

BCNS AGM 17 MAY 2024, CHAIR'S STATEMENT

Good evening everyone and welcome to the Annual General Meeting of the Birmingham Canal Navigations Society. It great to see you here today, and I would also like to thank Longwood Boat Club for hosting us tonight and over the weekend.

I think that despite a few undoubted trials and tribulations we have had another very successful year and I would just like to take this opportunity go through some of the highlights and the key issues.

First, the various events that we have run, starting with an excellent rally at the Pumphouse a year ago. Of course, the gloriously sunny weather helped, but nonetheless it was a great showcase for the Society, notwithstanding the fact that water problems meant Atlas got stuck on the way to the Pools with a cargo of CRT and other VIPs! It wasn't intended to make a point about the state of the cut, but it did.

We also ran two Explorer Cruises and the 24 Hour Marathon Challenge, both important events in our Calendar. Thanks to Andrew & Debbie Shepherd and our own Paul & Kirsty for running their respective cruises, and to everyone who helped

with the lockwheeling. The Explorer Cruises play such an important part in showcasing the delights of the BCN to people who might not otherwise cruise off the beaten track in this area. And it is good to see them fully-booked this year too, and indeed one of them coinciding with this Rally. A warm welcome if you are on this week's cruise.

The 2023 Marathon Challenge finished at the Malthouse Stables, Tipton with over 20 boats taking part. There were some impressive cruising feats, not least by the winners, Daniel and David Fasham on the remarkable Rivets 5,000. In addition, a significant amount of rubbish was collected in pursuit of the Shopping Trolley Trophy. Thanks to Jonathan Pegg for organising. This year the Challenge will be finishing at Hawne Basin.

So far in 2024 we've had the Big Clean Up based out of Minerva Wharf, Wolverhampton , working with the IWA Wergies and CRT. There was a reasonable haul of rubbish and we have received a useful amount of money from the weighed-in tat. Plans are already underway for next year based at Tipton. Back in March, we also held an excellent 'Icicle Cruise'. We boated up the locks to Parkhead (somewhere that seems to be less frequented these days), and back to Withymoor. Although we

didn't have icicles, it was definitely chilly and there had even been snow that morning. About 20 boats took part, though numbers were slightly down due to the emergency stoppage on the Stourbridge 16 which prevented some boats attending. I must record our huge thanks to our friends at Withymoor for their fantastic hospitality on Saturday night.

Last year also saw the Fund Britain's Waterways campaign event in central Birmingham. The highlight of this was our very own Bob Fox and Ivor Caplan appearing live on local TV news from Bimble. Obviously Bob also managed to give a plug to the BCNS! Atlas was also in attendance in a prime spot by the Mailbox.

While on events, I should also mention the IWA's Festival of Water at Pelsall the last August Bank Holiday. Although the Society was not directly involved, I have to say that Atlas & Malus were about the only boats that members of the public could actually board (in large part thanks to Francis Herne) and the main movement of interest on the water was provided by some of our members in the form of Enterprise towing its train of five joey boats.

Talking of Atlas & Malus, as you know, we own these historic boats jointly with Coombeswood Canal Trust. In the last year, the boats have been out and about at events including the Marathon Challenge (with some great coverage from the Cruising the Cut YouTube channel), Bradley, Brownhills, Pelsall and the Black Country Boating Festival. So far so good, they then set off for the Stourbridge Rally and promptly had to turn back because Atlas had sprung a leak! This was traced to the outer plate and has since been resolved with some over-plating. We're all set for more events this year. I would like particularly thank Phil Wild for all his work in coordinating the schedule crewing last year. He has now passed over the tiller to Francis Herne. Also thank to everyone from the BCNS and CCT who have been involved in the crewing and maintenance of Atlas and Malus. We continue to review the future of the boats with CCT on an annual basis. For the moment, we are keen to keep them going while we can.

Work parties continue to be one of our most important activity and make a valuable contribution to enhancing the BCN. Things were inevitably impacted by the non-availability of Phoenix for quite a while, but we have still managed to undertake some useful tasks. We have also run a couple of 'volunteering days' for companies – a nice way of generating goodwill, introducing

people to canals and getting some work done. We're trying to ensure that we can also generate some funds as well as goodwill.

The social evenings are another important activity and these have proved very popular. Thanks to Andy Tidy for arranging all of this. I should also thank Phil Wild again, this time for his continuing work in managing and expanding the BCNS Archive.

On social media, we continue to use our Facebook and Twitter platforms in an effective way, while the problems with the hosting of the website have also been resolved.

I will leave Kath will say more about finances, but suffice to say that costs have continued to rise. Against this background we are proposing an increase in subscription rates to take effect from next year. This is in line with the policy agreed at the 2021 AGM to review rates on a regular basis. And we continue to carefully monitor both income and expenditure.

On membership, the usual thanks to Marie for keeping everything on track, and for distributing our Boundary Post.

On membership more generally, I would say that worries about declining numbers are not unique to us – it's a societal issue

that is happening right across the heritage and other voluntary sectors.

