

CBOA NEWS

In this issue	
John Dodwell retires	4
MSRS Review	7
CBOA Trade member survey results	8
Northern carrying news	9
The River Renaissance	11

CBOA at the Recycling and Waste Management Exhibition



CBOA member Andy Horn talking to a visitor (photo: D. Lowe)

This year's RWM exhibition during 14-15th September was very successful, with both a high level of enquiries and with a significant number that could very well lead to water transport possibilities. Some of these involved international companies, whose potential interest ranged from being unaware that a sizeable navigation was on their doorstep, or were using barges in other countries but had not ventured in water transport in UK.

Or they had assumed – incorrectly perhaps – that barge transport would be too complex before investigating it. Being aware of the local nuisance of lorry traffic to residents and how this could be mitigated by using the local waterway was another issue, where water transport could help the company with future planning consents or simply better relations with residents.

New potential traffics included soil removal, plastic waste recycling, energy from waste (EfW) on other waterways than the Thames, refuse derived fuels and biomass and materials for the Canal and River Trust. There were innovative ideas from a business consultancy looking for ways to create 'best-in-class' competitions with industry, waterways scoring highly so enabling this. The West Midlands canals were discussed for moving waste/effluent from Birmingham where road access is difficult, and also for another narrow canal possibility for EfW, accepting the small scale of the waterway. Container transport costs of water versus road were discussed. Ports were also highlighted with moving sea shipped materials further inland via waterways, instead of by road.

Except where mentioned, all the above were adjacent to UK large waterways where it would most likely be more economic, but the possibilities on the smaller waterways may also be feasible.

Some known contacts were also remade, which is useful for promoting ongoing discussion. Altogether the exhibition provided some of the most interesting and promising contacts made to date at this kind of event.

Contents

CBOA at the Recycling and Waste Management Exhibition	1
From the Chairman	3
UK News	4
John Dodwell, CBOA Marketing/Corporate and Public Affairs, retires	4
CBOA future objectives	4
CRT awards contracts for 10-year works programme	4
Government Future of Freight Plan	5
Green Party supports water freight development	5
Government Answers	5
Maritime 2050 strategy blind to inland water transport	6
MSRS review and recommendations	7
Professor Rex Harris	7
CBOA Trade members survey results	8
British Ports Authority welcomes Labour's policy	8
Regional News	9
Northern carrying activities	9
GRS ships Cornish aggregate to London	10
Thames Freight Guide	10
London wharves highlighted	11
The River Renaissance	11
PLA provide shore power	12
Plaistow back in use	12
Cory to handle and process Hertfordshire waste	13
In the press	14
'Threat to barges' as a mill in Hull closes	14
MP in Cheshire champions water transport	14
IWA promotes light freight	14
<i>Express and Star</i> hopeful for West Midlands canal carrying	15
Overseas News	15
Rhine levels low	15
CBOA for Members	15
CRT increase licences again	15
All-Party Parliamentary Group – Waterways meeting	15
CBOA officer contacts	16

From the Chairman



Discussions regarding the Port Leeds (Stourton) project continue with, we understand, two expressions of interest from potential wharf operators.

Members will be aware of the reports of undue fish mortality in the Knottingley/Ferrybridge canal section of the Aire & Calder Navigation after loaded barges passed through earlier in the year. Following trials at various drafts the Canal & River Trust imposed a draft restriction which effectively stopped freight movements. Dredging was promised for April/May but in fact, disappointingly, didn't start until August. At the time of writing, it's progressing well between Knottingley and Ferrybridge, and below Lemonroyd, with Bulholme to Castleford lock to follow. The shoals of fish seem to have disappeared, and the draft restriction through Knottingley has been lifted. In late September Branford's *Farndale H* loaded 450 tonnes on 7ft 6

in and then water ballasted to 8ft. This trial demonstrated that a draft of 7ft 6 in was possible from Goole to Leeds with just a few locations e.g., below Lemonroyd lock (the river silts if there are no deep drafted barges passing) where spot dredging was still needed to enable the statutory draft of 2.5 metres (8ft 2 in). Hopefully this will be carried out once that planned is complete.

We assisted a potential water freight customer who wishes to move aggregate from a new quarry near Stanley Ferry by organising a trip on a small tug from the quarry site down the Wakefield section of the A&CN to two potential terminal sites in the Knottingley/Kellingley area on the Aire & Calder main line.

The Association again had a stand (jointly funded by CRT) at the Recycling & Waste (RWM) show at the NEC on 14th-15th September. I am very grateful to Tim West, Andy Horn and Chris Poole for help with manning the stand. The level and quality of serious enquiries was, this year, gratifying and included proposals to move very large tonnages of gas on the Aire & Calder, for a potential regular movement using the Trent, and for movement of waste in Staffordshire plus we had visits from suppliers looking to fit emission reduction technology to existing barge engines, and to supply lock gates into the UK. Another enquiry was from an international investment company interested in funding green infrastructure (including barges), and currently developing manufacture of barges and ships from new materials offering substantial reduction in weight, plus autonomous operation.

The Association's Scottish representative (Jonathan Mosse) is actively monitoring the Scottish waterways and is always on the lookout for potential freight use, especially timber. He has made contact with Scottish Canals at a senior level and this will hopefully bear fruit. The Association has renewed its links with Transport for the North thanks to our President, and we've had some useful discussions at a high level. We are also again in contact with Midlands Connect emphasising the value of the Trent and Severn as potential freight arteries, plus the niche opportunities presented by the BCN. This last initiative has resulted in press reports which suggest a large-scale resumption of cargo operations on the midlands narrow canal system! (See page 15)

In my last report I spoke of potential research projects; to date we've not been able to secure funding for anything major but we will continue to investigate and develop this area of our work. Indeed, the Association's research officer has been diligently initiating and collating a survey of members and some initial results are available for this News on page 8 with more to follow in due course. Special thanks to Chris Poole for his work on this and to those trade members who took the trouble to respond. Tonnage carried by members on the UK inland waterways amounts to several million tonnes per year!

