



LAGAN CANAL TRUST

**Lagan Canal Trust Annual Report
October 2012 to September 2013**

1. COMPANY INFORMATION

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE

- **Governing document:** Memorandum & Articles of Association
- **Company limited by guarantee no:** NI073608
- **Registered charity no:** XT13118
- **Registered office:** Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Craigavon, Co Armagh, BT66 6NJ
- **Administration office:** Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Craigavon, Co Armagh, BT66 6NJ
- **Auditors:** Dawson Nangle and Tumelty ,91-97 Ormeau Road, Belfast, BT7 1SH
- **Solicitors:** MacCorkell Legal & Commercial, Garvey Studios, 8-10 Longstone Street, Lisburn. BT28 1TP
- **Principal activity:** To achieve the re opening of the Lagan Navigation from Belfast Harbour to Lough Neagh

DIRECTORS

Erskine Holmes OBE - Chair
Brian Cassells OBE – Vice Chair
Alderman G Savage
Mayor of Craigavon Cllr M Baxter
Cllr J Palmer
Cllr A Beattie
Alderman S Duncan
Cllr P Catney
Jim Henning

Mr J Beattie (fixed term for one year from September 2012)

Observers from Belfast City Council

The Lord Mayor of Belfast Cllr M O’Mullieor
Cllr Guy Spence

Public Directors

Wesley Henderson
Dominic Lavery
Dr Caragh Reid
Joe Nelson
Wilson Steen
Prof. Alan Woodside
James Turner
Mike Clarke

Portfolio

Community and User Groups
Engineering and Cost Management
Tourism and Business
Natural Heritage
Farming and Landholding
Built Heritage

STAFF

Brenda Turnbull, Chief Officer
Peter Scott Project Delivery Assistant
Chris Harper, GIS Support Officer, secondment from Craigavon Borough Council (left 15th October 2013)
Linda Crymble, Administration & Research Assistant (from 30th September 2013)

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Company Law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which will give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Trust and of the surplus or deficit of the Trust for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare financial statements on an ongoing concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Trust will continue in operation.

Charity trustees are the people who serve on the governing body of a charity. They may be known as trustees, directors, board members, governors or committee members. The principles and main duties are the same in all cases. Trustees have, and must accept, ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of a charity, and ensuring that it is solvent, keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company, well-run, and meeting the needs for which it has been set up.

THE PARTNERSHIP

The Lagan Canal Trust is a partnership organisation which was established to further the campaign to re-open the Lagan Navigation from Belfast Harbour to Lough Neagh. The Trust is governed by its Articles of Association and Memorandum of Association.

The strength of the Trust partnership lies in the commitment of all those involved in securing the re-opening of the Navigation based on the core objectives. The partners successfully continue to strategically work together, recognising the benefits of a co-ordinated approach in setting out the Re-opening Framework to achieve the Trusts objectives, articulate social impact and lever support and secure funding for the re-opening.

The Trust Board is comprised of representatives of the key partners listed as well as 6 public directors representing core interests. The board meets quarterly. The Executive Committee supports and advises the Trust staff and is responsible to the Board, it meets bi-monthly.

The Executive Committee is comprised of officers from the principal partner agencies and other invitees - as permanent members of the Committee, or for specific advisory functions or programmes.

A record of attendance at the Trusts Board and Executive Committee meetings is attached in **Appendix 1**.

CONTRIBUTIONS IN KIND

LCT has many other partners that make Contributions in Kind, CIK, to the re opening project. Some of the ways the Trust is supported are outline below;

Belfast City Council

Belfast City Council Tourism Officer and Project Sponsor work closely with the Chief Officer and staff to ensure that programmes are developed in line with the overall aim to re open the Lagan Navigation in particular the new Belfast Sea Lock, the Lagan Gateway Project at Stranmillis and the wider Lagan Corridor.

Castlereagh Borough Council

Castlereagh Borough Councils appointed officer works in close liaison with the Chief Officer to ensure that programs are developed in line with the overall aim to re open the Navigation. Ongoing projects to enhance the Navigation include support for developing projects such the installation of canoe steps on the Lagan and extension of facilities at Lock No 3 to include citing of the 'Industry' Barge.

