

# Minutes of LUCS Committee Meeting

## 7th May 2024

### 1.0 Chairman's Welcome.

Chairman David Shirres welcomed Peter Lewis, Ian Gray, Ronnie Reis, Mike Smith, Andy Eaglesfield, Lynne Nelson, Douglas Scott

### 2.0 Minutes of the previous meeting:

— approved on a motion by AE, IG

Chairman congratulated everyone on the success of the Winchburgh Marina Opening Flotilla and subsequent trips. Lots of activity and visibility, but little mention of LUCS in Press coverage. There was general discussion of events and potential developments. PL asked to splash in Basin Banter.

Thanks were received from the Developers and from John Paterson of SC: over 300 pax carried. We await potential developments involving Winchburgh, especially when they have some facilities there. Contact will be maintained with all parties. Lots of pictures generated with publicity potential.

Lessons to be learned from the ineffectiveness of the PA system!

(There was general and wide-ranging discussion after the body of the meeting about what might transpire as a result of Winchburgh Marina coming on line - long cruises, collaborations, Edinburgh-bound trips, etc. Too early for conclusions, but creative thoughts welcome).

Victoria's transmission failure didn't impact the event greatly, but her unavailability pending repair has wide ramifications. [but see 3.1.2 below].

### 3.0 Boat Operations / Status

#### 3.1 BML Issues.

3.1.1 Congratulations to Willie and Peter on gaining their BMLs

Tom McPhie's application has got lost in the system and is to be revived.

3.1.2 Victoria's unserviceability will create increased demand for BMLs until she re-enters service. There was extensive discussion about various boat selections and their implications for crewing, and the risks of negative publicity if cancellations are needed. Spares are available: diagnosis and repair times critical to future boat scheduling of trips and crews.

[**Post-Meeting Note:** The issue was not gearbox, but stripped splines on the drive-plate. A replacement was fitted within a few days.]

3.2 Electric Boats There remains little enthusiasm for their operations here, and it was suggested that Bridge 19/40 might like them. D SH to talk first with Richard Millar of SC.

#### 3.3 Tech/Cert/Dry Docking

3.3.1 Victoria Gearbox: RR actioning [See Note at 3.1.2 above.].

3.3.2 There are questions about future accessibility of Ratho Dry Dock after notification that its booker has retired from the scene. D Sh to contact Seagull Trust's Stuart Rennie for clarification.

May be options to use Forth and Clyde's facilities if need be.

### 3.4 Special Cruises.

3.4.1 B49 Cruises were generally booking well, but challenge boat/BML/Leamington availabilities. Will resolve if Victoria is back in service soon.

3.4.2 Afternoon Tea Cruises in high demand, and arrangements well in hand.

3.4.3 Falkirk-based Cruises not receiving sufficient publicity. No interest expressed so far. DSh will prod SC at their Rotation Celebration to advertise more effectively. Possible advertising in Falkirk Herald? Action DSh

### 3.5 Boat Status

3.5.1 St Magdalene starting issue has been resolved by re-wiring starter circuit.

3.5.2 The continuous water-pump running issue on St Michael has been fixed by replacing pump-head switch unit.

3.5.3 Colin G is no worse: no immediate need for intervention. Motor repairs being re-started.

3.5.4 St Magdalene still runs a little rough, and RR is still investigating.

## 4.0 Basin Operations

4.1 Tea Room / Staffing. Some new members expressing an interest, and Lynn is addressing their training status.

Andy revising Rota as data emerges. There was discussion as to the effectiveness of our current distribution of internal information, which will be looked at.

Receptionist manning going satisfactorily at present.

Ten new members have been recruited this year, of which some are enthusiastic self-starters.

### 4.2 Facilities Status.

4.2.1 Tea Room Floor completed and decor restored.

4.2.2 Yard clearance delayed, pending ejection criteria decisions, projected yard use and suitable skip siting. Await AE return. Possible longer-term siting of the skip, e.g. mid-week in one of the parking bays, would make the process simpler. Need to keep in mind access to fuel bowser. A clear yard makes the positioning of the new larger heating fuel tank easier. Public access would restrict activity to the mornings only. Await AE's return to bring his clarity of purpose to bear.

4.2.3 Tea Room roof parapet waterproofing: cladding in Aluminium might take two weeks or so. DSh to discuss access with neighbours. It is considered essential to preserve the rest of the roof structure. Should not require external contractors. Liaison via AM in AE's absence.

Much discussion of potential costs, access and the need for scaffold tower, how best to acquire neighbour buy-in (vouchers, etc.)\_

4.2.4 Museum leaks...investigating.

4.2.5 Basin Electrical supply fit-out. The Basin's Electrical wiring is not fully documented or understood. Given the future increased use of electricity, it needs to be surveyed, and, if appropriate upgraded. The need for a relatively high power output connection for electric victoria, whilst a trigger for this discussion, is not currently required as Victoria electrification spec requires no more than 16A. (However, there may come a time when other electric boats push us to a quicker-charging requirement being useful on-site). We do not knowingly have the expertise in-house. An external surveyor may look at it and ask for it to be shut down; though it is organic in design, it was largely done by Norman Foulner, who was a professional, and is believed to be safe. A willing expert is to be sought out. Andy and Pete to search out friendly experts.

