

## Members' Briefing Evening

The B&MK Waterway Park project is heading in a more strategic direction with a three-year deadline to get its forthcoming business plan into those of partner and Government agencies "so that they all take notice."

That was the clear signal from Jane Hamilton, chair of the B&MK Waterway Trust, when she gave an update on the project to members at the first of a new-style briefing evening at Box End Park – near the proposed new head of navigation at Kempston.

She told 25 members of the negotiations going on behind the scenes to progress the Campbell Park marina project at the Milton Keynes end of the proposed waterway, in addition to plans to extend the head of navigation at Kempston. This involves survey work to be carried out by the Environment Agency and Bedford Borough Council to determine the scale of dredging needed. Jane gave details of the ongoing work with partner agencies and local authorities to take the project forward, as well as changes to the Trust Board.

This new series of briefings is intended to keep members more in touch with developments in a more social environment. We plan to hold one in Milton Keynes and one in Bedford each year, and possibly more subject to demand. The next one will be held on the John Bunyan boat at the end of the cruising season. More details in the next B&MK News.

Jane's briefing and question and answer session was followed by the results of our recent "ideas" competition (see below).



Jane Hamilton Addressing the Members' Briefing Evening

## Member Competition Results

You will probably be aware that we have recently run a competition to increase awareness of the Trust and the Waterway. This is because we believe that most people who know about our plans support them, so the best way to increase the number of supporters (and so put pressure on decision makers in straitened times) is to increase the number who know about the project.

The winning entry was announced at our members' evening, and is from Gerry & Joyce Pauley, who suggested that we get people to produce a painting or photograph of part of the route, and superimpose an image of the completed waterway on it. We hope that this will enable us to make ourselves known to art groups and secondary schools along the route. Other ideas are on page 3.

## Programme Manager in Place

We now have a Programme Manager helping the board to get the project into a fully implementable state, and to have at least one "shovel-ready" project in case government suddenly decides that there is money available at short notice. A full introduction to Steve and his sizable task is on P6.





## View from the Chair

May I open by saying a belated Happy New Year to all members and partners. The past few months since the last newsletter have been very busy and I will do my best to update you all in the next few paragraphs.

First, I mentioned in previous newsletters that we needed to fill a number of vacancies on the Board. We now have four new members who have been co-opted onto the Board and who I hope will be confirmed as Board members at our next AGM in May. You will find a short introduction to all of them in the Newsletter. Their recruitment will strengthen the Board and help take the project forward in a new strategic direction.

Now we have increased the number of Directors, the Trust has been able to establish a number of sub groups to take forward some key areas of activity. These include Finance – to oversee the day to day running costs, to produce Income and Expenditure accounts and cash flow forecasts covering the period of the plan

**Communications** – to produce material, both electronic and paper, to raise awareness of the project and engage businesses and the community with the vision via various media opportunities

**Membership and Volunteers** – to liaise with members and volunteers to further the work of the Trust and promote the project to potential new members

**Funding** – to explore opportunities for raising funds and leading bids for lottery, charitable and other sources of public funding

**Project Management** – to work with partners, landowners and Consortium members to ensure the safeguarding of the route and act as a powerful motivator to drive the project forward

**Strategy/Governance** – to keep the project under constant review, monitoring progress and identifying potential problems and risks and planning the most cost-effective use of available resources.

It is important that we give attention to all of these areas as well as working with our partners on specific projects which will help get the waterway on the ground. In the past we have been very thinly spread across these activities. We will be looking for help from you, our members, as well, especially with regard to helping us run events such as the AGM and Annual Partnership Conference. We also need some real help with running our project office in Milton Keynes which is now only staffed by volunteers. We need help with keeping our website up to date and

organising day to day meetings and operations which keep the Trust functioning. At this point I would like to say a big thank you to David Gibb who currently helps us on 2 days a week and without whom we would struggle! The second big step forward I can report is that we now have a Programme Manager – Steve Parker. He introduces himself and his background elsewhere in the Newsletter. We are very lucky to have been able to appoint someone with so much enthusiasm for the project as well as a wealth of experience and skills.