Lisburn City Council

Lisburn City Council Regeneration Manager works with the Chief Officer and staff in many operational areas; from provision of subsidised facilities for meetings and other events, to significant match funding of the Lagan Rural partnership RDP grant for the clearance and survey works at the Union Locks. The Councils significant input and support contributes to achieving the aim of re opening of the Lagan Navigation.

Craigavon Borough Council

The Councils Head of Conservation and Heritage and other department provides support through HR, procurement and budget maintenance which enables the trust to function operationally.

DCAL and Rivers Agency

The Inland Waterways Division works in close liaison with the Chief Officer and staff to ensure that programmes are developed in line with agreed strategic and operational priorities in both organisations. Through DCAL and Rivers Agency essential maintenance of the towpath takes place including recent upgrades to the surface, whilst Rivers Agency provide a vital function in clearing the river of fallen trees and strategic advice on the Navigation. DCAL has provided additional funding for Outdoor Recreation NI to audit existing recreational facilities in the trusts Operational Area and the updating and re print of the Lagan Navigation Walking Guide. DCAL has utilised the services of the Trusts GIS Support Officer which has helped to defray costs and provide for additional specialist training.

NIEA

NIEA, through representation on the Executive Committee both the Built and Natural Heritage sections provide advice on the legislative constraints and guidance on conservation of the important heritage asset that is the Lagan Navigation. The Core Funding Businesses Plan, to be submitted to all core funders in October 2013 makes the case for renewal of core funding which was stopped in March 2011.

Lagan Valley Regional Park

The Park Manager works closely with the Chief Officer to integrate the objectives and delivery of operational priorities in line with the overall aim to re open the Lagan Navigation. LVRP provides ongoing environmental protection and enhancement of the Navigation tow path from Stranmillis to Union Locks and continued promotion of the Lagan Navigation through interpretation and events.

Inland Waterways Association of Ireland Lagan Branch (IWAI)

A vital strategic relationship at Board level has recently been enhanced through the volunteering opportunity which was crated in the clearance works at the Union Locks, Lisburn. Attendance at Regional and National events by the Chief Officer has developed a closer strategic partnership. IWAI Lagan Branch continues its ongoing promotion and support for the re opening of the Navigation including sponsorship of events, boat rallies and publicity in its national press.

Ulster Waterways Group

Ongoing lobbying for the development of an Inland Waterway Strategy for Northern Ireland and support for the re opening including funding and support for the £9.5M Stranmillis Gateway in Belfast makes this group very relevant to the Trust. It recently provided support funding for the Trust to be represented at the World Canal Conference in France in September 2013.

Outdoor Recreation NI

Promotes recreation along the Lagan Navigation and support for the re opening. The advice from ORNI and representation on the Executive Committee adds to the collective management expertise in the field of recreation and public access.

Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation

Close ties are being developed which will see the emergence of a project to draft an EU pilot project application for funding. This will research the opportunities for water storage and addressing flooding in the Lagan Valley, the course of the Lagan Navigation.

Community Demonstration Projects

The Trust has devised a way to related strategy to sustainable actions. We have developed two demonstration projects which show how combining community and the Trusts objectives can bring real value to each. Our three chosen areas for demonstration are;

- **Aghagallon Community Organisation -**

The community, Trust and Craigavon Borough Council have submitted a joint funding bid to the Rural Development Programme to examine the feasibility of clearance of vegetation and potential upgrading of the tow path in this area with a connection to village services for visitors. Resident's objectives are to increase visitor numbers to boost economic activity in the village and for greater access to the Navigation

The Trust objectives are to re open the Navigation along its 27 mile route and to influence economic vibrancy and to increase access by local communities.

- **South Belfast Partnership -**

Early stages of engagement but first thoughts include how we can combine our objectives to give greater access to the River and influence development of facilities to support this.

Volunteer Now

Is supportive of work to develop a Volunteering Policy and held a round table workshop in March 2013 to promote volunteering amongst the Trusts partners. This contribution is on going and will contribute to the development of the Trust Volunteering Policy.

