

A New Era for the Waterways

**The Government's strategy for the inland waterways
of England and Wales**

Canoe England's Response June 2011



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Executive summary

Canoe England welcomes the opportunity to respond to the “A New Era for the Waterways” consultation and supports the strategy.

Canoe England is enthusiastic about the potential development of a New Waterways Charity. We believe it will provide a great opportunity for local communities to come together and get involved with managing and developing their local waterways. In addition we especially look forward to working with the NWC to encourage more people to get out on the water, and to build a future where everyone can enjoy our waterways for years to come.

The New Waterways Charity (NWC) will have a different management style, outlook, ways of working and it will need to position itself in such a way as to be inclusive and dynamic shaking off the image of British Waterways and starting anew. The NWC should be a unique organisation, able to contribute a huge amount to the quality of people's lives and to the richness of their cultural, working, leisure and sporting experiences. Therefore, it is extremely important that it is perceived as an inclusive organisation in terms of the activities it undertakes but also through offering the opportunity for a diverse group of people to be involved in its structure (Council) and Local Waterway Partnerships.

We know that our inland waters are a resource that has been used since prehistoric times and form part of our natural and built heritage, because of this we should not forget that they are as important to the population now as they were then. Properly funded and managed these waters can deliver a wide range of benefits from the natural environment to health and well being, cultural heritage, climate change and local economies to name but a few. To achieve this the NWC needs to continue to receive Grant in Aid for longer than the planned 10 years and the suggestion would be for the amount of grant to be significantly increased. In addition the NWC management needs to be encouraged to seek alternative and imaginative funding mechanisms, as well as embracing alternative management solutions.

Our waterways are a resource for the entire population and should not be seen as the preserve of a few, to help this process waterways management should develop a robust volunteer network, volunteers who can take ownership of the resource and assist in preserving it for future generations. The involvement of young people in a volunteering role is extremely important. However, volunteering is a very broad church and this fact necessitates looking at all ways in which volunteers can be encouraged. Volunteering ranges from running trips by canoe, nature walks and talks to restoration and running museums and shops etc.

Canoe England believes the involvement of young people in the NWC is vital to its success. Young people will be the tax payers and volunteers of the future and need to be engaged with the developments taking place on our inland waterways and the NWC. This will not only ensure the longevity of our heritage but by being involved they can change their lives through learning new skills and having different experiences. Young People should be encouraged to voice their own opinion on how they would like to engage with the waterways – adults aren't able to think like Young People, even though they think they can! **(See Appendix 1)**

Volunteering is not just for the young and can and should be encouraged for all ages and sectors of society.

Canoe England welcomes the recognition of the importance of the inland waterways and recognises that it has a role to play as canoeing has grown to be the most popular watersport.

We note that New Era for the Waterways is a strategy document, and are hopeful that the aspirations come into being.

Part I General

Canoe England recognises that they have a real part to play in the future of our inland waterways and are happy to assist and advise wherever possible.

A recent independent survey of adult participation has revealed that canoeing continues to be the most popular and fastest growing watersport for the eighth year running.

The survey which is carried out annually and first conducted in 2002, was commissioned on behalf of; the Royal Yachting Association, the British Marine Federation, the Maritime and Coastguard Association and the Royal National Lifeboat Institute.

Of the twelve boating activities measured, canoeing has seen the biggest increase in participation with the survey demonstrating that 1,262,478 people over the age of 16 years participate at least once a week in canoe and kayaking. In addition there are over 600,000 under sixteen year olds taking part in canoeing at activities centres and canoe clubs.

The BCU vision is "helping and inspiring people to go canoeing" and they aim to make the sport more inclusive for all sections of society.

The BCU comprises of GB Canoeing and the home associations; –

- **GB Canoeing** Is responsible for the GB Teams (Olympic and Non Olympic). Through its GB Canoeing programmes it is dedicated to supporting the most talented athletes in the Olympic disciplines of Canoe Slalom and Sprint Racing to win medals at international competitions including the London 2012 Olympics. GB Canoeing is also responsible for liaison with the International Canoe Federation and the UK Coaching Framework and Coaching Awards.



- **Home Associations**

Canoe England –

is the membership body for canoeists, clubs, centres and associates in England.