A recurring theme of my AGM statements has been the condition of our physical assets, and this year has been no different. This time last year, we were celebrating the 25th birthday of our workboat Phoenix, since then we have spent a sum considerably north of £20,000 in order to get Phoenix back into operational shape. Hopefully, she's set for another 25 years. We're also reviewing our requirements for vehicles and trailers, and are hoping that we will be able to both rationalise and modernise our fleet.

Well that ends my fourth report as Chair. As usual, I want to thank all of the members of the BCN Society who, in so many different ways, contribute to what we do in promoting the conservation and use of the unique and amazing network of canals in this area. I think that we are pretty unique as a Society in terms of our range of activities and our capabilities. We really do make a difference, and on top of that we make friends and it's fun. So thank you all very much.

Registered Company No. 04306537 (England and Wales)

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The BCN Society

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Registered charity number 1091760

ABBREVIATED ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST March 2024

Balance Sheet
Notes to the Accounts
Trustees Report
Profit and Loss Account

The BCN Society

BALANCE SHEET

31ST March 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
FIXED ASSETS - Note 4		
Costs bfw	48355	51525
Additions	0	0
Less Depreciation	(3170)	(3170)
Less Loss on Disposals	0	0
	45185	48355
Current Assets		
Debtors	0	0
Cash at Bank & in hand	20941	42582
	20941	42582
CREDITORS - Amounts falling due within 12 months		
Trade Creditors	0	0
	0	0
NET CURRENT ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)	66126	90937
CREDITORS - Amounts falling due after more than one year		
Deposits for keys	110	110
TOTAL NET ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)	66016	90827
REPRESENTED BY		
Restricted fund Events	1823	1823
Restricted fund Awards for all	3428	3428
Restricted fund work party expenses	1019	1019
Restricted fund CRT BCN 250	5819	6819
Accumulated surplus	53927	77738
	66016	90827

For the year ending 31st March 2024 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Director's responsibilities;

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476,
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

These financial statements were approved by the board on 17th May 2024

M. J. O'Keeffe

The accounts were examined by the society examiner who reports

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Phil Clayton
211 Marsh Lane, Wolverhampton, WV10 6SA

The BCN Society

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the period ended 31st March 2024

1. Principal accounting policies

a) Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with applicable accounting standards.

2. Share Capital

The company has no share capital being a company limited by guarantee. Each members liability is restricted to £1.

3. Accumulated Surplus

2024

Surplus brought forward	90827
Loss for the year	<u>(24811)</u>
Balance carried forward	66016

4. Fixed Assets

The society owns a work boat purchased with the assistance of the Heritage Lottery Fund. The items also include tools for use by work parties and a marquee for use at events.

Depreciation is charged on the straight line basis at 10% and 20% per annum. No depreciation is charged on the work boat.

	Work Boat	Tools and Equipment	Marquee	Total
Brought Forward	24601	9551	14203	48355
Additions		0	0	0
Depreciation		(1592)	(1578)	(3170)
Written off				-
Carried Forward	24601	7959	12625	45185

The BCN Society

Report of the Trustees

The trustees are also the directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 1985 present their report and financial statements for the period ended 31st March 2023

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Review of activities

The Company, a registered charity was formed to promote the use and retention of the waterway known as the Birmingham Canal Navigations (BCN).

The society leases from Canal & Rivers Trust the Titford Pumphouse a Grade II listed former Birmingham Canal Navigations (BCN) Pumphouse which had been restored by the former British Waterways (now CRT) and is used by the society as a headquarters with meeting room, office and storage.

The society carries out work on the BCN and organizes a number of events to promote the use of the canal.

By Order of the Board

Secretary

The BCN Society

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

For the year ended 31st March 2024

	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total	2024	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total	2023
				£				£
Income								
Subscriptions		7544	7544			8508	8508	
Other Income			0				0	
Donations		8037	8037		0	1662	1091	
Events		2436	2436			3565	551	
Grants		0	0			0	0	
Pumphouse		750	750			251	251	
Rents received		5876	5876			5925	5925	
Other charitable income		9799	9799			6106	6106	
				26898				17509
Total Income				34442				26017
Expenditure								
Operating Expenses	1000	43083	44083		922	13883	14805	
Administration expenses								
Events		937	937		0	1364	1364	
Rent & Rates		11372	11372			9425	9425	
Depreciation		3170	3170			3170	3170	
Other Expenses	0	0	0		0	0	0	
				15479				13959
				59562				28764
(Loss) Surplus for the year				(25120)				(2474)
Bank interest				308				76
Surplus for the year carried forward				(24812)				(2671)



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
The BCN Society

On accounts for the year
ended

31st March 2024

Charity no
(if any)

1091760

Set out on pages

Accounts for 2024

A(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed: P. Clayton

Date: 3rd May 2024

Name: Philip Clayton

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Address: 211 Marsh Lane, Wolverhampton, WV10 6SA

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.