Volunteering

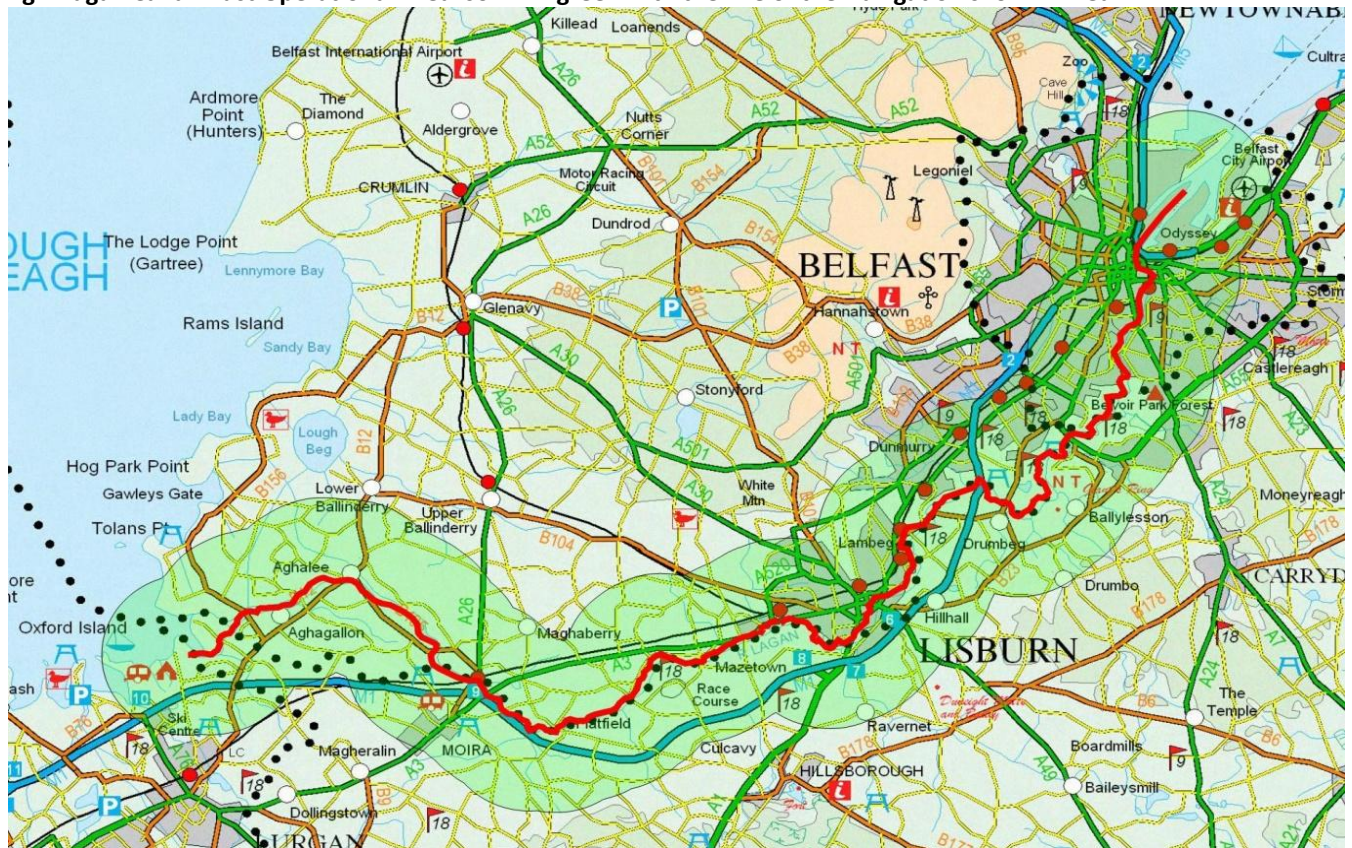
The Trust has a wealth of experience and specialist knowledge on its Board which contributes greatly to resources through their volunteering – effectively, the time donated to attend meetings, workshops, consultations and stakeholder groups giving advice and strategic support and guidance. This is likely to continue, with a greater requirement on Trustees to attend meetings due to their legal responsibilities as directors of a company. This has not been quantified but is nonetheless an economic benefit of the Trust.

