

Minutes of the LUCS Committee Meeting 7th January 2025

Present: Chair David Shirres (DS) welcomed:

Andy Eaglesfield (AE), Ian Gray (IG), Peter Lewis (PL), David Morrow (DM), Doug Scott (DSc), Mike Smith (MS) and Graeme Simpson

Apologies were received from Ronnie Reis (RR)

1.0 Chairman's Welcome

DS welcomed everyone to the meeting and took the opportunity to remind members of their responsibilities as Directors as stated on the extract from a Company's House document circulated at the meeting

2.0 Approval of previous Minutes:

Minutes of meeting of November 2024 were not available. The committee also needs to see draft AGM minutes.

Action: MS to circulate both sets of minutes to the committee

3.0. General Management

3.1 Treasurer's report

The October to December income and expenditure statement was discussed. This showed that on 31.12.24 LUCS had a balance of £88,292. The following issues were raised.

It included a late invoice for the whole season for £1,755 from Taste.

Action: PL to discuss with Taste

Company management expenditure included boat insurance which should be allocated to individual boats; Victoria project expenditure includes yard clearance it was felt that this should be classified as a premise expenditure.

Action: PL to make necessary adjustments

PL advised that due to an accounting error concerning the petty cash balance the last financial year's accounts incorrectly declared an end of year balance total £500 greater than the actual balance.

Action: PL to ask LUCS accountant to correct the accounts

3.2 Committee and Convenor Roles

The were discussed and finalized as shown in the attachment to these minutes. One key change is that the role of Designated Person Ashore with responsibility for liaison with the MCA has been transferred from David Shirres to Graeme Simpson.

**Action: DS communicate roles as appropriate
DS/GS handover DPA role**

3.3 Future committee meetings

Dates of next two meetings were set for 6th February and 6th March. Post meeting note: Due to a clash with winter talk date for the March meeting is now 13th March.

The most suitable date for meetings from April onward are to be set before the next committee.

Action: DS

3.4 Other general management issues

No other issues were raised

4. Marketing

4.1 Focus and budget for the year

During an open discussion included discussion of the following:

Widespread leafleting is ineffective; Advertise in WLC Connect magazine; Get more articles in canal magazines; Black Bitch must have an article for 50th birthday years and some adverts, Under utilisation of marketing mailshot facility on Mailchimp; Greater use of social media needed; Use of straplines such e.g. “50 years serving the canal community”; Triangular notices for lamp standards; Slots on the radio especially our 50th birthday, Questionnaire needed to find out more about our visitors; the 50th anniversary leaflets that IG is progressing.

Action: IG

PL to collate marketing ideas and formulate these into a strategy with an action plan to be circulated to the committee by 23rd January.

Action: PL

It was decided that the total marketing spend this year should not exceed £4,000.

MS is attending a BID which will consider tourist strategy and will report back to the committee

Action: MS

4.2 LUCS 50th anniversary booklet

IG had suggested the production of a free booklet for visitors which could be used to promote LUCS. DS considered that this could replace the guide cards for Aqueduct and Falkirk Wheel trips and will progress the production of this booklet to have it ready for 11th April.

Action: DS

4.3 Basin Banter

It was considered that items discussed at this meeting provide sufficient topics for the next Basin Banter which should be sent out before 19th January

Action: PL / DS

5. Boats

5.1 Victoria options

A sub-group comprising AE, GS, MS and DS had produced an options paper that estimated costs for various options to be:

Repairing Victoria and fitting a new diesel engine.	£26,145
A replacement Victoria replica with a diesel engine	£49,665
Additional cost of electric traction for both options	£13,730

This paper noted that grants totaling £7,714 may have to be repaid if Victoria is not electrified.

After discussion the committee voted unanimously to proceed with the Victoria repair option. A decision on electrification is to be taken once emerging costs of the Victoria repair are known.

As discussed in item 3.2, GS is the project manager for this work assisted by MS as project engineer to specify work required.

