**Coniston Water Association Meeting Minutes**

**12th October 2022**

**Water Park**

| **No** | **Item** | **Actions Agreed** |
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|  | **Look Ahead to Records Week**  Richard Solomon advised that Records Week was in its 50th year and due to take place from Monday 31st October – Friday 4th November with no changes.  All details and information had been sent out to lake users. If any outdoor centres on the lake would like to take groups to look around the pits please phone ahead on 07811323076. |  |
|  | **Review of 2022 Season**  Jack read out update from Sara Spicer Area Ranger for LDNPA –  We continued to patrol the area each weekend and Bank Holidays between February and October. It was a slow start to the season, and not as busy as we thought it would be (this may be linked to foreign holidays being available again, cost of living and fuel prices).  There were occasional issues relating to congestion when there was good weather, and people wanted to access the lake. These occurred at the head of the lake (Monk Coniston), Sunny Bank/Brown Howe/Blea Brows and some areas of the eastern road. CCC supported this by repainting the yellow lines and enforcing inappropriate parking. Extra car parking capacity was provided on the eastern road when the field near Peel Island was opened over the Jubilee weekend and weekends during the school holidays.  There were a few instances with jet skis accessing the lake from Coniston Hall and Hoathwaite campsite area.  Jack also read out an update from Debbie Ross PCSO for the Coniston area and surrounding parishes –  Over the spring and summer there have been a couple of thefts reported from Coniston Water – 3 outboard engines and 1 canoe - exact time of theft is hard to establish.  During the very hot weather in August we had several reports of highway obstruction due to the large number of visitors all wanting to access the water. The area saw large number of visitors, and parking around the lake was an issue. The majority of complaints were about the Monk Coniston area. Cumbria County Council carried some parking enforcement where traffic regulations were in place but this is always an issue during the warm summer months.  There were a couple of reports about camping around the shore. Camping itself is not a criminal offence but may be a civil trespass matter for the landowner.  Police can deal with offences such as criminal damage and public order but not the actual camping itself. There was 1 report of a large group of anti-social campers on Peel island in May who left of their own accord the next morning.   * Issues around the east side of the lake were discussed such as access issues for Low Bank Ground and Thurston due to parking on busy days and overheard branches etc. Low Bank Ground currently having to collect groups from their coach at Monk Coniston Car Park using smaller minibus. * Both Low Bank Ground and Thurston had seen an increase in paddlers accessing their property and being unwilling to move on. Some parties were even abusive when informed they were on private land. A member of staff from Thurston was threatened with a paddle. Those paddlers that had been cooperative advised staff that they had been briefed at Coniston Boating Centre that the eastern shore was access land, and it was possible for them to land there. It was discussed whether CBC could be more careful with the information they provide, and whether a map/handout would be a possibility to clarify to paddlers launching from CBC where it is possible to land. * Congestion issues around Hawes Bank due to events at Coniston Hall were discussed. Some ideas around overflow parking were suggested. * Rawdon Smith Trust reported they had continued to encounter lots of litter at Blea Brows, and even large numbers of the larger nitrous oxide canisters. * Jack reported that Diana Rutherford had collected over 600 bags of rubbish from various locations around the lake in 2022 which all agreed was a tremendous achievement and all were very thankful of Diana’s efforts. * Jack also confirmed that Volunteer Lake Patrols also assist with litter picking and general tidying of lake shore properties. | * Jack to find out location of yellow line repainting. Update provided by Sara Spicer as follows –     CCC repainted the lines at Monk Coniston and Brown Howe area over the summer and did more ticketing and enforcement in 2022. They were also due to repaint some at Sunny Bank, but this wasn’t completed for certain reasons.   * There were no Coniston Boating Centre staff present at the meeting, so unable to comment. |
| 1. **3.** | **Lake Health and Pollution Discussion/Feedback**   * Tracy Coward from Coniston Parish Council provided an update regarding the application for Bathing Water Status at key locations around the lake.   A zoom meeting with United Utilities had been held where questions were asked regarding overflow and discharge from the treatment works on Lake Road. Tracy advised that UU did not provide any specific answers and commented that ‘overflow and discharge were not an indicator of water quality’.  If areas of Coniston Water are designated as Bathing Waters, the Environment Agency would have a legal requirement to test the water quality on a more regular basis and this could encourage UU to invest money and capital into the lake and its operations.  Currently, there are not many inland waters that are designated bathing waters, and they are mainly concentrated around the coast.  The application has been submitted to DEFRA, which includes data from a minimum of 20 survey days over the summer to evidence the lake’s use for bathing and swimming. This was carried out using a small working group with volunteers from local parishes. The maximum number of bathers recorded on any 1 day at a particular location was 675. The average was slightly lower, however the numbers are much higher than other areas that have applied for Bathing Water status.  The 4 areas that have been applied for on the lake are –   1. Monk Coniston & CBC 2. Coniston Sailing Club and Coniston Hall Campsite 3. Brown How and Sunny Bank 4. Lake Bank and Peel Island     **Training Exemption Policy Update and Byelaw Clarification**   * Jack provided a quick update on the new PowerBoat Level 2 Training Exemption Policy. All parties that this is relevant too seemed happy and did not need further clarification. * Staff at the Priestly Centre had asked questions prior to the meeting regarding byelaws, what is permitted, how to report etc. Please see below for more info – * Coniston Water has a public right of navigation. All vessel types are permitted, providing they adhere to relevant byelaws. The main byelaw that applies is the 10mph speed limit. * Reporting of byelaw infringements and dangerous activity – The Lake Ranger duty phone number should be used to report instances of byelaw infringement. This number is – **07768 320 241** Ideally this will be reported as the activity is taking place. * Video and pictures are very useful for the Lake Ranger Team to assist with enforcement and build evidence to support a change in byelaws. * These can be submitted to the team via email –   [**LakeRangerTeam@lakedistrict.gov.uk**](mailto:LakeRangerTeam@lakedistrict.gov.uk)  or uploaded via **https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/visiting/things-to-do/water/lake-byelaw-enforcement/report-a-byelaw-infringement** |  |