Volunteering opportunities continue to grow as each project is delivered on the ground. The Union Locks project attracted 11,000 volunteer hours over five months from January to June 2013.

LAGAN CANAL TRUSTS MISSION

To re open the Lagan Navigation and to achieve recognition of the Trusts Operational Area, shown in Fig 1 as a regeneration zone - in ways which conserve and enhance the built and natural heritage, maximise recreational and visitor opportunities and involve and benefit the local communities thus contributing to positive social impact through training, employment, and diversification of local and regional economies.

Fig 1 Lagan Canal Trust Operational Area shown in green with the line of the Navigation shown in red



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THE TRUSTS OBJECTIVES 2013

- ✓ Ensure that all our work is informed by and fits with the Programme for Government and addresses the objectives of our Departmental, current and potential partners and stakeholders;
- ✓ Ensure that the Trust is resourced to deliver a complex programme of work;
- ✓ Develop an important historic and cultural asset which is recognised locally, regionally and nationally as having the potential to make a significant contribution to Northern Ireland's economy;
- ✓ Contribute to addressing poverty and social exclusion;

We will achieve these through;

- ✓ Conserving, managing and interpreting the natural, built, cultural and industrial heritage of the Navigation;
- ✓ Develop a digital history of the Lagan Navigation – ‘Just Add Water’
- ✓ Restoring the historic structures of existing locks whilst enabling their use through providing new lock gates and safety structures (under consent);
- ✓ Reinstating the towpath and create new paths along the whole length of the Navigation between Belfast and Lough Neagh;
- ✓ Connect and extend the National Cycle Route Number 9 through the Operational Area giving wider connectivity throughout Northern Ireland;
- ✓ Through a programme of work with specialist advisers, develop a social economy training organisation to address;
 - long term unemployment and
 - apprenticeship opportunities during the design, construction and maintenance stages of re opening
 - and on going management and maintenance over a 100 year period;
- ✓ Facilitate linkages between the Navigation, communities and public transport;
- ✓ Contribute to community health and well being opportunities through greater access to leisure, sporting and recreational pursuits
- ✓ Facilitate linkages between existing facilities and additional ones e.g. links to villages in rural areas
- ✓ Provide a range of additional facilities for visitors, walkers and cyclists and mooring points along the Navigation to enable boat usage and other water bases activities, features and attractions;
- ✓ Clearly defining the potential for positive social impact in local communities
- ✓ Re-watering the canalised sections along the Lagan through reinstating or repairing the weirs associated with each lock and lateral canal built in the 18th century to enable navigation;
- ✓ Providing a new cascade weir and new lock at Stranmillis to replace the existing pen weir structure (the former lock at this point is lost beneath development) and enable navigation from the tidal Lagan to the river;
- ✓ Providing a new section of river and canalised navigation between Sprucefield and Moira to replace the section of the Navigation overlaid by the M1 Motorway. This will include a canalised linkage to the Maze Long Kesh Site;
- ✓ A programme of silt removal and dredging to reinstate a channel for boat passage;
- ✓ Fully examining the potential the re opening of the Navigation could have on climate change in the Lagan Valley

CHIEF OFFICERS REPORT

The value that inland waterways contribute to the social, economic, environmental and physical regeneration of an area is widely recognised. There is a renewed interest and acceptance that waterways restoration and re opening delivers an exciting place to live, work and play, creating a focus for social impact, tourism, business, culture and leisure activities.

The Lagan Canal Trust partnership continues to work towards achieving the vision of a re opened waterway from Belfast Harbour to Lough Neagh. The efforts of the core partners to bring together the interests of the Navigation and key stakeholders along the Trust Operational Area are instrumental in driving forward the vision of a re opened Lagan Navigation.