Steve has some very important work to undertake over the next year in producing a credible and implementable Project Plan and establishing a Business Case which demonstrates that the Waterway Park is an essential piece of infrastructure which will bring wide ranging economic, environmental and social benefits. I talked about this in the last newsletter and both pieces of work are essential if we are to secure real investment in the Waterway Park.

By the time this newsletter goes to print we will have run our first Members' Briefing at Box End on 23<sup>rd</sup> February. I hope some of you were able to come along. The next big events for us are the Annual Partnership Conference and the AGM – both of which are being held on 26<sup>th</sup> May in Milton Keynes. You will find more details about these events elsewhere in the Newsletter. I do hope as many of you as possible will be able to come along.

I and other members of the Board continue to work with the local Councils, the Environment Agency, the Canal and River Trust and the Forest of Marston Vale to promote the Waterway Park. As advance work on the Head of Navigation project The Environment Agency is surveying the river near Kempston Lock and we are looking at securing another mooring in this part of the river so that the John Bunyan and other boats could travel further upstream. This would require dredging and re-profiling the river so funding will need to be found.

I have been keeping in touch with some of the bigger landowners and developers along the route of the Waterway Park to ensure the project is incorporated into any development proposals. Bedford Borough Council has recently granted planning consent for development at Bell Farm, Kempston, and, as part of this process, has required the developers to transfer land for the Waterway Park to the Forest of Marston Vale. This an important step because each time something like this happens it puts more of the route into the hands of our partners ensuring the land is protected





The John Bunyan about to enter  
Town Lock in Bedford

Greetings from the team at John Bunyan Boat and may we wish you a belated, yet sincere, wonderful 2016.

We're doing well on the boat, more volunteers, more cruises and decidedly delicious new offerings for this season, new delicacies to savour.

This year, on Saturday 16th & Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July, is the Bedford River Festival and we are completely involved for the whole weekend. From a brand new Curry Cruise on the Friday night to being the 'Mayor's Special Reception Cruiser' and then finishing off the weekend with a fabulous 'Motown & Soul Cruise' on the Sunday evening.

Our action plan for the year is both busy

and bountiful with many private charters already booked. We are being bold but we have action points with dates and will meet each and every one. Public cruises and special cruises are in place for the whole season. We are all very excited and can't wait for the season to begin.

Don't forget to like the John Bunyan Boat on Facebook. Follow @JohnBunyanBoat on Twitter.

Onwards and upwards for Team JB.  
Lynne Gray

and the route is not blocked in any way.

At the Trust's March Board we hope to approve a new Business Plan which will set out our strategic objectives and activities for the next three years. This will govern what we do and when we do it and will give us some clear targets to achieve. Once approved you will be able to see the Business Plan on our website and keep tabs on how well we are doing against our objectives – all very important in showing our members and partners that we mean business and that we have clear ambitions in getting the Waterway Park recognised as a "must have" piece of infrastructure for this region.

Don't forget – we need your help! If you want to get directly involved in our events, running the project office or managing and updating our website let us know. Details of who to contact are on page 5

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at our AGM and Annual Partnership Conference in May.

Jane Hamilton

## More Competition Winners

Other ideas which came from the competition include:

- Having a stand at non-waterway events. When we attend events, we tend to be talking to people who already know about the Waterway, and at events which are held in the summer, when it is harder to get volunteers to man the stand. By attending local winter events we would avoid both these problems.
- Arrange for a half marathon to be run along the route.
- Use boats as part of the "Mark the Route" project. Either old boats sunk into the earth, or new climbing structures for children to play on.