The BCU/CE also works in close association with the membership bodies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



The BCU/CE recognises that canoeing is an environmentally benign activity and promotes through its environmental publications, courses and other activities appropriate behaviour and respect for the environment and has published a You, Your Canoe and the Environment advice leaflet. <http://www.canoe-england.org.uk/waterways-and-environment/environment/you-your-canoe-and-the-environment/>



The 'Canoe Foundation,' the BCU's charitable arm, is working to change people's lives through the sport of canoeing. It is working to have a positive impact in five key broad areas: Young People, Equality, Facilities, International work and Heritage.

The British Canoe Union (BCU) is the national body for canoeing and kayaking in the UK. Visit www.bcu.org.uk



Part 2

A New Era for the Waterways – Canoe England's Response to the Consultation Questions

Question 1: Do you agree that, over time, the charity should work towards including other navigations, including the EA Navigations in the next Spending Review?

In principle yes, but in order for the transition and merger to take place in a constructive manner it is important that the background work to include the EA navigations commences as soon as possible. The Government has stated that it is committed to transfer of the EA navigations to the charity by 2015/16, subject to affordability and the agreement of the NWC Trustees however, without a full and proper examination of the implications, including the funding and liability of the assets, the Trustees of the NWC will not be able to make an informed decision.

Question 2: Do you think that the proposed requirements of the Trust Declaration are the right ones? Are they sufficient/are there others which should be considered?

Canoe England would urge DEFRA to revisit the 20/20 document produced by British Waterways as it is felt some of the key points are missing in the present proposal. This includes the use of the word navigation fundamentally being used as navigations is why the canals were built and it is only latterly that they have become used by other groups such as walkers but they are still used as navigations by freight and recreational boaters including canoeists.

Clarification as to the status of a waterway needs to be clearly defined so that the NWC will be required to manage the waterway according to its status (cruiseway, remainder or commercial) including as to how that waterways status may be altered.

Question 3: Do you agree that the suggested charitable purposes for the NWC are broadly the right ones? Can you think of other necessary requirements?

Yes - They are broadly right but consideration needs to be given for inclusion of other waterways in due course, be they the EA navigations or others currently managed by the wide variety of navigation authorities in existence.

Question 4: Do you agree with the proposed 'mission statement'? How could it be improved?

Canoe England agrees in parts - When the canals where first developed they were built for a specific purpose but over time their function has changed and will continue to develop. This clearly means that there is the need to have a dynamic Mission Statement as to how they are managed and used for the benefit of the whole nation. The waterways are for all to enjoy/use through this century and beyond so need to be more than "preserved".

Question 5: Do you agree with the proposed 'belief' statement? How could it be improved?

As above ...more dynamic and with the recognition of the on water activities ie that they are first and foremost navigations which provide huge environmental, social and economic benefits.

Question 6: Do you agree with the proposed 'vision' statement? How could it be improved?

The statement is agreed with.

Question 7: Do you agree that the New Waterways Charity should enjoy the same powers and be subject to similar legal duties to maintain the waterways as British Waterways currently is?

This question is difficult to answer fully without the knowledge of the contents of Public Bodies Bill and what the provisions of the Ministerial order will be. In addition the full implications of legislation that exist and/or are to be implemented such as Water Framework Directive need very careful consideration not only for the financial implications but as to whether they alter the charitable objectives. Demands though the WFD alone could add a phenomenal cost to the NWC (and as yet unknown) by placing upon navigation authorities the requirement to fulfil the environmental standards.

Re-aligned water bodies for navigation known as artificial and heavily modified water bodies must aim to achieve good ecological potential that takes account of the modifications to maintain its use. The types of measures used to tackle issues on these water bodies, will be substantial and numerous eg fish passes for migrating fish.

Question 8: Do you agree with the proposed governance model for the new charity? What improvements could be made?

Canoe England has concerns over the proposed governance model and believes it will not deliver what is needed for the NWC. The concerns include

- The size of the Council – too large and unwieldy
- The proposed representative numbers of interest groups on Council
- The lack of opportunity for the Council really to be active and effective
- There appears to be no direct relationship between the Local Partnerships and the 11 Waterway Management Units,
- The Local Partnerships are covering such wide and diverse areas that "Local" becomes a misnomer
- The lack of real opportunity for Young People to be involved in the structure. (see separate section ***Inclusion of Young People Appendix 1***)
- There is no provision for membership

The Governance Structure gives no real clear indication of responsibilities or lines of contact. Canoe England feels that these do need to be clearly defined.