We have assisted the Thames Estuary Growth Board with its research into opportunities for movement of light freight on the Thames and have joined with them in asking for changes to be made to the waterway grant system (MSRS) to better assist the development of freight by water.

We have read with interest the Government's 'Future of Freight' strategy report – while short on detail, water freight does get a positive mention and we will be responding to a consultation on planning where it affects water freight. As members will be aware the Canal and River Trust, in its 10th year, is engaged in discussions with government regarding a future funding settlement for the Trust which has had, of late, to cope with major and unexpected calls on its funds for reservoir repairs and improvements, breaches and other weather-related issues etc. At the very least continuation of funding at the present level (allowing for inflation) is needed for the future and this does cause us some concern. The new government's thinking seems to be more about economic growth with less emphasis on 'levelling up' and addressing green issues – though some would argue that the latter contributes to the former. We strongly believe that making best use of our inland waterways for freight must help address both concerns and will be pressing the point to the minister with our partner organisations. On the subject of CRT our vice-chairman, Tim West, represents the freight interest on the Trust's Council and takes every opportunity to promote freight both in formal session and utilising the opportunities presented by 'networking' with the many diverse interests represented at these meetings.

Wednesday 16th November is the date for the 2022 AGM. This will once again be on-line (thus enabling people to attend who might not otherwise do so) and further information will be sent out in the usual way. The CRT Chief Executive Richard Parry has kindly agreed to address the meeting.

David Lowe.

UK News

John Dodwell, CBOA Marketing/Corporate and Public Affairs, retires



John receiving the IWA 25 year service plaque from Robert Aikman (Harry Arnold/Waterway Images)

John has this summer retired from his CBOA position of Marketing/Corporate and Public Affairs, the various functions he carried out now being taken on by other committee members. Tim West has been leading Corporate Affairs liaison and David Lowe/Tim will be handling press releases and other marketing needs.

John chaired CBOA between 2007-11 (resigning when he became a founding trustee of Canal & River Trust) and remained on the Committee until 2022. He led the Association to concentrate more on the larger waterways with their larger capacity barges. He re-invigorated CBOA News, his wife being editor for some years. CBOA began making representations to planning authorities (which has continued under Richard Horne) and with David Lowe the Association was successful in

a long drawn out campaign to safeguard wharves in the Leeds area – a policy since followed by some other Yorkshire councils. CBOA News is used as a means of seeking to influence both Members of Parliament other leading trade associations and navigation authorities. Periodic meetings were held with Canal & River Trust (and its predecessor British Waterways). CBOA also began acting as a marketing arm for the industry.

John's interest in water freight as a means of getting traffic off the roads began in the 1960/70s, and was also involved with voluntary restoration of the waterways. At that time, there was substantial barge traffic on the tidal and lower Thames (e.g., to the Brentford Depot and Kingston) and the River Lee. Then, there was still regular narrow boat traffic. He remembers tanker barges going to Nottingham and busy traffic on the Yorkshire waterways as well as in the Mersey area. After a period engaged in other businesses, John established a waterways consultancy which focussed on seeking grants to encourage water freight and in encouraging local authority planners to take water freight more seriously.

John's involvement with the Government sponsored Freight by Water trade group led to his arranging for it to merge with the Freight Transport Association when the Government withdrew support in the aftermath of the 2007-9 economic crisis. That eventually led to the FTA (now Logistics UK) establishing its Water Freight Council.

The CBOA committee is indebted to John for his inspiration, hard work and persistence not just in keeping water transport on the UK map but ensuring its success. He has kindly accepted the position of CBOA Vice President, which will be ratified at the November AGM.

CBOA future objectives

The following has been decided as imminent objectives for CBOA at the strategic/Governmental level:

- Reform/reinstatement of Freight Facilities Grant (FFG), or similar to FFG benefits including provision of capital cost
- A single focal point of contact within DfT for water freight issues
- CRT to have a statutory duty placed upon them for promotion of water freight for the benefit of the nation
- A waterways regulator put in place (as per road and rail)
- Land use planning policies to encourage modal shift to water, including protection of wharves (against development) where these wharves are seen to be potentially and strategically important.

CRT awards contracts for 10-year works programme

The Canal & River Trust has awarded contracts to JN Bentley and Kier to carry out large-scale construction and engineering projects across its 2,000 miles of historic waterways over the next decade. The contracts have a potential total value of approximately £500m and are the Trust's largest ever award of waterway engineering works it reports, starting in August 2022. JN Bentley and Kier will carry out the largest restoration and repair projects and will work on the Trust's complex assets such as reservoirs, embankments, culverts, tunnels and aqueducts.

Malcolm Horne, chief infrastructure and programmes officer at the Canal & River Trust reported that making the network as resilient as possible to more extreme weather in the face of a changing climate, investing in reservoirs and other key assets to strengthen infrastructure and ensuring the safety of the waterways and safeguarding their future is the overall objective. Improving value for money and continuing to deliver an effective emergency response when required are also integral to the plan.

Ian Bester, operations director at JN Bentley, said: "We are delighted to have been appointed to the new Civil Engineering Contract Framework, where we will continue to work collaboratively with the Trust to deliver vital infrastructure projects."

The new contracts are awarded for a period of up to ten years from August 2022, with an initial term of four years, followed by extension options of a further six years. A rigorous six-stage tender process was carried out over a 20-month period.

It has been said in the past that many of our 200+ year-old waterway structures have a design safety factor of 1, meaning that either they stay up or they don't. Let's hope they can improve this figure for future resilience, so having fewer critical failures.

Government Future of Freight Plan

The Government has published the Future of Freight plan, which sets out the government's long-term vision for the UK freight sector. Water transport seems to be included adequately, unfortunately if the front cover is supposed to grab one's attention, water transport is not featured in the graphics on the front page as are the other three principal transport modes.

