



MEGAN & TINKS ANNUAL REPORT

2022

NOTTINGHAM NARROWBOAT PROJECT LTD

SUMMARY

2022 has been a year of recovery after being unable to hold many trips due to the lockdowns in 2020 and 2021. With little maintenance needed on the boats due to this being completed during the pandemic, we were able to get back into action by March 2022. This year has seen more bookings than ever before, a sign that our users have missed us and are excited to get back onto the water!

At the beginning of the year, we were able to provide our volunteers with refresher training to ensure they were confident taking our users out onto the canal and river. While our activities were reduced, the moorings we use at the Canalhouse, Colwick Park and the Canal Heritage Centre at Beeston were maintained, with the latter being refurbished completely due to the Canal Heritage Centre receiving funding and permission for a pontoon allowing for wheelchair access. This is a positive outcome for all our users with reduced mobility and we are looking forward to making more use of this in 2023 and beyond.

We have been fortunate to receive the remaining funds from the Government business support grants and grants from The Jones 1986 Charitable Trust and the Jesse Spencer Trust. We would like to thank all of our funders for helping us this year and throughout the pandemic. Our funding from the Lottery Fund Reaching Communities has now come to an end. We have submitted another application for continuation funding and are overjoyed to confirm this has been successful. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the National Lottery and all Lottery players! This funding will allow us to continue to operate for the next three years. We are currently in the process of putting together a strategy to work on becoming more self-sufficient in the future.

We have continued work on collecting feedback on data in order to measure our outcomes and outputs but are also putting together a plan to streamline these, so they are collected digitally to allow for smoother analysis in the future. We have shared positive feedback with our volunteers and worked on building this into our best practice and training.

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

168 TRIPS

2016
VOLUNTEER
HOURS

8
RESIDENTIAL
TRIPS

85+ GROUPS



TRUSTEES

The Trustee Board has continued to meet bi-monthly throughout the year, however, with the easing of restrictions and return to a new “normal”, in July the decision was made to move back to face to face meetings with the option for virtual attendance if required.

At the end of this year the Chair, and one of the volunteers who were key in setting up the charity in 2017, Gerry Mulvaney, decided to step down as Trustee Director. Amber Tipper has stepped in as Acting Chair. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Gerry for his tireless work and commitment as Trustee Director and Chair. The charity would not be where it is today without your dedication. Gerry will be continuing to volunteer with the charity as skipper and trainer, so luckily, we have not had to say a complete goodbye.

We have also received notice of the resignation of another of our Trustees, James Murray, who is standing down for personal reasons. We would like to thank James for his contribution to the Trustee Board. James is a Volunteer Skipper and we look forward to his continued support on our trips.

The Trustee Board now comprises:

Amber Tipper has worked in education for over 10 years and is currently Senior Partnerships Manager at Kaplan International. She has an MBA from Nottingham Business School and a Level 7 qualification from CMI in strategic management and leadership. She is interested in strategy development and planning. She is currently Acting Chair.

amber.tipper@meganandtinks.org.uk

Paddy Emerson is a former Chartered Accountant with extensive commercial experience in the UK and Europe. He was latterly the Finance Director for VF UK and Scandinavia (Wrangler, North Face, Timberland, Vans, et al). Paddy is Vice Chair of the Nottingham Credit Union and a regular Volunteer crew. He was instrumental in setting up the Charitable company in 2017 and currently leads on Finance and bookings.

paddy.emerson@meganandtinks.org.uk

Carol Greaves is a full-time youth worker and team leader with Notts County Council and is a regular user of our boats. Carol has a BA Hons degree in working with young people and communities and has extensive experience working with statutory youth provision and has a specific interest in Special Educational Needs (SEND) and Diversity in communities. Carol has significant expertise in Safeguarding and takes the lead on Safeguarding for the Board of Trustees.

carol.greaves@meganandtinks.org.uk

Gary Bramley had a distinguished Army career in the Royal Engineers before joining Royal Mail and served in a number of senior management positions. Gary is qualified in Mechanical Engineering, Health & Safety and Environmental Management and has extensive experience in operations and logistics. Gary lives on a narrowboat, is one of our regular volunteer Skippers and takes the lead on Operations, Health and Safety and Risk Assessment for the Board of Trustees.

gary.bramley@meganandtinks.org.uk

James Barron is a very experienced IT and Computer Security Systems expert, with 30 years' experience in Information Systems covering hardware, software, information security, governance, risk and compliance. Now self-employed, James was formerly the Head of Information Systems and Site Security for the Players Horizon Factory in Nottingham. James takes the lead on IT and Computer Systems security for the Board of Trustees.

james.barron@meganandtinks.org.uk

The Trustee Board is utilising our Trustee Recruitment Policy to add more members. We are dedicated to ensuring our board is respecting diversity and equality and comprises a variety of skills to ensure the current and future success of the charity.