ACHIEVEMENTS 2012 - 2013

Strategic

- Work on the Final Re opening Framework document has now included comments from the public/statutory and stakeholders workshops. The document will be finalised following meetings with Ministers in early 2014.
- Drafting the brief, procurement and commissioning of the Preliminary Engineering Designs and Costings Report is now completed. Further work has been necessary in terms of aligning the data captured into the Business Case for re opening and this is now completed.
- Having drafted the brief, procured and commissioned a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), the team worked closely with the consultants to fully realise the impacts both positive and negative on the proposed engineering works along the 26 mile route. The final Environmental Report published in January 2013 shows that where a negative impact or opportunity to increase bio diversity was likely a programme of mitigation and enhancement works has been now complied. Statutory agencies have contributed to the development of this work.
- Re commissioning of Business Case for 27 mile preferred route is now complete. Endorsed by the Board, this work is being used as the source of information for the preparation of the presentations to Ministers on the potential to re open.
- On going development of Master Programme for the delivery of the 15 year programme of work is underway with the assistance of the Strategic Investment Board.
- Key to informing the above is the development of a Land Acquisition Strategy which is being drafted to include clarification of ownership of land by public bodies and private individuals.
- The development of Stakeholder workshops has begun and it is vitally important to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy which will inform engagement over the programme timeline. Research has begun to inform the procurement of such an engagement strategy.
- Research into the potential for development through the Conservation Action Plan for the site at Union Locks, Lisburn is now completed. This will inform an approach for funding the restoration of the locks and more sustainable and accessible use of the whole site.

Operational

- Work is now substantially completed on the commission for aerial photography of 27 mile route and unmanned aerial vehicle image capture of five nodes of potential increased activity along route. Data has been captured and a short promotion video is complete. The full 27 mile images will now be used to produce an edited and scripted fly through of the Lagan Navigation.

- Development of the Traffic Lights reporting system to the Board.
- Procurement and commissioning of new web site where all strategic documents are available.
- Developing an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to establish a digital history of the Navigation – ‘Just Add Water’
- Successful application for c£55k to Lagan Rural Partnership, match funded by Lisburn City Council for funding to clear, survey and record the condition of Union Locks, Lisburn to inform and enable an HLF restoration funding bid is now complete. Work will begin in January 2013 and substantially completed in June 2013. Volunteers played a very large part in this work and we reordered some 1,300 volunteer days on site and at the public consultation event. This work enabled the development of the Conservation Action Plan for the site noted above.

PLANNED OPERATIONAL WORK

1. Consultation

In order to ensure that the re opening of the Lagan Navigation considers the interests of the diverse range of stakeholders along the Operational Area an extensive programme of engagement has continued throughout the year. Three demonstration projects have been developed.

2. Demonstration projects

Developing a Re opening Framework is all well and good but the Trust has devised a way to related strategy to sustainable operational work. We have developed three demonstration projects which show how combining community and the Trusts objectives can bring real value to each. Our three chosen areas for demonstration are;

- **Aghagallon Community Organisation -**

The community, Trust and Craigavon Borough Council have submitted of a joint funding bid to the Rural Development Programme to examine the feasibility of clearance of vegetation and potential upgrading the tow path in this area with a connection to village services for visitors. Resident’s objectives are to increase visitor numbers to boost economic activity in the village and for greater access to the Navigation.

The Trust objectives are to re open the Navigation along its 27 mile route and to influence economic vibrancy and to increase access by local communities.

- **South Belfast Partnership -**

Early stages of engagement but first thoughts include how we can combine our objectives to give greater access to the River and influence development of facilities to support this.

- **Maze Long Kesh Development Company -**

The Trust is keen to address climate change through conserving water in times of flood to release during dry months to ensure that water levels and the quality of water are maintained for navigation. Working with the Corporation and the statutory agencies could potentially contribute to alleviating flooding in the Lagan Valley and to meeting environmental objectives.

3. Development of a Social Enterprise within the Trust

There is recognition that in order to be sustainable the Trust needs to decrease its dependence on grant funding. At the same time it needs to address the opportunity to have a positive social impact in all the work its does. With 31 of the top 10 percentile of the most deprived Super Output Areas in Northern Ireland in its Operational Area the Trust has a challenge which it will address through the development of a social enterprise which will provide training, employment, apprenticeship and mentoring throughout the lifetime of the programme for delivery of the re opening.