The 'Vision' is a starting point for government / industry collaboration going forward and states the shared vision for the sector. It establishes the sectors' joint ambition and commitment to a long-term, cross-government and cross-modal approach to delivering the Vision.

Aspects of this are cost efficiency, reliability, resilience, environmental sustainability and value to society. It says "By focusing on this vision in the medium and long-term, industry and government can deliver the strong, efficient, and green freight sector that will power UK economic wellbeing and global influence for decades to come." The document can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1085917/future-of-freight-plan.pdf

Green Party supports water freight development

Not just this but development of the waterways for freight, passenger transport and leisure use also. Consultants would need to draw up a report which would outline those waterways that can be enlarged to serve industrial areas. This would reduce trans-shipment, pollution and inland transport costs as a result of the economies of scale made possible by the use of larger inland craft.

Inland waterways would become extensions to maritime transport connections, as they are on the continent. Coasters to penetrate further inland, integrated Tug Barge (ITB) system and the 'split ship' concept would also allow direct shipments between inland terminals in Britain and waterside industrial sites on the European waterways network, giving greater flexibility to shippers.

The Green Party would strengthen planning guidance in relation to waterways development and would develop regional policies of planning provision for inland ports, with integrated transport policy to ensure successful planning and development of waterways in the future, e.g., road bridges built with enough air draught. The Party would set up a national water freight unit to coordinate waterway freight development in the UK for identification, research, development and planning of waterways.

In the Financial Times Simon Kuper wrote "We need to return the waterways to service; imagine using the immense capacity of shipping to take delivery trucks off the roads. One of the newer Thames freight barges with a capacity of 1,750 tonnes can replace 44 large trucks. Even without being electric-powered, it uses much less energy per tonne and causes less noise pollution."

Is this too far-fetched for traditionally small UK thinking? May be not; they do this kind of thing on the continent, so why not here? And we are close enough to the continent for Short Sea Shipping. Let's not forget that in the 19th century many industries all over the UK were built beside canals and river navigations, because they just happened to be there already – what does that tell you? Modern industrial parks subsequently placed next to motorways junctions and major road access points springs to mind.

Government Answers

In a written answer, Rebecca Pow, The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs responded to Ben Everitt's (Conservative, Milton Keynes North) question about an assessment cost of maintaining and improving CRT's waterways by outlining the grant at present (£52m with an additional £10m p.a. performance related) and that the climate change impact is being considered as part of Defra's current review of the Government grant required by the Grant Agreement, to inform a decision about any future funding for the Trust from 2027.

Caroline Lucas (Green, Brighton, Pavilion) asked if DEFRA would publish details of the funds allocated for the maintenance of navigable waterways since 2017; and whether she has made estimates of the funding requirements for their maintenance over the next five years. Rebecca Pow responded that CRT provide this information on their web site, and then re-iterated the grant situation, followed by the arrangements for other waterway authorities. But with the current inflation increases, it will be a tough time ahead for all waterways authorities, unless the Government can be persuaded to release the fixed grant level somewhat.

Rachael Maskell, Shadow Minister (Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) asked what measures are there for the greater use that can be made of rivers for transport in places such as York. Robert Courts Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Transport) replied that waterways are valuable for transport, and the DfT was engaging with the sector to understand the opportunities and requirements for increased use of rivers, to move both freight and people, in addition to existing grants available to encourage a shift to water-freight.

In the House of Commons Select Committees, the Transport Select Committee Chair, Huw Merriman MP said: "The long-term solution (...to difficulties with road freight and driver shortages) lies in moving more freight to rail and water. This will help decarbonise the sector and make it more attractive to drivers who want to operate over shorter distances". He then said that drivers liked to get home to their families at night and not spend it in dangerous situations in anti-social lorry cabs. Perhaps the solution lies in cosy barge/boat cabins.

Trudy Harrison, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Transport) in a written statement about UK freight referred to and described the Future of Freight plan as described in the previous section. With the importance of the opportunities gained from the cross-modal approach she said "...the UK government and industry have agreed to work more closely together, and with the Devolved Administrations, to deliver a world-class, seamless flow of freight across our roads, railways, seas, skies and waterways."

Barry Sheerman Labour/Co-operative, Huddersfield in a written statement asked the Secretary of State for Transport what steps is he taking to increase the use of waterways for freight transportation, what steps is he taking to commit to upgrading waterways by allocating adequate funding for navigation authorities, and what plans he has to upgrade existing waterways so that they can take larger cargos. Robert Courts, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Transport) replied referring to the Mode Shift Revenue Support (MSRS) and Waterborne Freight grants with £20 million per year to 2024/25 to support rail and water freight services where the benefits of doing so are apparent. Also, in his reply he referred to the Future of Freight plan and other innovative modes such as e-cargo bikes. He said the plan also sets out how government will raise the status of freight within the planning system, will develop with industry a £7 million Freight Innovation Fund and will undertake work to develop a National Freight Network. This work will support, and provide opportunities to increase the use of waterways for freight. However, upgrades of the waterways network are the responsibility of CRT which is sponsored by DEFRA. Other types navigation authorities were mentioned and some are funded by other branches of DEFRA.

Actually, as CBOA officers have noticed the correct answer to Barry Sheerman's questions other than MSRS, is 'none'!

Perhaps the £7m Freight Innovation fund is something about which CBOA and operators should make sure that water transport gets a proper share of.

Maritime 2050 strategy blind to inland water transport

In a submission to the Transport Select Committee, a major operator on the UK's inland waterways and rivers says the government's Maritime 2050 strategy has made no impact on their sector. Rather than capitalising on the sector's strengths, it is ignoring the contribution the maritime sector can make to economic and environmental challenges.

As an illustration of what can be achieved using inland waterways, the operator, GPS Marine, identified the emissions savings made when they transported millions of tonnes of excavated material and delivered thousands of tonnes of construction materials to the high-profile infrastructure projects of London's Crossrail extension, the Northern Line extension and the Tideway tunnel. Compared with using HGVs these included:

- A carbon reduction of 7179 tonnes compared with conventional lorry movements
- 3915 accident-free barge movements
- Removal of approximately 358,000 lorry movements from UK roads
- Approximately 7,500,000 miles on public roads obviated
- Reduced road wear and traffic congestion
- Improved kerbside air quality due to reduction in vehicle journeys.

