

Proposed Agenda Subjects for the British Waterways Advisory Forum

The following is a list of three items that the new BWAFF may wish to consider as appropriate for early discussion with British Waterways.

The Property Portfolio

Most BW stakeholders recognise that the BW property portfolio is important in releasing much needed income to be used within the organisation to their general benefit. BWAFF should engage in a dialogue with BW on the strategy to be adopted to maximise this income within agreed guidelines that takes account of other important issues and seeks to achieve a reasonable balance for all. The overall aim would be to nip any conflict in the bud and to get potential opponents on side. These issues may include:

- The rightful protection of heritage;
- The views of those affected by developments that under normal circumstance may not be seen as 'stakeholders';
- The sensible protection of water freight facilities;
- The participation of stakeholder that may be affected by future development, e.g. boaters and traders, etc.

Dredging Strategy

The condition of the BW system, whilst much improved in recent years, still gives rise to discussion and dredging strategy is probably the foremost subject of debate. The BWAFF could usefully enter into a dialogue with BW on dredging strategy noting that many stakeholders would consider dredging to original profiles to be essential.

Affordable Boating

It is generally appreciated that the inland waterways should be an attractive leisure resource for a wide range of both water borne and tow path based users, regardless of social background or ability to pay. It follows that there should be a means by which potential new boaters may be encouraged to get on the water without having to endure high costs for acquisition, mooring and maintenance of craft. The BWAFF should enter into dialogue with BW on the strategy and practical policies to be followed to encourage affordable boating for new entrants into this leisure pursuit. This may seek to include, but not be limited to:

- The encouragement of a plentiful supply and choice of a range of mooring facilities to suit all pockets, so that they do not become a scarce highly priced resource;
- The encouragement of genuine self-help groups;
- The encouragement of trade organisations to participate in these policies.