|  | **Chill Swim Review**  The only update provided by Coniston Boating Centre was that ChillSwim intend to operate over 2 dates in 2023.  Rob Macleod from ChillSwim/EpicEvents sent his apologies after being held up at an event in Grizedale. He sent this update –  **2022 Events**   1. Chillswim Coniston Saturday 25th June    1. A rather windy day which was approaching a marginal level for the safety team but they were confident they could deliver the event successfully    2. The event went well despite the weather – we did have some congestion for a short spell with swimmers queuing in the shallow water at Monk Coniston to cross the timing point at the finish line which is one of the reasons to move to a 2 day event.    3. A near miss incident was reported by Gondola – initial discussions were held with the Water Safety Team but unfortunately no representatives from Gondola were able to attend. Further discussions are required but initial feedback and suggestions from the Water Safety Team will be passed to Paul Kear, I was hoping to discuss with Julian at the meeting but unfortunately as mentioned above I wasn’t able to make it on time.    4. Comms Plan had been clarified pre-event which had been working well but at the time of the reported near miss the safety team reported some confusion with Gondola attempting verbal comms with kayakers rather than the agreed Radio Comms with the Water Safety Management Team    5. No issues reported on the water or with Comms from any other lake users    6. Aware of traffic congestion around Monk Coniston and on the Eastern Shore 2. Epic Lakes Coniston Swim Sunday 14th August    1. Good conditions on the lake for swimming also with some very warm water    2. There were also a number of vehicles illegally parked that also seemed to be staying overnight on the narrow road approaching Monk Coniston from town – we did distribute our own No Waiting cones and moved on a lot of the vehicles on Saturday that were illegally parked but some did refuse. Further discussions are perhaps required with National Park and maybe Police or SLDC Traffic on how this can be avoided but I am of curse aware thus is an ongoing issue and the persons involved were not local or participants in the event.    3. No issues reported on the water from any lake users    4. An onsite visit from an abusive (and identified) local resident regarding the PA system in use for the event – we did then amend the direction of the speakers which were initially pointing in a direction which meant the wind would carry the noise towards town.   **2023 Events**   1. Chillswim Coniston Saturday 24th June and Sunday 25th June    1. Now scheduled to be a 2 day event – to spread the participant’s across 2 days and ease some of the congestion    2. Congestion around Monk Coniston this will be alleviated by additional marshals and signage to move on vehicles to the event car park field just beyond Monk Coniston which is also available for public use    3. Additional Marshals will ensure no spectators in vehicles will be permitted beyond the Event Car Park onto the road on the Eastern Shore (n.b. resident’s access will not be affected)    4. Any spectator vehicles accessing the road on the Eastern Shore from the South will be ‘moved on’ to the Event car Park field in the North. 2. Epic Lakes Coniston Swim Sunday 14th August    1. Congestion around Monk Coniston - this will be alleviated going forward by additional marshals and signage to move on vehicles to the event car park field just beyond Monk Coniston which is also available for public use    2. Pre Event comms and site visit with SLDC and National Park re illegally parked vehicles and overnight stays on the approach road to Monk Coniston  * Julian provided update from Gondola regarding these events. * Julian highlighted that the information provided to Paul Kear had no mention of other lake users. * The move back to the east side of the lake helped with navigation issues encountered in 2021. * Julian highlighted that he had no details of contacts on the day and this was not contained in the information provided to Paul Kear. * The incident relating to swimmers at Monk Coniston meant that Gondola had to terminate power which left them vulnerable to the elements in a tight area of the lake. * Julian mentioned that if these issues are not addressed next year then Gondola would not run for the planned event days in 2023 due to safety concerns and would seek compensation for this. | * No actions agreed on the night due to absence of ChillSwim/EpicEvents representative and or Coniston Boating Centre staff. * Advised actions – Gondola, ChillSwim/EpicEvents and Coniston Boating Centre organise a meeting to address concerns on all sides, * to enable these events to take place alongside Gondola operations and other lake use. |

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|  | **AOB**   * Dan from The Rawdon Smith Trust provided a quick update stating the sunken vessel at Lake Bank would be retrieved in the coming weeks. * Rydal Estates application for 6 moorings was discussed by RST, CPC and Jack. It was agreed that due to the rights written in at the point of sale that Rydal were entitled to the 6 x moorings. Although the locations highlighted on the map were now taken, they were in side the permitted area. | * RST and Warden Dan Johnson to engage with Rydal Estates to agree location of moorings. * Land Owners would approach right of access to mooring holders in same way they would any other mooring holder. EG – CSC only allow access if mooring holders were members. If not, access only via public slipway at CBC. |
| **8.** | **Date of Next Meeting**  Wednesday 15th March. Location to be confirmed. |  |