What's more, CBOA member GPS Marine says there was little or no consultation with companies like them, or the membership body Commercial Boat Operators Association, in devising Maritime 2050.

Despite a 2007 Transport Committee report on freight strategy giving the waterways higher priority, there is disappointment that the DfT has not delivered on it.

Issues of funding and skills, and protecting wharves to bring them back into use, remain. The submission ends with calls for a unified approach to the issues in government, with a single point of focus for maritime operators.

MSRS review and recommendations

In July this year a review was produced by Thames Estuary, the PLA and WSP on the Mode Shift Revenue Support scheme. Few operators consider the MSRS as offering a proper beneficial way to encourage water transport, some claiming it is not fit for purpose. The scheme offers assistance with operational costs for a proposed traffic, not with the set-up capital expenditure cost as did its predecessor the Freight Facilities Grant (FFG).

Issues found with the MSRS include the following:

For light freight:

- Grant funding levels are estimated to be lower than the financial need
- Lack of provision of capital is a barrier to developing light freight operations with the cost of piers and wharves etc.
- It is difficult for waterways to compete against intermodal rail operations.

For heavy freight:

- Considerable financial benefits can be obtained and analysis suggests that heavy operators could be competitive with MSRS applications
- If already financially viable, then it would not meet the application criteria for financial need
- Routes for heavy river freight could provide considerable environmental benefits from shifting from road and with additional funding there could be opportunities to open new routes. However, heavy freight operators typically do not have the resources to apply for MSRS compared to rail companies and may not be considered eligible for funding given that financial viability may already exist, as is the case for a selection of existing routes.

General:

- 'Step changes' are required it says for sustainable and innovative solutions in some areas, particularly focused on environmental initiatives to unlock decarbonisation opportunities
- The current MSRS environmental benefit estimates (per mile) for switching from road movements are estimated using rail cost alternatives, and therefore may underestimate the full benefit of removing road movements to river freight. The current mechanism may not be advantaging applications where a river freight solution is unlocking decarbonisation opportunities across the wider transport network
- As said above, the lack of capital costs is a significant barrier for opening new river routes, which is not as much a barrier for rail operations with a well-established infrastructure.

The review recommends changing the assessment criteria as follows:

- Changes are required as rail is unfairly favoured compared to water
- Relaxation of the criteria to encourage river applications
- Innovation particularly for decarbonisation solutions using waterways rather than a combined rail and waterways scheme
- Development of opportunities for light freight operations for specific movements with a pilot study (as detailed) to evaluate benefits and so adjust the scheme to better suit
- Finally, allow grant funding for capital expenditure.

Operators and other relevant transport bodies were consulted, but only those water transport operators in the London area appear to have been consulted (as seen by the list given), and so whether this is fully representative of the industry is a good question. Various factors would probably change the picture on other waterways and areas of the country; size of waterway may be another but in principle, any size of waterway – including our small waterways – could be applicable for an MSRS grant.

Professor Rex Harris

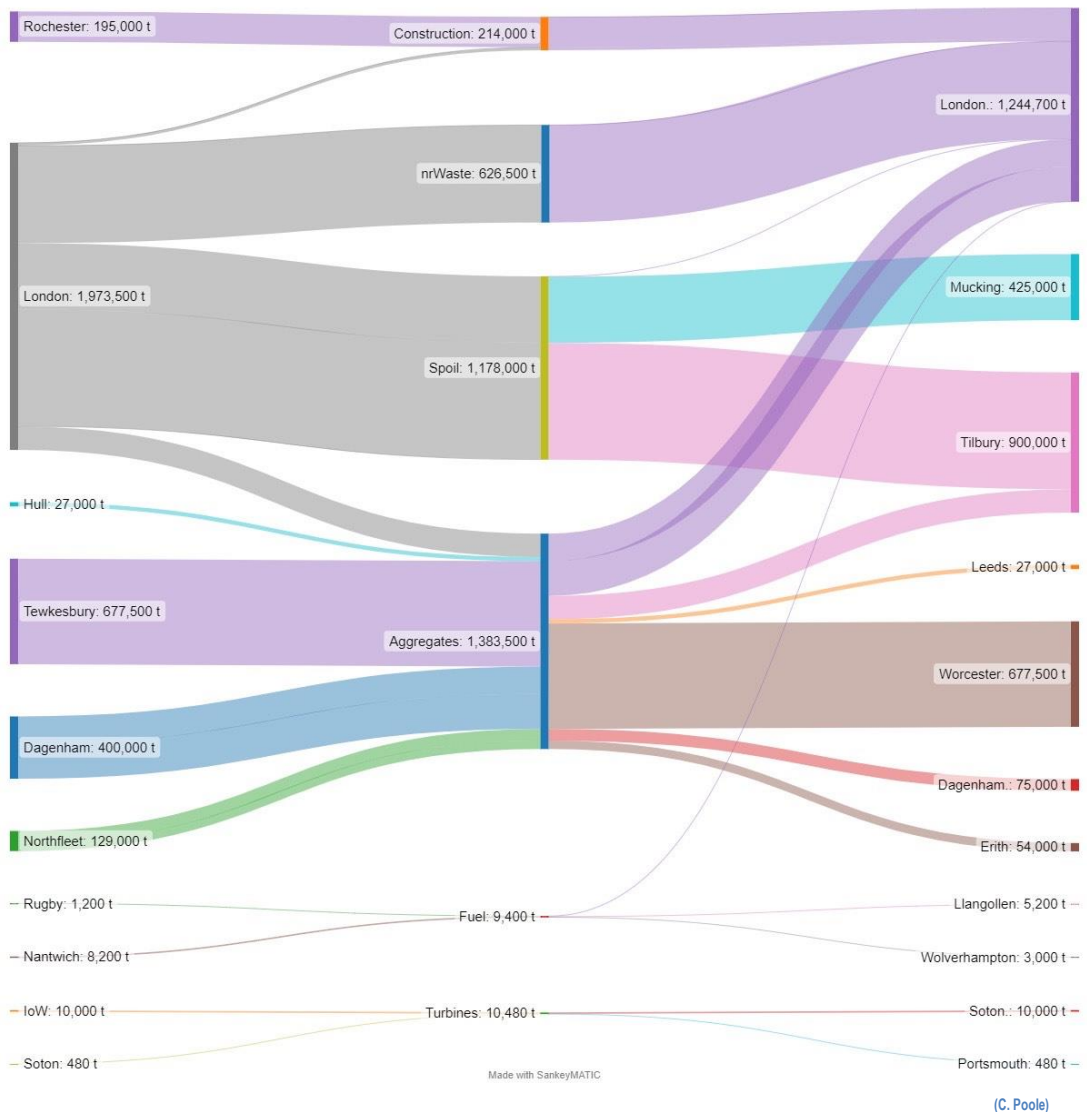
We were very sorry to hear from a colleague at Birmingham University of the death of Professor Rex Harris on the 2nd April. The funeral took place at Lodge Hill Crematorium, Selly Oak, Birmingham on Friday 13th May and the wake was held in the School of Metallurgy and Materials afterwards on the University of Birmingham Edgbaston Campus.