Whilst this is a response from Canoe England it must be recognised that some of the Waterway Management Units covering Wales include waterways in England. There are

differences in ownership and requirements between the countries so it may be best to have them managed within the existing operational structures.

Question 9: Should funds raised locally by the Local Partnership be spent on local priorities? Why?

In order to maintain the incentive for fund raising within local communities it is necessary for the fund raising to be focused on local needs and probably specific items eg nature trail, play ground, moorings etc . If all the monies or even a large proportion of funds raised were to go to the charity in general this would be a great disincentive for local communities to fund raise.

However, it does need to be recognised that perhaps a small proportion of the funds raised may need to be transferred and used by the NWC at the centre. Any plans for this to happen need to be carefully communicated with realistic percentages.

As some Local Partnership may be more successful in fund raising there may well be a disparity of standards around the network. To help to standardise spend engagement with the local Waterway Management is important in order to ensure a minimum standard throughout the network. Minimum standards could be for such items as

- Signage
- Portage points
- Canoe trails etc
- Standard of tow paths
- Moorings

It is important that those using the network, be they on the water or towpath, have a very similar positive experience wherever they are. Some form of minimum standards would go a long way to ensuring this.

Question 10: Who do you think should be encouraged to sit on Local Partnerships? How should the nominations panel be constituted; who are the essential parties?

In order to ensure that Local Partnerships are representative of the local area and its needs there should not be a statutory membership pattern. However, guidance may well need to be given to ensure fair representation of all parties including users as well as those with a specific skill set.

Question 11: Is between 8 and 12 the right size for a Local Partnership?

The number of people needed for each Partnership will depend very much on the circumstances of each one. There may well be Trusts, voluntary groups and other partnerships with legal requirements already in existence which need to be taken in to consideration. Each Partnership needs to have the flexibility to determine the numbers required in order for them to be dynamic, representative and successful.

Question 12: Which are the particular subjects or activities you think may require the attention of a specific sub-committee of a local partnership?

Linking in with the answer for Question 11 it is important this is not pre-determined. Local Partnerships should be able to decide for themselves what sub-committees, and on what subjects, they may need depending on their circumstances and these may well change over time.

Such subgroups could include

- Heritage
- Environmental
- Volunteers
- Fund raising
- Events

Question 13: How best can the New Waterways Charity strike the right balance between local needs and the needs of the waterways network as a whole?

It is important that the lines of communication and areas of responsibility are well established and take in to consideration the respective needs of the Partnerships and Management Units whilst dovetailing with the NWC objectives.

Question 14: How could the charity encourage effective working between different communities and partnerships who share the same waterway?

Fundamentally this will be the role of the Local Partnerships. They will need to establish effective and positive local representation and strong lines of communication with other Partnerships where the same waterway is shared. It is important that this is achieved to ensure the each Partnership has an understanding of the needs and shared priorities for the waterway.

Question 15: In what ways could people be helped to become more involved and take more responsibility for their local waterways? What might the barriers be, and how could they be overcome?

One of the barriers is that there is often a misconception about what volunteering is and what the benefits to the individual are as well as to the organisation.

For the individual the benefits of volunteering include?

- Increase in confidence
- Meeting new people and making new friends
- Improved organisational and work skills
- Enhanced employability and is admirable on a CV
- Improved career options
- Gained experience in different roles
- Developed transferable skills and knowledge
- Provided with new challenges
- Volunteers can show health benefits

The need for volunteers needs to be promoted locally to so that they can gain a better appreciation of the social, economic and environmental benefits to be captured through the improvement of their local waterways.

Question 16: In what ways could more people be encouraged to volunteer for the waterways? What might the barriers be, and how could they be overcome?

More people would be encouraged to volunteer if the NWC has a very positive image and a welcoming attitude to volunteers. This can be achieved by having Volunteer Coordinators in each area. The Volunteer Coordinator would have specific responsibility for supporting the voluntary workforce. This includes co-ordinating the recruitment, training and opportunities for their volunteers.

The Volunteer Coordinator will play a pivotal role in ensuring that volunteers feel positive about their volunteering experience and act as a main point of contact for volunteers.