# Refreshing the Board

There have been a number of changes to the Board recently. Graham Mabbutt has resigned to spend more time on his work with the John Bunyan, and Marilyn Leask has also had to stand down. We thank them for their great efforts over the years. These, and other resignations over the last couple of years had left the board under-strength, and put an extra load on the remaining directors,

Fortunately, we have had a few volunteers recently and, after due consideration and attending a meeting or two, those below have agreed to be co-opted onto the Board. They will, of course, be standing for formal election at the Annual General Meeting in May.

We are always looking for extra help, so if you feel you can contribute, please contact Jane. The board meets in alternate months, and most of the work can be done from anywhere. We are particularly looking for people with communication, or web skills, but anything you can bring will be welcome.

## Beryl Bennett MBE



Beryl has worked in the charity, not-for-profit sector, for more than 30 years; latterly, as a member of the Senior Management Team and as Director of

International and Corporate Affairs for a charity. Beryl represented her organisation at both national and international forums and was responsible for developing active and genuine collaborations with a number of partners. She has extensive experience as a committee member, in strategic planning and its subsequent implementation, as well as event and general project management skills. She has a good understanding and knowledge of the Charity Commission's responsibilities and the importance of developing and monitoring a charitable organisation's key performance indicators and ensuring regular auditable standards are published, together with an appreciation of the many challenges currently facing charities. In 2011, she received the MBE for services to women's health.

## Simon Clewlow



**Simon Clewlow BSc (Hons) DiplEng CEng MICE MCIHT MTPS** became a Chartered Civil Engineer in 1990 and during his career has primarily provided transport planning and engineering advice to a range of largely private sector clients. Simon has worked for civil engineering contractors and consultants

including spending 17 years with Travers Morgan during which time it was first acquired by Symonds and then by Capita. Before he left Capita Symonds in 2009, he was its Director of Development Transport and Infrastructure. For the last 7 years Simon has run his private transport planning practice advising clients across the South and East of England as well as in London. Simon has been active in the Institution of Civil Engineers serving as the National Chairman of its Associate Members Graduates and Students section and as a Supervising Civil Engineer overseeing graduates seeking chartered membership. Simon is currently the lay member of the Royal Town Planning Institute's Conduct and Discipline Panel and is a past president of the Bedford Civil Engineering Society.

## Julian Armitage



Julian Armitage BSc (Hons) CEng MICE has spent a number of years as an HR specialist with major construction companies. In 2002 he renovated a derelict windmill in which he

now lives. He is keen to see the Waterway built and believes this vision will become a reality only with buy-in from the local community, public authorities, private investment and the government. He is committed to trying to bring this about quickly. A keen golfer, Julian is a volunteer driver of the Villager bus, serving North Bedfordshire villages. He is also a Trustee of Amicus Trust providing housing for homeless people.

## David Watson



David spent most of his career in BP, where he undertook a variety of roles working mainly in the upstream part of the company both overseas and in the UK. Latterly he was Group Treasurer for four years.

Since retiring in 2002 he has been actively involved in local activities: as groundsman for the cricket club and as a trustee for the village hall, and when not working in the garden, he has been studying for a degree at the Open University. He has lived in Bedford for nearly 30 years, and has holidayed on many of the canals and rivers in England.



## Information Evening & AGM

We will be holding our annual members' information meeting and AGM on May 26th in Central Milton Keynes. The formal notice of the meeting is included with this newsletter for all members.

While the speakers list is still being finalised as we go to press, it is bound to be an interesting meeting, and an opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new ones.

A popular part of the evening is the raffle - and **we would be grateful if as many of you as possible could bring a raffle prize with you.**

This year we will be holding our Annual Partnership Conference in the afternoon and the Information Evening the same date. Let us know if you think this works, if you come to either or both of these events.

## Project Office & Volunteers

Our project office is now staffed by volunteers. David Gibb is doing a great job on a couple of days a week, but we could do with more help there.