Prof. Rex Harris had kindly attended our AGM in April 2018 and gave us a captivating talk about Hydrogen as a source of motive energy, and also of the excellent magnetic properties of the element Boron for making more efficient electric generators and motors. He spearheaded construction of a hydrogen-powered canal boat, which was tried and tested, and undergoing further modifications. The aim of the hydrogen powered vessel was to produce a zero-emission hydrogen hybrid vessel propulsion system, also to convert a freight barge to be fuelled by hydrogen. CBOA are supportive of all attempts to develop alternative power systems for all vessels to reduce our carbon footprint, and to keep ahead in the transport industry with development of this.

We offer our belated condolences to his family, friends and colleagues.

CBOA Trade members survey results

Chris Poole, CBOA Research Officer has kindly produced the following diagram from the results of the CBOA Trade members' survey, the chief aspect being that members are currently carrying 3.4M tonnes annually as follows:



We look forward to further analyses and studies in the future from Chris to assist and quantify the case for water transport.

British Ports Authority welcomes Labour's policy

The Labour Party have announced a policy in September that they will create a National Wealth Fund if they form the next Government. This fund will see amongst other projects expansion of UK offshore wind generation, which will require considerable amount of port space and specialised infrastructure from ultra-deep-water berths and channels to heavy lift quays and significant laydown space. This will require a significant further investment in the UK port infrastructure to achieve it.

Mark Simmonds, Director of Policy & External Affairs at the British Ports Association said: "A long-term investment fund will be welcome as UK ports plan for the next generation of specialist infrastructure to support the energy transition."

Although UK ports received a welcome £1bn of investment last year, further would be required to satisfy the requirement for this project, to prevent the business going to Norwegian or closer European ports, with also the increased potential for European supply of products instead of UK supply.

Coupled with the port expansion, we must also consider how the port feeding inland waterways can play their part wherever possible, to deliver materials and equipment to ports for transhipment to sea going vessels.

Regional News

Northern carrying activities

CBOA committee member Maik Brown has kindly provided the following comprehensive report on traffics and carrying in the North East: -

AC Marine Aggregates Ltd – Hull to Leeds aggregates



Humber Barges' Fusedale H arriving at AC Marine's Knostrop Depot, Leeds (©maikb)

After 6 months of frustration, barges *Farndale H* and *Fusedale H* re-started last week to move aggregates between Albert Dock, Hull and Knostrop, Leeds.

The Aire and Calder Navigation (A&CN) has had its issues and fair share of bad luck over the last 18 months, which has resulted in the canal being closed for 9 months for a breach at New Bridge and then another 3 months earlier this year for 'fish' casualties at Ferrybridge, then another few months waiting for the dredging to start.

Dredging was supposed to commence in May, but only started in August and the plan is to dredge the A&CN to 3 metres (10ft) to enable barges to load to 500 tonnes or more (2.5 metres/8ft 2 in draft) in the canal and enable full loads to Leeds with each barge taking at least 25 lorries off the roads.

AC Marine of Rotherham are hopeful that CRT will agree to expanding the space at Knostrop, this will result in at least 4000 tonnes per week of material moving by barge between Hull and Leeds. AC Marine are also looking to expand their West Yorkshire operation in the near future with advance discussions taking place to move marine aggregates to two other wharves on the A&CN and with potentially a further wharf also on the Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation (SSYN).

MMS Workboats Ltd.

I am very pleased to be able to report that a new carrying company is just about to go into service called MMS Workboats Ltd, a CBOA member. This is a newly formed company whose objectives are to transport cargos between all the Humber based ports to Leeds and Rotherham in particular. The company has purchased the former bulk liquids tanker *Humber Princess* from Hughes Marine. The barge was previously owned by J H Whitaker's of Hull and was specially designed for the A&CN to carry petroleum products from Immingham to various inland terminals in the canal system including Castleford, Fleet and Leeds.

MMS Workboats have renamed the barge *MMS Off-Roader*. The newly refurbished *MMS Off-Roader* is capable of carrying 530 tonnes of cargo per trip and has the capability to remove up to 5200 lorry loads per year from the Humber ports inland to Leeds and Rotherham, and has the flexibility to carry other commodities as well as aggregates.



MMS Off-Roader in MMS' drydock, Hull, during conversion to dry cargo (©maikb)

The *MMS Off-Roader* can carry a multitude of cargos ranging from: -

- Bulk - aggregates, grains, steel
- Break bulk - building materials, pallets, boxes, drums, bags
- Containers 10ft - 20ft - 40ft including reefer
- Special cargos - heavy lift & large loads unable to move via road
- Recycled materials – refuse derived & solid recoverable fuels
- Potable fresh water.