As it was currently estimated that Victoria will be out of service until end of June, it is likely that Leamington will be needed for Town Trips until then. DS proposed approaching the Bridge 19-40 Union Canal Society to see if it might be possible to use their boat RoseAnne for town trips in return for the income from these town trips. The committee agree to this proposal.

DSc advised that he had enquires for Leamington hires during this period. DS hoped to be able to advise him of Leamington's availability in the near future.

DS advised that Victoria had now been placed on the historic ships register which should provide additional funding opportunities.

Action: GS & MS progress Victoria repairs

5.2 Winter work on, Leamington, St Magdalene and St Michael

In RR's absence a detailed discussion on winter boat work was not possible though the following key points were noted:

- Though Leamington's stern tube seems to have fixed itself the back of the boat needs lifted off the slipway to examine this problem.
- The reliability of St Magdalene's engine cooling system needs to be confirmed
- St Michael's toilet floor needs replacing – work on this has already started. She may need new batteries

AE felt it important that, with so much work, we make it clear that as many volunteers as possible are needed in the next few months and that a list of work on the museum whiteboard was needed.

Action: AE communication actions to blackhand gang as appropriate

5.3 Boat strategy group

AE advised that he had invited about nine people to participate in this group which will produce an overview of work needed with a short, medium and long term plans for each boat.

This group will also consider the future requirement for Colin G, Slateford and the electric dinghies. DS advised that two of these dinghies may be transferred to the Fountainbridge Canalside Community Trust if St Michael goes to the Edinburgh Canal Festival.

Action: AE

6. Other projects and events

6.1 LUCS 50th birthday events

a) 50th birthday party on Friday 11th April

DS circulated a list of 15 'VIPs' who had been sent annual reports with a covering letter advising them that they would soon be sent invitations to this event. He had also spoken to the Lord Lieutenant of West Lothian who indicate that she would be glad to come to this event. He felt the event needed a focus which could be the unveiling of a plaque to commemorate our 50 years, a few speeches and the launch of the LUCS booklet and that a buffet meal and boat trips could be provided

IG cautioned that the canal basin may not be able to accommodate those invited and felt that A, B and C invitation lists were required. It was also felt that a booking facility will be needed to plan for anticipated numbers.

Action: IG/ DS to work together to develop invitation lists and the format for this event

It was agreed that the weekend of the 12/13th would be an open weekend and also would be the start of the season instead of the previously agreed 5th April which will now be a members weekend to get them up to speed with the plans for the season.

Action: DS to update key facts sheet to show season starts on 12th April

b) Other 50th birthday events

- IG advised that he has reserved the Low Port on 16th May for an event would could be a ceilidh
- Exhibitions in the Tea Room including Barbara's paintings and Martine's photos
- A boaters gathering in September. DS suggest a lunchtime gathering at Winchburgh with a flotilla to the Linlithgow basin where LUCS would host an evening event. He is to float this idea at the Scottish Waterways for All meeting on 21st January with a view to firming up a date soon.

Action: DS Establish date for a September boaters' event

c) Members 50th birthday survey

It was felt members opinions should be sought on they wanted from LUCS's 50th anniversary year. IG is to produce a survey for distribution on MailChimp as soon as possible.

Action: IG

6.2 Website revision

The good work done by IG working with Douglas Robertson to give the website a stronger focus on donations and volunteering was noted, though there was no time to discuss this except that IG felt there was an urgent required for the QR donation code at the bottom of the website to be replaced with a donation button at the top of the website. DS and DM are to progress this.

Action: DM / DS

7. Promoting Heritage

7.1 Museum initiatives

DS is progressing the museum boards initiative which will be completed for the 11th April. To do so he has had discussions with Jim and Nuala Lonie, Danny Callaghan and Maureen Wilson.

Action: DS

The requirement to have the U66 rib and rudder display on the yard wall by 11th April was also discussed. MS offered to assist with the required metalwork

Action: MS

DS advised that Chris Matheson Dear had offered to represent LUCS on the West Lothian Council Museum's Forum.