VOLUNTEERS



Susan, new volunteer

Our activities are run and led by our Volunteers, without whom we would not exist. 2022 has been a recovery year for those Volunteers, returning to normality delivering our services in the Community. Although it was a slow start due to the continuing pandemic, we were able to hold refresher training for all volunteers and open up our bookings again for the full year ahead.

As always, our volunteers have played a major role in boat maintenance, administration and finance, as well as organising and delivering training for our Skippers and Crew. We ended 2022 with 31 volunteers (including the trustees) and one employee, our operations manager. We have 15 qualified skippers and our crew have all completed a boat handling course. We also have 5 qualified trainers.

Throughout the year, we have received several expressions of interest from potential new Volunteers. These have been responded to and as a result approximately 3 new Volunteers have been added to our roster and completed their boat handling courses, one of which was a previous volunteer from when the project was led by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The Trustees want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of our volunteers for their individual contributions in 2022, we could not have got through the year without your time and dedication.



Volunteers new and old!

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Having taken advantage of the lockdowns to complete a considerable amount of maintenance on the boats in 2021, 2022 has been a year focused on recovery from the pandemic. starting by offering refresher training to our volunteers to enable a complete offering for users throughout the year. As a result of the lifting of restrictions, the boats not needing as much time out of the water for maintenance and our volunteers ready and excited to get back out on the water, this year has seen one of the biggest number of bookings to date with over 160 trips completed with over 85 different groups.



Cat, Operations Manager & Gary
Trustee leading on Operations

There have been a total of 8 residential trips throughout the year being bookings for both boats over two days, with some 5 day bookings and a few 2 day bookings with just one boat. This has equated to a total of 32 boating days.

Besides the trips we have offered there are a few things to note this year. While there was limited maintenance needed, we started the year with Tinkers Lean coming out of dry dock with a newly fitted prop due to the damage to the previous one. We hold a strong relationship with the Canal Heritage Centre in Beeston and this year they received the go ahead and funding to install a pontoon and associated works to access the Centre from the old lock. This pontoon is wheelchair accessible and means we have more options for our wheelchair users in the future.



We are an accredited training centre (ATC) for the National Community Boats Association (N-CBA) and this year we trained up 3 volunteers who gained their Boat handling certificate. We also provided training for 11 young people doing their DofE residential gold qualification who also gained their N-CBA Boat handling certificates.



Our operations manager was able to return to her normal working hours this year and we were able to focus on her professional development by offering further training. The position of the operations manager has been fundamental in allowing a greater focus on the operations of the charity, allowing to accommodate the increase in bookings.

The effects on mental wellbeing due to the the pandemic have become very clear, and the benefits of our trips on mental health and wellbeing on both volunteers and users was identified quite early on in 2020. As a result of this, we have put some more focus in this area and have partnered with the Canal and River Trust (CRT), supporting them in some of their wellbeing activities, with a total of 18 trips completed. This has also allowed us to broaden our reach of users this year.

Looking to the future, we will be updating our booking system to ensure we are capturing information from our users to help us better analyse our trip data to better understand who our users are as well and to aid in our aims for measuring outputs and outcomes. This will compliment our feedback forms the groups complete during their trips.



MEASURING OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

In 2022 we have continued to work towards the four outcomes for Children, Young People, Older People and Volunteers. Feedback forms were created to be completed by group leaders during trips, to ensure opportunities to share positive feedback with our volunteers and to improve our offerings if needed. However, we found that these were not always completed and due to them being on paper, the data was more difficult to collate. Looking to the future, the Project will be looking to streamline feedback and group information so the data can be collected electronically and analysed more easily.

As mentioned previously, 2022 has been a year of recovery with more trips booked than any other year. Due to the lingering impact of the Pandemic however, some groups have continued to show caution and have therefore not partaken in as many, if any activities with the Project, mostly seen by care homes for the elderly. We have been in contact with these group and have processes in place to ensure trips are as safe as possible for them.