There are many benefits of having Local Volunteer Coordinators. These include

- Providing support to the volunteers
- Increasing communication
- Assisting with recruitment initiatives
- Coordinating volunteers' skills to appropriate roles
- Organising training needs
- Raising the profile of the volunteers
- Thanking volunteers - from a simple 'thank you' to rewards and recognition
- Ongoing communication and support from sub groups/Partnership and NWC where appropriate.

The NWC would need to build up a network of Volunteer Coordinators and provide support to them. The development of a Volunteer Coordinator resource pack would be essential to assist them in their role.

It is important that volunteers have a role description. This recognises the importance of people understanding what their commitment is likely to be. Too often people get put off volunteering because we ask them to do too much – or because they see someone who does everything and think they will have to do that as well.

Volunteers can be the lifeblood of a charity/group and without them many things would not happen. Volunteers are extremely valuable and deserve considerable praise and thanks. So it's essential that volunteers feel that their role and their actions are important; they want to feel welcome, needed, useful, part of the organisation and thanked. To support volunteers a "Reward and Recognition Scheme" should be developed

The NWC needs to be realistic about what volunteers can do and when volunteers are available to volunteer. Flexibility and being able to enjoy volunteering must be key considerations so that a wider variety of people will volunteer for the NWC.

Question 17: What would a successful volunteer programme look like? What would it achieve?

In addition to the answer to Question 16 - Volunteers should be encouraged to add value to their local waterways and undertake any activities for which they are suitably skilled and qualified or want to be trained to do.

The success of a volunteer programme would be that none of the volunteers/employees or contractors feel compromised and can work in harmony to the benefit on the NWC.

Health and Safety and management procedures should not be used as a barrier to volunteers who can demonstrate the necessary self-management and skills.

Question 18: Do you agree that the new charity should initially focus on securing fair representation, and move towards a greater element of direct membership over time?

Canoe England would certainly favour the opportunity for membership to be part of the NWC, as membership could provide fairer representation of interests. It does believe that as the work progresses towards Vesting Day the interim trustees should determine whether the NWC is best served by membership at the beginning or at sometime in the future after its inception. Membership should enhance not detract from the work of the NWC.

Question 19: Do you agree with the proposed make up of the Council? Which interests should be represented?

Canoe England's main concern is about the un-wieldy size of the Council and its real ability to make a difference to the organisation.

Question 20: Should a proportion of the Council be directly elected? If so, who should be entitled to vote?

A significant percentage of the funding of the inland waterways comes through the payment of licenses. It is felt that these people should be represented through the election of individuals in order to reflect the direct support that they give. These would include commercial operators, boaters and anglers.

Question 21: Should the independent chair of the Appointments Committee be chosen by Committee members or the Council? What skills would they need?

The election should be via the Council.

Question 22: Are there other topics that you consider would benefit from Council scrutiny committees?

The need for additional topics will depend on the final constitution and working practices of the NWC so at this moment it is too early to state. However, the understanding has to be that there may well be the need for them.

Question 23: Are there any other activities of British Waterways that would be best placed in the CIC?

Canoe England is not aware of any at this present time.

Question 24: Government policy is to support the movement of freight on inland waterways, where it is economically sustainable. Do you agree that the status quo is no longer an option? Which of the 5 options do you prefer? What other options should we consider?

Canoe England recognises the value both economically and environmentally of carrying freight on the network. It also recognises the additional costs in maintaining waterways for freight and believes this will be a huge financial burden for the NWC, for which Canoe England already has concerns over its funding arrangements.

Canoe England feels unable to comment further in this but does support the findings and recommendations for Commercial Waterways in the already published IWAC reply to the New Era for the Waterways Consultation.

Question 25: What measures of the effectiveness of NWC's use of public funds (through the Government Funding Contract) would be appropriate?

Canoe England has concerns that the funding arrangements being suggested will not enable the NWC to fully meet the aspirations being set out. Therefore greater clarity about what is expected within the Government Funding Contract before measures of effectiveness can be established.

Question 26: Are there other areas where you think NWC could:

- Increase its commercial income.
- Its voluntary income.
- Its third party income.

The ability to raise additional funding will increase as BW becomes a charity BUT in order to attract additional funding from the public the NWC needs to ensure it has a new image and it not just seen as BW in another form. This is because unless the marketing and image is right people will believe it to be another Government organisation and will not be inspired to donate or fund raise for it as they may well believe that it should be fully funded by Government.

