank. JM is concerned about such a fundamental change to the riverside because there is less access to the waterside and believes we should reject the application. JE suggested a more open approach (as quayside without fencing) but it was agreed that the whole concept should be discussed with ECC. There does not appear to have been any prior consultation with the public, or discussion by ECC committees. Agreed that PN will request a meeting with ECC as applicants.

Rockfish: Briefly discussed contractors and working times.

4 Flood prevention works - update

Discussed the use of concrete paving slabs on The Quay by the Transit Shed to replace the reconstituted stone ones which were there before. The on-going works are causing disruption with further disruption expected. The works at Countess Wear are huge and over-bearing and may be found unsightly by adjoining home owners. Silting of the river, vegetation and trees at the side of the river were discussed and whether this will be problematic in the event of flood waters – riverbank land owners have riparian responsibilities to keep the riverside clear – SG to speak to ECC and EA to see what can be done.

5 FESC — activities and update

Group is in dialogue with ECC regarding Canal Commercialisation investigations, and have suggested some possible skilled consultants. The possible Canal Carnival is still being investigated but is in need of more funding. JE highlighted the River Wensum Strategy in Norwich.

6 Points raised by JM

Maclaines Warehouse: JM believes that now the Bike Shed seemed to have pulled out of its project to develop a theatre there, the warehouse's future should be put on hold so it can be included in the Canal Commercialisation Plan. The building and its income are an important part of the canal basin's regeneration. Suggested that ECS should make a statement to this effect. JE has heard a rumour that Topsham Brewery are interested in using part of the building.

JM believes that ECS should take stock of proposals for the river and canal area because there appears to be a series of disparate projects emerging. We should also review what we can achieve, and that a review day will help us focus upon this. It was suggested that if this is to happen we should involve a number of other organisations to hear their position/work for the area, and that such an event could be opened to wider ECS membership. Agreed in principle to have a review day – KL to discuss this and funding with ECS chairman.

7 AOB

JE to email information regarding canal commercialisation and canal recreational charging.

The appointment of the Harbour Master and new staff was discussed and how this may affect management of the canal.

Meeting closed at 21.45