8. 2025 Season

DS asked if, other than items already discussed, there was anything that needed to be considered now to ensure that LUCS was ready for the 2025 season. The following issues were raised.

Availability of Tea Room volunteers for opening during the week after Easter. PL is to confirm that sufficient Tea Room volunteers will be available

Action: PL

DSc reiterated the need to know when Leamington would be available during the season. DS is to investigate the possibility of getting another boat to cover town trips and advised that it might be two or three weeks before this is known, In the meantime, DSc was asked to record expressions of interest in boat hires in the meantime.

Action: DS / DSc

9. Health and Safety

No accidents had been reported since the last committee. However, it was noted that reports had yet to be received for accidents involving the projector in the Mel Grey Centre and the collision between St Michael and Victoria. AE is to chase up the production of these reports

Action: AE

10. Any other business

No other business was raised.

DS closed the meeting thanking everyone for their contributions in a meeting with a very full agenda.

2025 Committee and Convenor roles

General	Role	Current	Reports to	Notes
Boat certification	Licensing and Insurance	Peter Lewis	N/A	
Boat certification	MCA Liaison / Designated Person Ashore	Graeme Simpson	N/A	
Boat maintenance	Leamington	Ian Walker	Ronnie Reis	
Boat maintenance	St Magdalene	Ronnie Reis	N/A	
Boat maintenance	St Michael	Allister Mackie	Ronnie Reis	
Boat maintenance	Victoria project - project management	Graeme Simpson	N/A	
Boat maintenance	Victoria project - specification	Mike Smith	N/A	
Boat maintenance	Colin G / Slateford	Ronnie Reis	N/A	
Boat maintenance	Battery boats	Ronnie Reis	N/A	
Boat maintenance	Workshop	Mike Smith	N/A	
Boat staffing	Driving Training	Steve Braesc	Ronnie Reis	
Boat staffing	Driving Licensing / Medical renewals	Gordon Hewitt	Andy Eaglesfield	
Boat staffing	Drivers Rotas	Gordon Hewitt	Andy Eaglesfield	
Boat staffing	Charter, self hire crewing, also rooms	Wille Irvine	Doug Scott	
Education	Education	Vacant	David Shirres	
Events	Fun Day - general	Peter Lewis	N/A	
Events	Afternoon Tea, Halloween and Santa cruises	Maureen O'Donnell	David Shirres	
External liaison	Scottish Canals	David Shirres	N/A	
External liaison	Scottish Waterways for All	David Shirres	N/A	
External liaison	BID & Town Management	Mike Smith	N/A	
External liaison	External Relations	David Shirres	N/A	
External liaison	info@lucs	Andy Eaglesfield	N/A	
Funding	Funding	Ian Gray	N/A	
LUCS Management	Document Control	Gordon Hewitt	David Morrow	
LUCS Management	Company Secretary	Peter Lewis	N/A	
LUCS Management	Treasurer	Peter Lewis	N/A	
LUCS Management	Minutes	Vacant	N/A	Shared amongst committee
LUCS Management	Membership Secretary	Andy Eaglesfield	N/A	
LUCS Management	Health and Safety	Andy Eaglesfield	N/A	
LUCS Management	IT Group	David Morrow	N/A	
Marketing	Marketing	Peter Lewis	N/A	Assisted by Ian Gray
Marketing	Booking System	Doug Scott	N/A	Assisted by Ken Duerden
Marketing	Website	Douglas Robertson	Marketing	
Museum	Curator	Vacant	David Shirres	Chris MD is LUCS rep on WLC mtg
Museum	Receptionists Rota	Andy Eaglesfield	N/A	
Premises	Premises	Allister Mackie	Andy Eaglesfield	
Premises	Gardening	John Lewis	Peter Lewis	
Tea Room	Rota	Lynne Nelson / Anne Mackie	Peter Lewis	
Tea Room	Supplies	Lynne Nelson / Anne Mackie	Peter Lewis	