Volunteers are also required in all areas. We particularly need people to represent us at various shows - we have had to reduce the number we attend, because of difficulties putting together a rota for the stand. Just a couple of hours will be a great help, and you can usually get into the event free as an exhibitor. We will make sure that you are paired with someone more experienced when you start, you will soon become confident to support someone else!

Someone to manage the display material would be a great help too. Ideally with somewhere to store the display boards, you would keep an eye on where things were, and report when display items needed replacing or updating.

Do you have social media / website skills? Updating the website or managing Twitter and Facebook for us would be a great help.

We are, of course, still looking for an editor for this newsletter. You can do this from anywhere - no need to attend meetings if you don't want to.

Drop a note to us at the office address: [BMK.OfficeTeam@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:BMK.OfficeTeam@canalrivertrust.org.uk) telling us how you would like to help, and we will be in touch!

## Direct Debits

For years we have been trying to find a way to accept direct debits which made financial sense. Some options would have taken almost a third of the payment. We believe that we now have a solution, and a form is included with the renewal request with this newsletter.

There will also be a way to renew online through the website. As this is all new to us, please be patient if there are teething problems.

### B&MK News

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## Programme Manager Now On Board



We are pleased to welcome Steve Parker to the Trust. Steve will be working for two days per week on the project. His priorities are:

To prepare an implementable programme plan by March 2017. This will include a strategy Map and supporting documentation, a governance framework for developing the plan and its implementation, project management plans including work breakdown structures & schedules (Gantt charts) for the identified component projects:

- Enterprise Risk Management
- Benefit Realisation Management
- High level timetable including milestones

To develop, in consultation the Programme Executive and key development partners, a Business Case for the Waterway Park, evaluating social, economic and environmental impacts and benefits by June 2017.

To prepare regular progress reports for the Trust Board and Consortium meetings, assist in researching sources of funding and assist in preparing Trust bids and assist in preparing new presentation material by April 2016.

Assist the Chair of the trust in the creation and development of a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and Plan.

Steve is a highly experienced Business Consultant with a history of major achievements in the areas of strategy, innovation, change, programme and project management for one of the UK's most renowned experts in defence, aerospace and security, QinetiQ plc., currently delivering contracts through his own company, Danichris Ltd.

He has extensive experience in the provision of independent advice and objectivity in monitoring executive management practices, providing guidance and expertise on strategic management, performance management, risk management and on-going business progression.

Commercially aware and results orientated with outstanding staff development and motivational skills, Steve is recognised for being customer focused, with excellent relationship management skills.

Experienced in: co-ordinating business strategy, creating strategic initiatives, product launch plans, client training, delivering profit growth, business development, commercial management, championing appropriate use of technology to support business objectives, relationship building with employees, supplier management, contract negotiation and management, purchasing management, P&L, business analysis, SAP, APMP / Prince2 project management.

Originally graduating as a mechanical engineer, Steve worked at Rolls Royce as an engine designer before moving to the MoD (DERA) experiencing and driving the change to QinetiQ, he is a Chartered Engineer and has the full APMP practitioner qualification in project management.

More recently he has been working with Interserve, responsible to the Transformation Director for establishing and operation of a Programme Management Office to deliver the Transforming Rehabilitation programme through mobilisation, transition and transformation.

## Spring Walking Group

Chris Fox and Alan Mayo are arranging a walk at the Milton Keynes end this Spring.

The route is from the Cricket Club Car Park at Campbell Park, through to Salford pub, via Broughton Brook cable-stayed bridge, then Kingston Bridge and dog leg back onto unclassified road from Broughton Gate traffic lights then over M1 into Salford. The walk will end at pub where food will be available. We expect to have a minibus available to bring you back if required.

The walk will start at 11:00 on Sunday 10th April from the pavilion car park. If you are interested in coming along, watch the website for any last minute details.

Even better, if you are willing to help Chris and Alan plan this and / or other walks, leave your contact details with the Project Office. Contact details are, as always, at the bottom of the back page.