FINANCIALS

Our finances remained strong throughout the year, despite our lottery funding ending.

We received the remaining funds from the Government business support grants and grants from The Jones 1986 Charitable Trust and the Jesse Spencer Trust, for which we are very grateful.

Our income from trips this year was up from last year due to being able to complete more trips than the previous year. We are considering increasing our charges in 2023 not least because of increases in running costs and our need to work towards becoming self sufficient. Our expenditure was much lower than last year at £41k vs £57k, This was due mostly to lower maintenance costs (£5k down from £22.7k) in 2021, when we had to replace the engine and gearbox along with all the associated electrical equipment on Tinkers Leen and we had substantial engine refurbishment, maintenance costs and significant structural repairs on Megan.

We submitted another application to the Lottery Fund in August 2022. At the time of writing, we have been granted funding to cover us for the next three years, until 2025.

We are working on a plan to increase other funding which will allow us to become self-sufficient.

Paddy Emmerson – Trustee and Finance Director

SUPPORTERS

We are fortunate to have several companies and organisations who provide us with various types of support. We remain indebted to the National Lottery Community Fund for their ongoing grant from their Reaching Communities fund. Our final payment from the Reaching Communities fund was received in June and will receive payment for the new funding in April 2023. We are also funded by grants from the Jones 1986 Trust. We are very grateful to these supporters for their financial support.

Whilst we have clearly been affected by the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic, our supporters have been affected to even greater levels. We are based at the Canalhouse pub, owned by Castle Rock Brewery. We understand closure of venues, including the Canalhouse due to the pandemic has hit their revenues and profits hard and we are very grateful to Castle Rock for their ongoing support while suffering financially themselves.

In April we were pleased to take part In an April Fools prank with Nottingham City Transport. With their support and promotional activity, we announced the start of a new "WaterBus" service form Beeston, along the Nottingham Canal to Meadow Lane. We published a video on social media showing users boarding the "waterbus" using their contactless technology and the "waterbus" departing and arriving with one of our skippers In Nottingham City Transport uniform. It had a very wide viewing and even convinced a number of viewers of its authenticity. We had to own up with another video later in the day and that too received widespread coverage. We want to thank Nottingham City Transport for their support and that of their advertising agency for all the work they put in to make the "WaterBus" service almost believable, while at the same time promoting the activities of our charity.

We would like to acknowledge the continuing support of our local Councillors for the Castle Ward where we are located - Sam Webster and Angharad Roberts, and our local MP Lilian Greenwood.



We would also like to thank the James Tilford and the Park Rangers at Colwick Park Marina who have continued to keep our mooring in the Marina accessible and tidy even during our significantly reduced use in 2021 and 2022.

The Canal and River Trust, Castle Marina, Trevethicks boat yard, the National Community Boats Association and others have suffered similar financial constraints and we are very grateful for the way they have continued to offer both material and financial support throughout the pandemic and beyond to our charity.



The Nottingham Narrowboat Project Ltd

registered charity number 1176252



OUR BOAT TRIPS

We provide a unique Canal and River waterways experience for diverse local communities.

Located on the canal in Nottingham City Centre, Megan and Tinks Leen are two 70ft accessible narrowboats which can offer half day, full day, residential and summertime evening trips for groups of up to 12 or 24 people.

We provide a waterways experience along the Nottingham & Beeston Canal and River Trent including boat steering, working the canal's locks, water safety and a general taste of waterways life.

Each boat is staffed by our highly experienced and qualified skippers and crew. Whichever direction of travel takes in a mix of scenery, both urban & countryside.

Primarily we cater for primary and secondary Schools, Academies, Scouts Guides and Brownies, Youth Clubs, people with autism, disabilities and learning difficulties, community friendship groups and care homes, most of whom can benefit from a reduced qualifying community group fee.

We can also arrange trips for corporate groups as team building exercises or families for celebrating a special event.



CONTACT US

For bookings and enquiries please contact us:

t: 0115 837 0225 e: enquiries@meganandtinks.org.uk

A booking form can be downloaded from our site: www.meganandtinks.org.uk

[@meganandtinks](https://twitter.com/meganandtinks)



Registered Charity 1176252