In addition, MMS are able to offer quay services, covered storage, fork lift and crane facilities in Alexandra Dock, Hull.

Review of current barge operators and their vessels: -

- ❖ **Branford Barge Owners** – *Farndale H & Fossdale H*
- ❖ **Humber Barges Ltd** – *Fusedale H*
- ❖ **MMS Workboats** – *MMS Off-Roader*.



Exol Pride penning through Aldwarke Lock, Rotherham (©maikb)

Dean's Marine have semi prepared *Battlestone* and if the work continues to build & develop as expected, *Battlestone* will be added to the canal fleet.

Exol Lubricants

The *Exol Pride* is achieving three deliveries a fortnight of Lube Oil from Hull, to Exol's inland terminus at Rotherham on the SSYN. *Exol Pride* loads 400 tonnes and although the annual tonnage is not high, it is keeping the SSYN commercially alive.

So, I am pleased to report that carrying operations are looking really positive in this region.

GRS ships Cornish aggregate to London

In May, GRS (Roadstone) Limited reported that its Freight and Handling division had brought the first sea shipment of construction aggregate into London. This aggregate is derived from Cornish china clay waste, the contract amounting to half a million tonnes p.a. As 'secondary granite' – branded Enviroc®, it is transport by ship with a fraction of the embodied carbon of other construction aggregates.

London developers looking to build greener can specify the GRS material, available in bulk or bags, for almost every construction application from sub-base and capping layers to structural concrete and asphalt, and even decorative landscaping. With London consuming about 10 million tonnes of aggregate each year, recycling of demolition and excavation waste virtually at its maximum in the capital, GRS believes the way to further improve the sustainability of aggregates is to use secondaries and transport them as efficiently as possible, and by water fulfils this goal.

GRS has a marine wharf and processing plant at Tilbury and is also recommissioning a rail freight terminal to be able to transport secondary aggregates more widely across Greater London and the South East. Transporting aggregates by river and significantly reduces road miles and traffic congestion, and represents a fraction of the carbon emissions of road haulage, leaving lorries to continue the 'last mile' to destinations.

GRS reports "We anticipate that Enviroc® will change the way materials are specified on major construction jobs. Contractors can count on a consistent, quality product that meets specification and at the same time know that it's the most sustainable aggregate there is – a UK-sourced, industrial by-product transported by water. It doesn't get better than that."

Thames Freight Guide

A new Freight Guide, supported by the Port of London Authority, has been published to help businesses thinking of using the river to transport freight. Titled *Getting Started with River Freight: a Guide for Business* by the Cross River Partnership (CRP), explains which goods are most suited for transport by the river.

Contacts for groups and organisations are listed who can assist with facilitating river freight and advice on zero emissions and last mile delivery are provided. David Ebbrell, CRP project officer said that it simplifies the processes and obstacles for business and highlights the potential benefits that are gained from water transport.

The guide can be found at <https://crossriverpartnership.org/publications/>

London wharves highlighted

Waterway operators will welcome the commitment to preserve and upgrade London's safeguarded wharves.

One example, Swedish Wharf, is a safeguarded wharf at which ships and barges may dock to load and unload cargo or passengers. It currently houses office facilities and a fuel storage facility with parking for the commercial and private vehicles.



Swedish Wharf, Hammersmith and Fulham

The Mayor of London and the Port of London Authority have given it safeguarded status to ensure that it is retained as a working wharf. In December 2021, a planning application for housing and a working wharf at ground floor level was submitted to the Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham for the land at Albert and Swedish Wharf. The MP for Chelsea and Fulham, Greg Hands is pleased to see that the proposed housing development of the land at Albert and Swedish Wharves includes plans to utilise the wharves and keep them running.

Henley Investments' proposals will retain Swedish Wharf as a sustainable, long-term hub for freight handling, tapping into the River Thames' underutilised potential to support 'last-mile' deliveries and helping to keep more lorries off the capital's congested roads. They refer only to light freight but should also consider transport of heavy construction-related freight by water.

Henley mentions that a river bus could provide access to the site and this could also assist the car-free residents when the development has been completed.

A marine specialist notes that wharves being brought back into use might well need dredging, reinforcing along the frontage if the river wall is rendered unstable by the removal of supporting material or a marine deck is constructed in front of the wharf face.

The PLA commends the proposed spatial separation between wharf and residential uses at the site, so that potential conflicts of use and disturbance may be reduced to an acceptable level.

The unique circumstances of this scheme mean that the proposed development would enable two safeguarded wharves to be combined and reactivated for waterborne cargo handling use.

The Safeguarded Wharf Review was last updated for the 2018- 2021 period and subsequently recommended by the Secretary of State on 19 February 2021. These 'Directions' for safeguarded wharves require that the mayor is consulted prior to the granting of planning permission on a Safeguarded Wharf as listed. The list of these wharves can be found at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/planning-applications-and-decisions/safeguarded-wharves-directions>

The River Renaissance

James Trimmer, Director of Planning and Development, Port of London Authority (PLA), delivered the keynote address at the at the Logistics UK's Water Freight Seminar on 20th May at the Waterman's Hall, a Georgian building by the River Thames in the City of London.

James said the Thames is the link between what is now the UK's principal international gateway and the most populous and economically diverse region in the country. "It's the link that binds the two of them. Using the river to move goods results in fewer than half the carbon emissions per tonne per kilometre than using the road. With the inland fleet now transitioning to the use of biodiesel, this was already having a beneficial impact on air quality and emissions, including NOx and particulate matter, in the capital." The river fleet needs to modernise on the river and investment is coming he said. Predictability of passage is important and the Thames can achieve this, as indeed the tides are predictable.

The major infrastructure projects in the capital have used the river, as the sites are alongside it. More than five and a half million tonnes of project cargo, from aggregates to tunnel boring machines, has been moved along the river for the Tideway project.



