

Minutes of the 42nd Annual General Meeting of Linlithgow Union

Canal Society held virtually by Zoom on

2nd December 2021 @ 7.30p

Attendees :

Chris Matheson-Dear – Interim Chair Mike Smith – Vice Chair Douglas Robertson – Minute Secretary David Shirres – Treasurer / Company Secretary Lynne Nelson (from 8pm) Ronnie Reis Stuart Rennie	Sandra Purves Danny Callaghan Graeme Harvey Stewart Liddle Chris Gunstone Ian Robertson Karen Bradford David Roy John Aitken Martine Stead	Gordon and Liz Beetham Doug Scott Peter Lewis Andy Devenport Nuala and Jim Lonie Maureen Wilson David Wood Andy Sinclair Kenneth Robertson Ian Raven Ken Duerden Joan and Ian Murfitt
--	---	--

1. Apologies :

Tom Jamieson, Bob Wigley, Peter and Janette Nixon, Ian Walker, Barbara Braithwaite, Tricia McLuckie, Helen Wilson Allister and Anne Mackie, and Andy Eaglesfield.

2. Chris Matheson-Dear's (Interim chairman) statement, covering :

- Reason for having this meeting on Zoom
- Personal introduction
- PDF version of Annual Report has been issued.
- Acknowledgement of the diverse activities of LUCS including such things as the electric boat rally in August, that also included a steam boat.
- Unsung hero's especially Mauro Vecchi doing IT work, along with John Aitken. Boat team keeping 5 boats going. In particular Ronnie Reis, Mike Smith, Les Duff and Ian Walker
- Leamington's engine issue and the planned replacement, and Victoria's electrification.
- The significant effort made by LUCS volunteers to have the tea room open this year especially Lynne Nelson and Anne Mackie.
- Engagement with new members, to make new members feel more included. Chris wishes to extend the active membership with a more diverse mix of volunteers.
- Thank you to all LUCS volunteers and teams that keep the society operational, we have 100 active members out of 400 members overall.
- Thank you to those leaving the committee, Douglas Robertson, Allister Mackie and Stuart Rennie. Allister and Stuart will continue in their roles "off committee". Also thanks to David Wood who is standing down as Education Convenor.
- National Transport Trust "Red Wheel Plaque", which has been awarded to LUCS. The Red Wheel Scheme was created by the National Transport Trust to recognise and commemorate the most significant sites of historical importance to transport

heritage in the United Kingdom. Tribute to the pivotal role LUCS plays in the Union Canal.

- The passing of Joyce Green, who was involved in LUCS for many years, along with her husband Michael.
- Chris also noted it was the 200th anniversary of the Union Canal next year, with appropriate events anticipated.
- Potential motorised entry in the Marches
- St Michael – other uses such as floating entertainment venue.

3. **Previous Minutes (AGM 3rd Dec 2020)** – no amendments. Proposed by Graeme Harvey, seconded by Stewart Liddle

4. **Matters Arising from previous minutes** –
Mike Smith confirmed that a reassuring number of LUCS activities had been revived after lockdown. The museum was included in this. Wifi signal and payment card systems have all been operating effectively.

5. **Management Report** (see the Annual Report).

- Chris commented that each convener’s report could be read in the Annual Report and that printed copies will be available. Requested that if anyone knows of a need for a printed copy to let membership secretary know.

6. Accounts

David Shirres gave a report:

- Our balance at the start of the year was circa £51k and at the end was circa £50k. For such a difficult year this is very credible.
- Three grants had been obtained over the year: £3k from Scottish Canals, one grant of £17k from Museum Galleries Scotland that allowed LUCS to engage a software company to build a new booking system. A further grant of £5.5k was for COVID adaptations, this included screens and dispensers. It was also used to purchase the new payment system card readers, which have been very well received by all its users.
- A question arose over the use of “unaudited” in the accounts, it was clarified that this was a Companies House requirement.
- It was noted that there was a mention of “pension scheme” in the accounts. As LUCS has no paid staff this is superfluous. DS/CMD to clarify both points with the accountant.

7. Independent Examiners Report

Proposed by Danny Callaghan, seconded by Stuart Rennie.

8. Appointment of Philip Bald as Independent Examiner

Proposed by David Shirres, seconded by Mike Smith.

9. Appointment of Solicitors

The proposal is to appoint Ian Fraser (of Thorntons) as solicitor. Ian has been our solicitor since the previous AGM.

Proposed by David Shirres, seconded by Graeme Harvey.

10. Election of Officers and members of the committee of management

Nominations were received, and committee members elected as :

Office	Name	Proposer	Seconder
Chairman	Chris Matheson-Dear	Douglas Robertson	Mike Smith
Vice Chair	Mike Smith	Douglas Robertson	Ronnie Reis
Treasurer	David Shirres	Mike Smith	Ronnie Reis
Secretary	No nominations		
Ordinary committee			

Members			
	Doug Scott	Andy Eaglesfield	Ronnie Reis
	Andy Eaglesfield	Douglas Robertson	David Shirres
	Cassandra McArdle	Chris Matheson-Dear	Stewart Liddle
	Tom McPhie	Chris Matheson-Dear	David Shirres
	Lynne Nelson	Douglas Robertson	David Shirres
	Ronnie Reis	Douglas Robertson	Stewart Liddle

Chris asked if anyone would be willing to be an associate member. If so, they could be co-opted to the committee, please contact Chris direct.

11. Proposals for next season

- John Aitken supported the planned electrification of Victoria.
- Chris talked about the new engine for Leamington and, as the cost is above £400, this will be financed by SC (ie out of revenue).
- Karen Bradford, from Sorted Project thanked LUCS for the use of Victoria for lock training in Falkirk, it was very successful. Consequently Panacea (which is now a RYA training centre) will be available free of charge for LUCS First Aid training. Chris thanked Karen for this offer.
- Danny Callaghan noted that having Covid receptionists was a very good feature, they were able to chat to folk and promote the society.
- Chris noted how successful the Door Open Day was, showing how important the museum is to the society.
- Andy Sinclair welcomed the new committee and asked about TalkTalk being the provider of networking services, due to service problems in the past. John Aitken was able to provide reassurance, LUCS is with the Business Division so should get a better level of support. Noted that Mauro Vecchi (LUCS IT support) has done an excellent piece of work arranging this.

12. Fixing of subscriptions

Proposal to leave subscriptions unchanged.

Mike Smith proposed, David Shirres seconded.

AOCB

Chris commented on how popular this years Santa Cruises have been, we have a deluge of bookings, for circa 400 children.

Hopetoun Estate have donated a 12 foot Christmas tree. Appeal to volunteers to put it up in the basin.

Chris stated that, after the meeting, the LUCS pantomime cruise from last year will be shown.

Ronnie Reis thanked Karen and Sorted project for help in removing overhanging branches.

David Wood mentioned the book "Tracks around Linlithgow" by John McGregor, with some canal interest. Recommended reading.

Mike Smith mentioned a reasonable number of drivers are in training including a significant number of female drivers. We are indebted to Sorted and various other organisations for ancillary training (fire safety, first aid etc), so that we can provide boatmaster training to the canal in general. LUCS was able to do this in the past, and we intend to be able to do this again.

Andy Sinclair asked about Zoom lectures. Chris asked for any volunteers and this could be arranged.

Douglas Robertson then closed the meeting thanked all for attending.