The idea to use hydropower as a means of raising funds has been suggested. Inappropriate HEP development and/or management regimes seriously damage canoeing and other recreational activities and can in severe cases wipe it out. This damage can be minimised by the interested parties and BW/NWC, evaluating each site on a case by case basis at the design stage with a view to introducing combined canoe and fish passes, sluiced by pass channels, landings and portage paths around the HEP, and with sympathetic management regimes, such that the HEP water intake is modified when being used for recreation and canoeists are on site.

Many proposed sites for HEP are current sites of canoeing activity.

It is with concern that we note that currently BW on many sites is both site owner and HEP promoter either directly or indirectly. Yet currently BW does not take into account or even consult with canoeists. The NWC must consult more widely on each and every one of their HEP development programme sites at the design stage as a matter of course.

Question 27: Are there other areas where you think NWC could save more money/make greater efficiencies?

In order to be able to make greater efficiencies especially in the medium to long term it is important that the funding of the NWC in its transition is adequate. In addition the NWC the liability for past service pension liabilities needs to be removed.

To ensure stability and sustainability of the charity there needs to be certainty of funding beyond 10 years.

The network consists of many aging structures for which the repair and maintenance costs are escalating. A way in which structures, such as bridges, are maintained needs to be found. Road bridges for example should become the responsibility of the relevant local highway authorities.

Question 28: We would welcome any views you have on the analysis in the Impact Assessment and relevant evidence that we could draw upon in finalising the assessment.

Canoe England would like to have seen a fully worked Business Plan for the next couple of years which based on the Impact Assessment which focus on the commercial prospects and the implications for the waterways.

Question 29: New Waterways Charity (NWC) is just the working title for the new charity. Which of the following suggestions for the name of the new charity do you prefer, and why?

- a) National Waterways Trust.
- b) Waterways Trust for England and Wales.
- c) Waterways Trust.
- d) National Canals and Rivers Trust.
- e) Canals and Rivers Trust.
- f) National Waterways Charity.
- g) [your suggestion]?

The name, whatever it is needs to consider the fact that the NWC is only but a part of the inland waterways network ... therefore cannot be considered to be "national"

To quote the "Waterways for Everyone" Consultation document of 2009...

"There are approximately 5,090kms (3,160 miles) of fully navigable inland waterways in England and Wales, about 445kms of which are tidal. British Waterways is responsible for about 2,615kms, of which about three quarters are canals. The Environment Agency manages almost 954kms, most of which are navigable rivers. The Broads Authority controls a 200km river-lake system. The Middle Level Commissioners manage 190kms, most of which have a dual function as drainage channels and navigations. The remainder are managed by a wide range of other bodies, including local authorities, port authorities and charitable trusts."

"In addition there are about 890kms of managed un-navigable waterways, about half of which are the responsibility of British Waterways (320km) and the Environment Agency (120km). There are a further 2,095kms of abandoned un-navigable waterways."

"Inland waterways are managed by more than 30 waterway authorities. Most are public bodies, and a few are from the private and voluntary sectors. This diversity of ownership reflects the complex historical evolution of the waterway system. Each authority has its own priorities, characteristics and legislative regime."

Appendix 1 - The Inclusion of Young People

1.0 The Inclusion of Young People

Canoe England believes the involvement of young people in the NWC is vital to its success. Young people will be the tax payers and volunteers of the future and need to be engaged with the developments taking place on our inland waterways and the NWC not only to ensure the longevity of our heritage but because being involved can change their lives. Young People should be encouraged to voice their own opinion on how they would like to engage with the waterways – adults aren't able to think like Young People, even though they think they can!

Trying to define the age of a young person is difficult but for the purposes of this document young people are up to the age of 21 years.

The need to engage young people in the future of our country at local and national levels has been recognised. Young people have a tremendous amount to bring to any organisation not only in terms of inspiration and enthusiasm but they have very forward thinking ideas about inclusion, diversity and indeed the needs of others.

Inner City Canals/waterways can be both 'no go areas' because of crime or on the other hand wonderful havens of modern lifestyles. If young people are engaged with their local waterways this could lead to a crime reduction, and the transformation of the area in to a place which is inviting to go to. It has been found on many occasions that where young people are engaged in looking after gardens etc the previous vandalism is reduced and the space is cared for and more often than not enhanced.