## **5.0 Promoting Heritage.**

5.1 Museum: Nothing to report at this meeting. Whereabouts of stuffed birds display case : anyone know ?

5.2 Education: no progress to report.

## **6.0 Projects**

6.1 Victoria refit. We have quotations (which need to be continually refreshed), of which the latest (Revolutionworks) comes with an all-up price of 22K (ex VAT), including installation by the supplier. It contains a fit of solar panels on the roof, which help mitigate the weight of the fit required to meet foreseen range performance. . We are discussing the possibility of using less-obtrusive flexible PV panels, which are somewhat less effective, but less visually dominant, or possibly their omission, requiring portable charger to be carried for longer range sorties.

(Revolutionworks responded to LUCS' boat performance and operational envelope specification, rather than the technical spec put to the other earlier suppliers. The technical spec Revolutionworks created in response the Performance Requirement did not differ radically from the tech spec we put to the earlier bidders).

The extent of whole-boat refit continues to be discussed, the cost of crange and potential fragility of shelter in the yard being a bones of contention. The negative impact of working on a floating boat is harder to quantify, but significant. There may still be a need to tailor the requirement to fit limited funding.

6.1.1 Funding: the grants market is being probed with Ian Gray's expertise and industry, but has yet to come up with large sums. Itemising individual aspects of cost, identifying social spin-offs, etc., matter to different sources to varying extents.

QR codes leading to donation portals are to be spread around, notably on boat sides. Keep Crowd-Funding in reserve.

6.2 Website revision...under review.

## **7.0 Health and Safety**

7.1 Accidents and Incidents.

7.1.1 Scalp-wound exiting Victoria via after cabin doors. Low roof-line not easily seen when wearing a hat (a sign above the door would be ineffectual). Highlighted absence of sterile swabs and irrigation water in 1st Aid Kit to allow extent of injury to be assessed. Even superficial head wounds bleed copiously. Casualty not concussed and received suitable dressing from experienced nurse. Need to confirm that all records filed.

7.1.2 St Magdalene propeller jammed by fence post. Caused obstruction to navigation on aqueduct, and was physically stressful for crew. . Formal report needed, there being no injuries? Strong case for carrying a saw on board.

7.2 Training. Towing should be added to training and rope-handling scheme. (Note that towing a passenger boat is seen as a special endorsement to BML - though pax-free should not be an issue(?)).

7.3 Small boat competence syllabus and recording...no report.

7.4 HSE Policy document tabled by Andy E, and will be circulated for comment. (One area absent remains Workshop / Tool Handling section : MJS to expedite.)

7.5 Other Policies: Safeguarding, Data Protection, Volunteers Anti-exploitation Policy, Equality, Inclusivity, Diversity, etc.: examples being collated.

## **8.0 Events**

8.1 Street Fair (11th May): a stall to be manned.

8.2 Marches: Declare Deacon and My Lord: participate, but lack resources to have Float this year. Hospitality on Deacons' Night, Perambulation , etc.; to be planned.

8.3 Halloween Cruises require review in the light of last year's limited success.

8.4 Fun Day: safety boat improvement from last year. Andy E working on sources.. Stallholder development making progress, albeit slowly. Entertainers to be confirmed: (Puppets)? Liaison with WLC progressing.

8.5 Participate in Falkirk Wheel Flotilla and Celebration weekend of 25 May: details to be received.

8.6 Additional item to be added to next Agenda: "50th Anniversary of LUCS".

## **9.0 Marketing**

9.1 Current initiatives

9.2 Black Bitch strategy / tactics discussed at length. Can we grab attention by telling LUCS History through pictures of the changes wrought?

DSH to write article for Black Bitch; advert including Falkirk Wheel Cruises to be inserted..and posted on facebook?

Care to be taken to avoid publishing QR codes on platforms where they cannot be clicked, to avoid client frustration.

Optimum use of the Notice Board at the head of the drive to be reconsidered.

9.3 Basin Banter Topics - ongoing.

## **10.0 General Management**

10.1 Treasurer's report: nothing of concern. Need to assess shortly the management of funding significant major works (e.g. Tearoom Roof , Victoria refit) from current funds. Clarification being sought about state of SC licensing. *Action D Shirres*

10.2 Bookings: Still occasional reports of payment time-out issues. To be monitored. Still in contact with Blue2.

Discussion on how to identify different kinds of bookings on special cruises.

10.3 BML Management system.. held over.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday 11th June, 1900hrs