# Events Calendar 2016



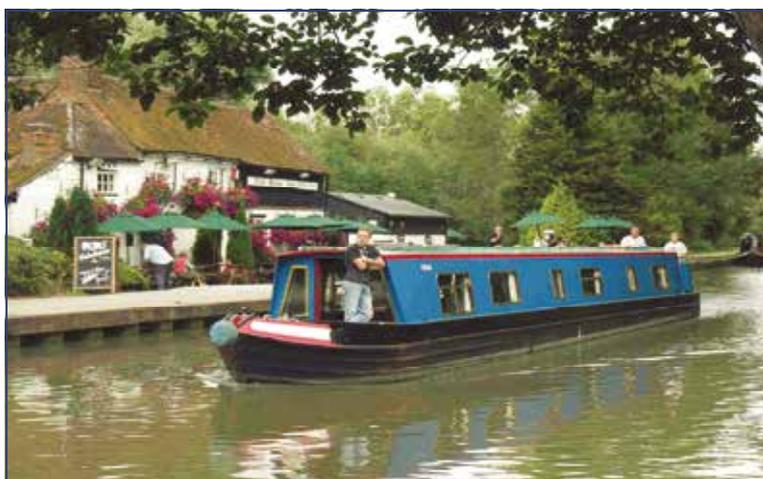
<b>April 20th</b>	<b>Talk to Ampthill Ladies Club</b> (by invitation only)
<b>May 11th 7.30pm</b>	<b>Talk to Warwickshire IWA Group</b>
<b>May 26th</b>	<b>AGM &amp; 6th Annual Partnership Conference</b> - This year we are holding these as separate events on the same day in the same venue. They will be at Arts Central, which is in Central Milton Keynes, just across the road from the MK Council offices. A formal notice for meeting for the AGM, with full details, is included with this mailing for all members.
<b>June 13th, 9.30am to 4.30pm</b>	<b>Bedford High Street Showcase.</b> Following on from last year's hugely popular event, which attracted tens of thousands of people to the High Street, the Big High Street Showcase is to return. Expect to see a range of local businesses, community groups and entertainers all coming together on Bedford High Street and Mill Street to showcase their talents in the heart of Bedford. The Trust and the John Bunyan will be sharing a stand. If you would like to help, contact the Project Office.
<b>July 16th &amp; 17th</b>	<b>Bedford River Festival.</b> As usual, there'll be live entertainment, river events, carnival parade, funfair and fete. There'll be raft races, fireworks, sports, arts and heritage village, which this year will be recreating life in 1166, when the Bedford Borough was first formed. Once again, the John Bunyan will play a central role at the festival, and the Trust and the John Bunyan will have stalls. We need quite a number of volunteers to man the stalls over this popular event. Contact the Project Office if you are able to help, if you have never done this before, we will make sure that you are matched with a more experienced volunteer.

## Talks Organisation

John and Sally Gunning have now resigned as Talks Organisers, after many years helping us. Our thanks to them. Talks are now organised through the Project Office (details on back page).

## Weekly and Short Break Holiday Hire

4-8 berth self drive Luxury Narrow Boats



### Excellent Boats on a Beautiful Canal

*Cruise through the waterside parks of Milton Keynes*

Our base at Linslade is within weekend reach of the Waterways Museum at Stoke Bruerne or the Chiltern Hills and Aylesbury. Choice of exciting one or two week cruises including the River Thames.