2.0 Education

The National Trust have stated on several occasions that they are Britain's biggest classroom but in reality with over half of the population living within 5 miles of a waterway the NWC has the potential to be even bigger!

Places of beauty and history contribute immeasurably to the health and well-being of the nation – learning in the fullest sense of the word. The waterways and their surrounding areas offer life-enhancing, even life changing experiences – often just by being there for all but especially young people. These positive experiences can come through imaginative interpretation, and sometimes through special learning events. By involving young people at Council level and in the local advisory groups will enable the NWC to really engage with the opportunities which can be developed locally and nationally.

The potential to use education in all of its forms and at all levels is endless. It warrants a considerable amount of work in terms of developing proposals and materials for links to education within all of the Key Stages, for activities and learning in and outside the classroom.

Linking the waterways and their surrounding environment in to the national curriculum (there is some link up already) does provide even greater opportunity for really diverse and dynamic educational opportunities.

However, education comes in many forms and the NWC does need to engage with educational opportunities in its widest sense

Just a few suggestions

- Nature walks/trails
- bird hides etc
- Modernising of some museums
- Up to date and informative literature
- badges with the uniformed organisation eg Natural England has a sponsored badge with the Cubs Scouts ..
- historical information alongside the waterways
- lock guides etc ie how they work, different types etc

3.0 Action Groups

Young people could get involved in holiday work/education camps and schemes and learn new skills as well as helping the NWC.

The NWC could also develop a network of young people to assist with the work of the NWC by

- Inspiring others to get involved and support the NWC .. adults and young people...
- Spread the word about environmental concerns, greening the waterways, nature conservation etc
- Inspiring others to get on board ..ie to take part in boating activities ie, canoeing, boating, rowing etc
- Inspiring others to use the waterways for walking, cycling, fishing,

4.0 Life long Careers

The opportunity to change young peoples' lives through involvement with the NWC is enormous. Young people can get involved in traineeships and programmes like the Duke of Edinburgh's Award or through the Prince's Trust and their involvement can be the starting point for life-long careers both on and off the water. eg

- Learning how to mend a lock gate might inspire someone to be an engineer, carpenter, teacher
- Learning how to set a nature trail, manage the hedgerows, natural banks etc might inspire someone to be a teacher, gardener, land manager or work in conservation etc

The permutations are almost endless but the NWC has the opportunity to make a huge difference to many young lives.

In addition to the land based activities, activities on the water can do the same. Whilst not all of us are going to be an Olympic champion there may well be a budding canoeist/sailor or rower amongst the young people involved in the NWC and providing the opportunity or inspiring them to take part may change their lives. They may go on to be an international athlete or have a career working in watersports or may purely use watersports for low level competition or for recreational purposes with their friends and families. In addition they will associate the waterways with fun and develop a lifelong understanding, and hopefully support, for them.

5.0 Examples of Young Volunteers and the involvement of Young People in organisations.

There are many organisation from which the NWC can draw useful ideas and experiences from. Enabling young people to help and inspire other young people is a theme running through many of the organisations which have young people at the heart of them or indeed a major part. The following are just a couple of examples but there are many more. Due to the

diverse nature of the opportunities available volunteering is becoming more appealing maybe even “cool” to do!

5.1 The Girl Guide Association

The Girl Guide Association has a whole network of young people who help others not only within their organisation but in community projects as well. For example there are young members who are “In4mers”. These specially trained young people are available to go in to other parts of the Guide Association to help the girls with a variety of issues from drugs, bullying etc. The belief is that young people find working with and being helped by other young people inspiring and more relevant.

5.2. Canoe England Youth Action Network

Canoe England has a Youth Action network whose main purpose is to provide a voice for young people within England, sharing ideas and comments with respect to Canoe England development initiatives and projects. This includes:

1. Resources being developed or reviewed
2. Templates being developed or reviewed
3. Thoughts and ideas on initiatives and projects

Membership of the group is open to 15 to 21 year olds who have signed up to or have completed a BCU/Canoe England leadership award namely the Cadet Leader Award, BCU Lifeguard, 4 and 5 star awards or BCU Coaching Award and are actively volunteering. (**See Appendix 1A**)

6.0 Use of modern technology

In the 21st Century and with a new modern NWC ways of engaging and promoting the work of the NWC should be undertaken though as many mediums as possible.

