

**WATERWAYS OMBUDSMAN COMMITTEE**  
**Held by Zoom**  
**On Monday 13 September at 09:15 a.m.**

**Present:**

Karen McArthur (KM)	Independent Member (Chair)
Jane Brothwood (JB)	Independent Member
Lisa Smallwood (LS)	Independent Member
Alan Collins (AC)	Independent Member

**Apologies**

Claire Stokes (CS)	Independent Member
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**In attendance**

**Navigation Authority Observers**

Janet Hogben (JH)	Canal & River Trust Board Representative
Tom Deards (TD)	Canal & River Trust Executive Representative
David Greer (DG)	Avon Navigation Trust Representative

**In attendance:**

Sarah Daniel (SD)	Ombudsman
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**User Representative**

Dave Mendes da Costa (DMdC)	Canal & River Trust Council Member
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**Action**

**1. Welcome & Apologies**

KM opened the meeting and welcome DMdC to his first Committee meeting, confirming that she had thanked SR for her contribution as User Representative.

Apologies noted as above.

DMdC introduced himself, as a long-term user and resident of the inland waterways, interested in the work of the Committee.

**2. Declarations of interest**

The Register of Interests was noted, and no other interests related to the Committee's work were declared.

**3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 June 2021**

Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2021 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

**4. Action Log**

An update was provided on the open actions in the Action Log

	<b>Action</b>
<b>11 November 2019</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Minute 12</b> – TD proposed SD and KM attendance at March 2022 Council meeting</li> </ul>	TD
<b>8 February 2021</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Minute 7</b> – TD to schedule Boat Safety Scheme presentation for future Committee meeting</li> </ul>	TD
<b>21 June 2021</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Minute 4</b> – SD had received Trust’s risk register template. KM felt that current format of risk register was not ideal in Diligent, as it spread over several pages.</li> </ul>	TD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Minute 6</b> – SD had raised reduction in complaints to quarterly meeting with Trust’s Complaints team</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Minute 8</b> – TD to schedule Equality Act presentation for future Committee meeting</li> </ul>	TD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Minute 9</b> – disclaimer had been circulated, which the Committee was happy with subject to making ‘if sent in error’ wording more visible</li> </ul>	SD
<b>5. Deep Dive – Lone Working</b>	
SD took the Committee through the report, which was well received by the Committee.	
TD agreed to send SD and the Committee a copy of the Trust’s ‘The Line’ card, which was now given to all Trust colleagues as part of their induction.	TD
SD agreed to review website wording around unacceptable behaviour.	
	SD
<b>6. New Business and Comms</b>	
JB took the Committee through the report.	
The Committee discussion covered the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TD agreed to reach out again to AINA and Peel (in respect of the Bridgewater and Manchester Ship Canal)</li> </ul>	TD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TD agreed to consider whether the Scheme could be incorporated into the Boat Safety Scheme</li> </ul>	TD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DMdC suggested that the Cam Conservators be approached as a possible member and agreed to speak to his personal connections.</li> </ul>	DMdC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DG agreed to co-ordinate a section on the Scheme in ANT’s annual publication and to request an invite to SD for the 2022 AGM</li> </ul>	DG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SD was putting together a wider press release to go out early in 2022.</li> </ul>	SD JB

- JB agreed to look into whether there may be any suitable members in Northern Ireland.
- TD agreed to consider further ways of publicising the Scheme within Trust governance stakeholder groups

## 7. **Ombudsman's Report**

SD went through the Ombudsman's report, noting the following

- Quarterly meeting with Trust's Customer Services team
- SD was due to attend the upcoming Ombudsman Association (virtual) meeting next week
- Casework had dropped to more a more typical level, following a significant upturn in cases earlier in 2021
- Majority of referrals were now within jurisdiction, although a number had not yet gone through the full Trust complaints process.
- Open cases, including 2 other cases not in report (relating to treatment of new boaters and mooring space reduction)
- Closed investigations
- Governance complaint where jurisdiction had not been accepted (as the complaint had gone to the Charity Commission).
- Survey Monkey – SD did not feel it was worth reinvesting in and was happy to stick with existing survey

DMdC observed that the survey options were a little confusing and could be more 'outcomes focused', (e.g. how could the service be improved?) which SD agreed to consider.

**SD**

DMdC also noted the closed investigation relating to mooring arrears, particularly in the light of recent change to mooring terms and conditions which enabled the Trust to refuse renewals. TD agreed to clarify this.

**TD**

## 8 **Financial Update**

8.1 The report was noted.

## 9. **Any Other Business**

JB noted that the Scheme Website did not link through to the Ombudsman Association, which SD agreed to remedy.

**SD**

KM requested that the February 2022 meeting be cancelled, with a date to be found in March 2022.

**TD**

TD agreed to update Committee on the venue for 6 December 2021 meeting.

**TD**

**10. Close of Meeting**

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 10.35am.

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

6 December 2021, venue tbc.

**Chairman**