The Waterman's Hall, St Mary at Hill

Light freight movements are also important and a number of piers are suitable for this. Volume rather than weight is perhaps the point here, and passenger traffic is also important.

A plan for growth in freight is being developed by the PLA as an opportunity to construct an infrastructure for future growth of freight on the Thames.

"For me, the river is part of the future of urban logistics in London because it offers what the customers need: sustainability, reliability and certainty," James said. The PLA are keen to listen to market requirements and facilitate the river renaissance that is envisaged.

Containing artefacts and steeped in a 500-year history of the watermen, the Waterman's Hall is the property of The Company of Watermen & Lightermen of the River Thames.

George Frideric Handel performed his wonderful Water Music on the Thames in July 1717 for King George I, so well within the watermen's period of history; but this was during the Baroque period after the "first" Renaissance. Sadly, they had not invented the clarinet then, so the Water Music cannot be played by a modern full orchestra except by arranging the music to include them.

The King, together with his waterborne aristocratic entourage and orchestra boated upstream from Whitehall Palace to Chelsea on the rising tide. A large quantity of oboes was amassed for the 1717 performance, most likely making an awesome sound across the water, in addition to the

splendid colourful pageantry as has been depicted. The King ordered the orchestra to repeat the Water Music at least three times on both up and downstream journeys as he liked it so much, the wind players no doubt having harder work than the oarsmen who were taking advantage of the tidal flow and ebb each way.

PLA provide shore power

In August the PLA announced that next year the first-ever, high-capacity, electric shore power station for vessels using the tidal Thames is due to be available. Firstly, at West India Pier, and another to follow in central London. Using renewable sources of electricity, the charging points will also be available to power other plant and equipment using the river. The intention is to reduce use of diesel power by the river's fleet and so reduce GHGs.

Net Zero Marine Services (NZMS) will install the first charging point at West India Pier with a loan from the PLA, with other later.

Robin Mortimer, PLA chief executive, said: "Hopefully the first of many, these new charging points are set to be a game changer for the tidal Thames. They are another major step forward in our work to decarbonise the river and deliver Net Zero and also have the potential to help give the capital the edge over competitor ports around the world." He sees that the river must play its part in reducing carbon emissions for the benefit of all and for a better quality of life for all.

Plaistow back in use



Plaistow wharf (PLA)

In April the PLA announced that Plaistow wharf in Newnham on the Thames was back in action following a £2.6m investment programme by the PLA, also in preparing the adjacent Primrose wharf. Keltbray Construction undertook works to strengthen the quayside and strengthening the river wall, GPS carried out river bed preparations. It is 20 years since barges last used the wharf.

The first barge, 600tonne capacity to arrive with GPS' tug Cambria loaded spoil at Plaistow wharf in April.

Cory to handle and process Hertfordshire waste



Cory Riverside 1 facility (Cory)

In June, CBOA member Cory announced that it has been awarded a major contract by Hertfordshire County Council to manage the treatment of 100,000tpa of the county's waste. The contract will run from April 2024 for ten years, with the option to extend for another five years.

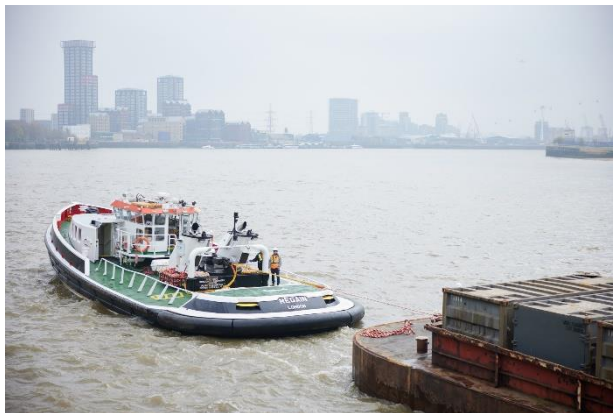
This is for non-recyclable, residual waste originating in Hertfordshire, converting it to electricity and recycled materials for use in roading and construction.

The waste will be transported to Belvedere by river via Cory's waste transfer station in

Barking. Cory's use of the Thames removes around 100,000 vehicle journeys from London's roads each year.

A councillor from Hertfordshire County Council said: "We want to create a cleaner and greener environment in Hertfordshire, so being able to stop sending waste to landfill sites is really a significant step for us." He acknowledged that even after encouraging residents to avoid throwing away less, around 250,000 tonnes a year still needs to be disposed of. New contracts like this are environmentally attractive to the council.

The Riverside 1 plant will also benefit from a power purchase agreement (PPA) with energy trading company Danske Commodities, Cory announced in June. Danske Commodities will provide balancing, asset optimisation and route-to-market for Cory's Riverside 1 EfW facility.



Cory Northumberland Wharf waste transfer under way (Cory)

Cory receives around 750,000 tonnes of non-recyclable black bag waste a year, converting it to energy and avoiding landfill. Danske Commodities will use its trading expertise to optimise and offtake the energy so generated. Cory said that by using Danske Commodities, increases access to the energy market and decreases liquidity risk.

In their 2021 Annual Report, Cory stated diverted a record 782,000 tonnes of residual waste from landfill at its energy from waste (EfW) facility in Belvedere, 7% increase compared with 2020, saving around 170,000 tonnes of CO₂e from being released into the atmosphere, while producing 532 GWh of electricity for domestic consumption. 170,000 tonnes of ash were turned into construction aggregate. The company generated £141.4 million in underlying revenue, nearly 10% increase on the previous year.

In May, Cory announced an MoU with Norway for Cory and Northern Lights to explore the opportunity to ship carbon from Cory's energy from waste operations to Northern Lights' subsea carbon storage facilities in Norway. In addition to strengthening the UK and Norway's free trade agreement, the partnership could help to create a blueprint for international carbon transportation and storage and the development of a global carbon trading market. This announcement coincided with a meeting between PM Boris Johnson and the Norwegian PM Jonas Gahr Støre and other senior cabinet officials of both countries to discuss the UK and Norway's energy alliance.