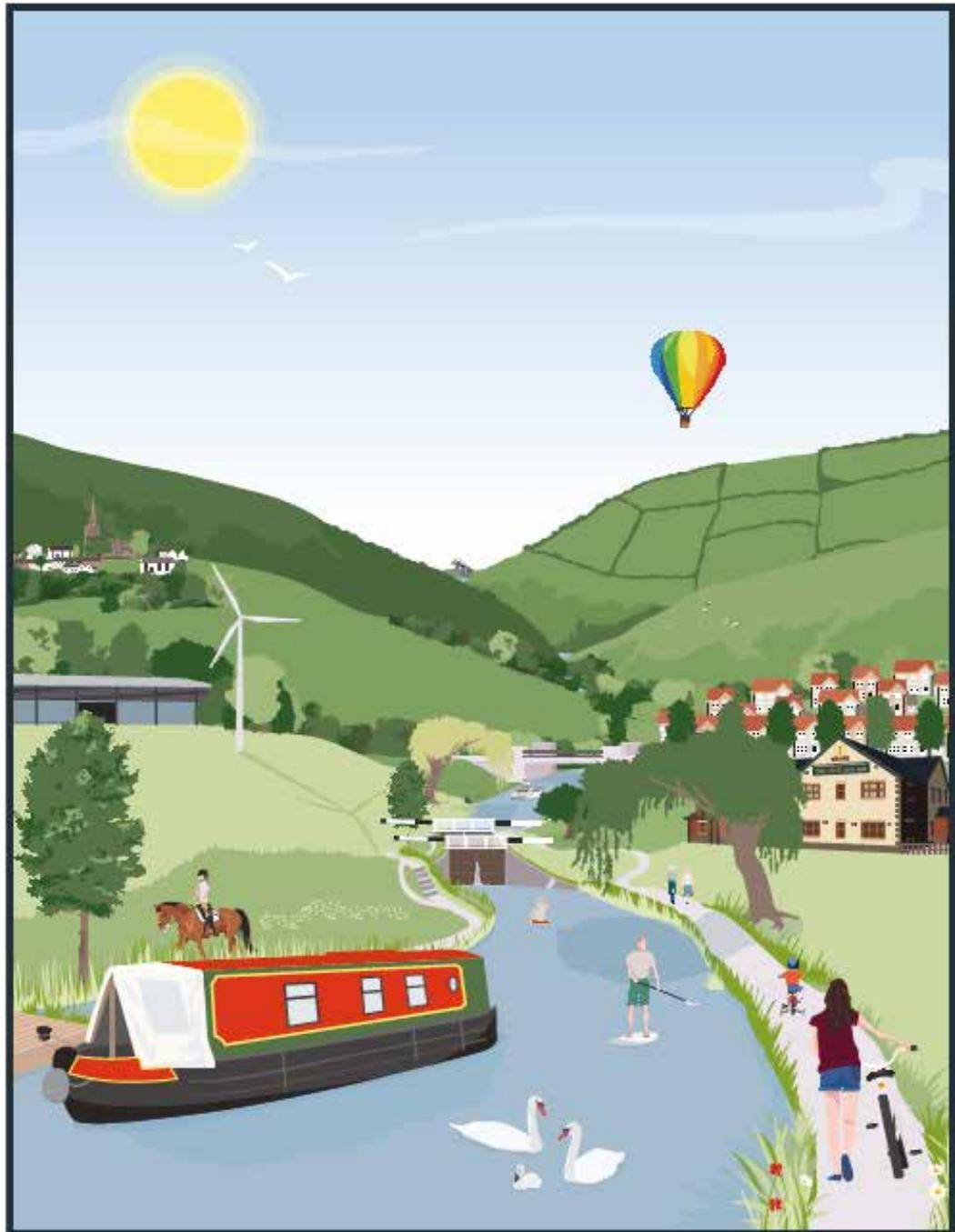
Also 'Waterside Cottage' (sleeps up to 11) set in the boatyard grounds

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• BEDFORD & MILTON KEYNES WATERWAY PARK •

B&MK WATERWAY

This artwork was commissioned by the B&MK Waterway Consortium, from Tabitha Mary Wainwright who has produced other Bedford and Milton Keynes related artwork – see [www.tabithamary.co.uk](http://www.tabithamary.co.uk).

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