Several websites are beginning to tap into the power of the social networking model for philanthropy. Such models provide a means for connecting organisations with other interested parties and to reach a broader audience with interested users. Social networks are providing a different way for individuals to communicate digitally. These communities allow for the sharing of information and ideas, an old concept placed in a digital environment.

6.1 Social Networking

Web based social network services make it possible to connect people who share interests and activities across political, economic, and geographic borders through e-mail and instant messaging, online communities are created where a gift economy and reciprocal altruism are encouraged through cooperation. The Information given is drafted to suit the audience and in this case as information is a non rival good it can be given at practically no cost. (Sharing best practice) Companies have found that social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter are great ways to build their brand image - ideal for the NWC.

Social networking has really made inroads into society and none more so than with young people. For the NWC to engage fully with young people of various ages social networking such as Facebook and twitter must be considered. There are Facebook pages for British Waterways at the moment but these are didactic and not well followed. A more dynamic and regularly updated page/pages needs to be considered. There is an issue within social networking of child protection and ways to ensure the safety of young people can be implemented so child protection need not be considered a barrier to using social networking.

Social networking could also be used for any youth group which is set up - see the **Canoe England Youth Action Network Appendix 1A)** This would provide young people with a virtual forum on which to put forward ideas, mention successes and discuss issues concerning the waterways.

6.2 Websites

For young people under the age of 13 years Social networking sites such as Facebook are not available to them so the need for an interactive website with a section specially aimed at young people is needed to really engage the full range of young people.

7.0 Young People's Membership/Supporters Club

Whether there is the opportunity to be a member of the NWC or not there is a need to consider some kind of supporters club or membership for young people. To have a tangible "body" to be a member of, even if it is in the virtual world of the internet, is important for interested young people as it gives a sense of belonging as well as understanding with like minded and similarly motivated individuals.

Appendix 1A

CANOE ENGLAND YOUTH ACTION NETWORK

OUTLINE OF MEMBERSHIP, ROLE & EXPECTATIONS

November 2008



The purpose of this document is to provide an understanding of the aims and responsibilities of the Canoe England Youth Action Network.

1. MEMBERSHIP & RECRUITMENT

The Youth Action Network will consist of young volunteers across the country and is led by the Volunteer Development Officer from Canoe England.

Membership of the group will be open to 15 to 21 year olds who have signed up to or have completed a BCU/Canoe England leadership award namely the Cadet Leader Award, BCU Lifeguard, 4 and 5 star awards or BCU Coaching Award and are actively volunteering.

An ideal number for the group is 14 members but this will not be fixed and is dependent on ensuring an effective membership is achieved that reflects the various disciplines and roles within the sport (ie lifeguards, recreational, competition, coaching and officiating).

2. RECRUITMENT

The group were appointed initially through open recruitment which offered all qualified Cadet Leaders the opportunity to take up this position. Following this, 14 young volunteers joined the group and have been in place since November 2007.

Future members will be recruited annually and all newly qualified coaches, Cadet Leaders and BCU Lifeguards will be invited to join the group. Applications will also be promoted via the website, Volunteer Newsletter and Canoe Focus.

3. LONG TERM MEMBERSHIP

Members are entitled to remain in the group until their 21st birthday but a minimum of three responses will be expected per year. If insufficient responses are received members will be contacted to discuss their membership and exit from the group.

A member will be required to leave the group on their 21st birthday where membership to the National Volunteers Advisory Group will be offered.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Youth Action Network reports to the Canoe England Volunteer Development Officer. The main purpose of the role is to provide a voice for young people within England, sharing ideas and comments with respect to Canoe England development initiatives and projects. This includes:

- Resources being developed or reviewed
- Templates being developed or reviewed
- Thoughts and ideas on initiatives and projects

5. COMMUNICATION & MEETINGS

The Youth Action Network will be contacted via email or letter on a regular basis - approximately 5 times a year except where ongoing communication is required to gain further advice on a matter. Members will be provided with a feedback form for responses and where members are struggling to complete the form within the time, they can return a blank form to demonstrate their commitment to the group.

The group may choose to meet once a year unless agreed by all members that additional meetings are required. Travel will therefore be reimbursed at 25p per mile.

A summary of the feedback will be produced for the group with an outline of the impact of the groups' thoughts and advice.