4. Land Ownership and Advocacy

A key element of the Trust's work is to contribute to safeguarding, enhancing and promoting awareness of the scenic, natural, built and cultural heritage values of the Navigation and its Operational Area. A large section of this area of the Navigation is in private ownership, with the locks and canal bed afforded the protection of Scheduled Monument listing protecting them from potential irrevocable damage.

The Trust has developed an extensive Geographic Information System database for the Navigation Operational Area which has been used to capture, store, manage and present data linked to specific geographical locations. This innovative planning tool has been used to map the Navigation, its associated features and build a comprehensive database of landownership. In essence, GIS displays geographic information for informed decision making and within the Trust it has enabled a visual representation of different elements of the Operational Area.

3. Communications

In order to develop a sustainable navigation corridor and operational area it is essential that the Trust continues to act as a champion for the Lagan Navigation, promoting and facilitating the awareness, support and involvement of key stakeholders.

It is essential to the re opening project that the Navigation is promoted as an asset to local authorities, central government, potential funding bodies, developers and local communities. To this end the Trust has effectively undertaken an on-going program of advocacy, lobbying and representation of Navigation interests and the potential benefits of re opening. This includes distribution of its Briefing Paper, attendance at meetings and conferences and networking opportunities. In addition, the Trust feeds into the programs and management of core partners including Lagan Valley Regional Park. The Trust also works in cooperation with the Blackwater Regional Partnership to secure the re opening of the Ulster Canal.

The Trust continues the process of engagement with local communities, current and potential users within its Operational Area, service providers and the wider public. To build momentum and support for the project a database of community groups and contacts has been developed. This has enabled the Trust to make contact with key groups and gain their support. A key success to the communication of the vision of a re opened Navigation will be the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy being drafted and the Communication and Marketing Strategy to be undertaken.

The continued development and management of the Trust website allows effective communication of information relating to the Navigation, the Trust and its news and events. All major research is published on the web site.

FINAL THOUGHTS ON THE PERIOD 2014 - 2017

Economic uncertainty could be a reason for not investing in major capital infrastructure project such as the re opening of the Lagan Navigation, however it is not a justifiable reason for lack of planning for investment in the following;

- The development of a major new visitor product
- Investment in training and, apprenticeships across the age spectrum in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) agenda
- The potential for sustainable wealth creation through;
 - ✓ New jobs
 - ✓ Social enterprise opportunities
 - ✓ Intergenerational mentoring and coaching

- ✓ Creation of additional health and well being opportunities and businesses
- ✓ Growing existing business in the waterway related supply chain such as accommodation & boat repair and building

The next three years will present the Trusts greatest challenge. Ensuring that it is resourced to meet those challenges will require focussed work by the Trustees, myself and the team to get commitment from existing and new core funders and from Government.

The re opening of the Navigation will bring about both positive and negative environmental impacts and these will be managed through a programme of consultation and mitigation. The potential exists to generate an increase in bio diversity and through careful consideration of water resources have a positive impact on the attenuation of flooding in the Lagan Valley.

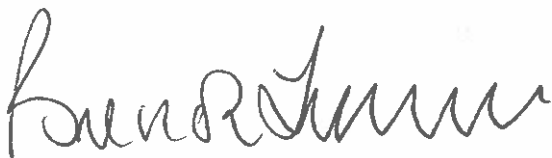
The Trust will continue to strive for the re opening of the Navigation with support from its partners, stakeholders and the wider community along its 67 sq mile Operational Area show below in Fig 1 above.

FUNDING PARTNERS

I would like to acknowledge and thank our core funding partners:

- Belfast City Council
- Castlereagh Borough Council
- Lisburn City Council
- Craigavon Borough Council
- Department of Culture Arts and Leisure

I would also like to thank all our partners and stakeholders and those who have given support to the Trust this year. I look forward to building our working relationship to progress the re opening of the Lagan Navigation.



Brenda Turnbull
Lagan Canal Trust Chief Officer
October 2013