As with other socially conscious corporates, Cory announced the launch of the 2022 Cory Community Fund, which will provide grants for groups which generate positive improvements in local people's lives. Grant of up to £7,500 are available for protecting the local environment and supporting the circular economy and awareness schemes; Enhancing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics skills and of benefit to local people in the community in other meaningful ways. The 2021 scheme supported rowing activities, green spaces for young people, Churches Together, nature activities/awareness, and the School of Hard Knocks working with pupils at risk of exclusion or low attainment.

In the press

'Threat to barges' as a mill in Hull closes



Swinderby (CBOA member Mainmast) on the River Hull (M. Slater)

The *Yorkshire Post* carried an article in June reporting that a site including the distinctive 1912 built Isis Oil Mills off Stoneferry will close in December with 36 jobs being lost. Cargill's who have run the mill since 1985, say it is due to market conditions. Rape seed and other speciality crops are crushed for oil manufacture.

This will leave only 3 processing sites in the UK – Liverpool, Erith (London) and a smaller site in Warwickshire.

MP in Cheshire champions water transport

Esther McVey, MP for Tatton and photographed wearing a captain's hat at the helm of the steam tug *Daniel Adamson*, is very keen to promote use of local waterways for both freight and leisure, so reported the *Northwich and Winsford Guardian*.

Whilst on a trip on the *Daniel Adamson*, she experienced the sand build-up in the River Weaver, limiting large vessels and freight opportunities.

She said "I think dredging additional sections of the Weaver is part of the solution and could bring both environmental and economic benefits to our area. Not only would more vessels be able to use the river, for commercial transportation (reducing trucks on the road) but increased activity would be a boost to the local economy through regeneration of the waterfront and bringing more people to Baron Quays shopping centre.

"I am really keen to see a multi-agency approach to this issue to see if we can attract initial funding to start dredging and so will be writing to Cheshire West and Chester Council, DEFRA, the Canal and River Trust and neighbouring MP Mike Amesbury to discuss how we can work together to make this happen."

IWA promotes light freight

In their Autumn newsletter, The Inland Waterways Association devoted a full page on water light freight, but also acknowledging the part that waterways play with heavy freight. A freight meeting was held with the APPGW (All-Party Parliamentary Group Waterways) earlier in the year about freight, and more recently with a seminar hosted by the Company of Watermen and Lightermen of the river Thames.

Over 60% of inland freight is carried on the Thames, mostly through London. With 3-4 million tonnes annually, only a small amount of light freight is carried however. Energy consumption by water wins – 17% of fuel that is used by road and 50% of that by rail it is calculated, with HVO fuel used to reduce NOX and particulate emissions.

Goods can be relied upon to arrive on time without traffic delays; the only hindrances known in using the Thames is the occasional Thames Barrier closure which can be predicted in advance with some accuracy, and occasional fog!

Express and Star hopeful for West Midlands canal carrying

The *Express and Star* carried an article, following on from a new freight strategy report by regional transport body, Midlands Connect. It was interpreted as if the canals around Birmingham would once again be used often for freight, with the statement "Transport chiefs say the use of canals to move greater quantities of goods must be "considered" if the region is to decarbonise freight and free up the roads", and "Transport modes such as water freight and rail freight are more sustainable and emit less per tonne carried, particularly carbon dioxide."

We would very much like to agree, especially considering the lock free lengths available. However, the reality is that the major potential is with the Severn from the Bristol Channel ports (up to Port Worcester, long proposed by our member Thompson River Transport), plus to a lesser degree, from the Humber Ports up the Trent to an inland terminal in Nottingham.

But there could be some potential on the BCN for 'last mile' deliveries and maybe waste. Although several years ago a BW initiative, led by the Tom Chaplin then BW freight manager, unfortunately failed to make headway. Still, the scope is there; it is being done on London's canals which proves the case. The lock free lengths around Birmingham can take wider, longer boats also.

Overseas News

Rhine levels low

The *Telegraph* reported in July that Rhine levels were significantly down with the dry summer across Europe. Kaub, on the long lock free but 'sloping' normally fast flowing section of the river was reported as being the worst place to pass with barges loading much less than usual to get through, with levels falling by 1 metre. (From paintings, there was once a toll house at Kaub a long time ago, on the rocks in the middle of the river).

The energy crisis was quoted as 'particularly painful' with Rhine barges delivering oil and coal to factories and power plants, with heatwave records broken in June following a dry winter. The Rhine is about 770 miles long, passing through Germany, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands, with an estimated 6,900 vessels carrying about 10million tpa. The largest vessels are Euro class V size, up to about 110m x 12m, normally carrying up to 3000 tonnes.

In Italy the River Po which is its longest, was also reported as drying up after the most severe drought in 70 years.

CBOA for Members

CRT increase licences again

In August CRT announced a second increase this year of 4% to licences, following a 4% rise in April. With soaring inflation and costs and as it says, construction costs which are rising faster than the headline inflation figure. But the Government grant payment is frozen this year (and hence declining in real terms) and until 2027. Some scaling back of non-essential works is occurring, however CRT report that this winter foresees one of the largest programmes of repairs and maintenance to date.

CRT will agree its prices from April 2023 in November, continuing to seek to balance the impact on all boat operations and boaters with the pressure that the Trust's finances are experiencing. Support to the vulnerable is offered with flexible payment plans offered on an individual basis and signposting to relevant services where necessary.

All-Party Parliamentary Group – Waterways meeting

The next meeting of the APPG Waterways has been re-scheduled for Wednesday 2nd November, from 9.30am to 11am. Richard Parry, Chief Executive of Canal & River Trust will be speaking about the Trust's long-term financial position, and specifically the DEFRA review of their future grant funding.

It will be a hybrid meeting with MPs and Peers who will be encouraged to attend in person at Westminster, with waterway organisations joining by video link. An agenda with joining details will be available nearer the time, the Inland Waterways Association will have details of this.

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