

# Jericho Community Boatyard News



## Spring into Action—Jericho developers employ ‘independent’ boatyard consultant

Spring, the development company who bought the Castlemill site, held a two-day event at Jericho community centre last February. Here they displayed sketches of their proposals for the site and provided feedback forms so that local residents could comment on the plans. If you haven't yet seen them, these plans are still displayed on our website [www.jcby.co.uk](http://www.jcby.co.uk)

Spring's display boards stated that Alchemy boats had been 'successfully relocated' at Yarnton and Spring's concession to boat services was to create a new winding hole—something that is unlikely

to be a high priority for Oxford boaters.

Spring announced that they planned to commission an 'independent consultant' to assess boatyard facilities in Oxford. JCB met with the consultant, Mike Adams, who is director of a planning consultancy company called Adams Hendry.

([www.adamshendry.co.uk](http://www.adamshendry.co.uk))

Mr Adams, whose firm specializes in contentious planning projects, was recommended to Spring by BW. He has a range of experience relating to boatyards and has recently compiled a report for the Greater London Authority about boatyards in London. Mr Adams said his

brief was to assess need for boatyard services; existing facilities and possible options for providing services.

As yet, there has been no further public move from Spring who have not yet put forward a planning application for the site.

Their PR company say they are in the process of re-considering some elements of their design in the light of the feedback and they are also awaiting Mr Adams' assessment. Meanwhile, there has been recent publicity about some alternative designs for the Jericho site. See 'Strong Contender...' on page two.

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See the previous issue of  
JCB News at  
[www.jcby.co.uk](http://www.jcby.co.uk)

### Other survey results

- 72% disagreed Yarnton was a suitable replacement yard
- 74% disagreed that College Cruisers was a suitable chandlery service
- Thanks to Charles Parrack and Louise Harriss for their advice with the survey
- Thanks to JCB members Kate Saffin, Fiona Bradshaw, Annie Gilchrist and Isadora Deeley for their help in delivering the survey

Meanwhile, a boat sinking on the canal in March



## Our survey said...

Thank you to everyone who participated in our boaters' survey. We found that while nearly everyone (92%) needed some kind of maintenance on their boat, only 16% thought that current services were in range. Most people identified several types of work

that needed doing on their boats, a proportion of which was overdue. DIY was an important issue to 90% of those who took part. So no surprises perhaps, but we think the results will be a useful document to show that boaters' needs are not being

met. If you would like to see the results in full please take a look on our website. Alternatively, we would be happy to send you a copy by email. If you are not on-line we can send you a paper copy to look at. JCB contact details are on the back page.

**Strong contender– but still no yard** writes Mark Davies, following the publication of an alternative plan for the Jericho site in the Oxford Times of March 16th (see our website).

**JCB would like to thank Jessica Nakman for her contribution as a Director. Jessica resigned from the board in the new year due to health reasons**

**Welcome to our newest boaters! Congratulations to Julia and Sean on the birth of Oak, to Caroline and Darren on the birth of Rowan, and to Sam and Conrad on the birth of Finn.**

JCB supports the aspirations of an imaginative alternative scheme for the development of the old Jericho boatyard put forward by Peter Strong with support from the Ruskin Society. Essentially, we believe that the plan demonstrates the potential to include features which both residents and visitors would find attractive and acceptable. The mixed-use nature of the scheme, to include workshops and studios, is particularly pleasing, and in keeping with the traditional and distinctive character of the suburb. It is also, of course, in keeping with John Ruskin's high estimation of the value and purity of manual labour. However, there is one major omission in the plan as presented, namely boat repair facilities. It is clear to us, both from the opinions of our members (many of whom live in Jericho) and also from the heartening display of support still visible in a large number of Jericho windows, that a boat repair facility of some kind is an absolute requirement for any development of the site. We understand that modern pressures may forbid the retention of the facility this site has offered

off and on for at least 150 years, namely the space to bring full-length boats out of the water. Yet as this is an activity which has pertained for so very long one could argue that it should be requisite as part of any planning application, as a fundamental and irreplaceable element of the essential ambience of Jericho.

And let's be clear about this. No-one will be able to develop any of this site until facilities, whether on the existing site or elsewhere, have been provided where full-length boats can be repaired and maintained. This was the ruling of the Public Inquiry decision of August 2005, that such facilities should be provided in an "equally accessible and suitable location". The Inquiry further recommended that these facilities should be such that they would enable people to do a significant amount of their own DIY work (again, something Ruskin would undoubtedly have approved of) on their boats. There is a need for secure wharf space where boats can be worked on in the water, hardstanding where they can be worked on out of the water, with workshops and DIY facilities. As no viable alternative has yet been found, there could be a long

way to go still, because (unless the only "equally accessible and suitable location" should in fact turn out to be where it's always been, in Jericho!) the new facilities *must* already be operational before any actual building can commence. The promise of a site is not sufficient.

When British Waterways closed down the Jericho site last summer, they effectively prohibited local and visiting boaters from being able to attend to major or routine concerns. With the passage of time there has been an inevitable accumulation of work, some of it fundamental to the very safety of the boats and their inhabitants. And yet there could still be a long way to go: a feeling of *déjà vu* would be quite understandable amongst readers, since development of this site has been supposedly imminent on several occasions during the past decade and a bit. Peter Strong's plan, even if it proves unworkable as it stands, will hopefully at least set a benchmark which will ensure that everyone – boaters, Jericho-habitants, the Council, visitors, and a conscientious developer – will all be happy with the end result, however far into the future that may end up being.



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## Public Inquiry extended as MP slates BW for lack of transparency

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee has been undertaking an inquiry into the work of BW in its ambition to create 'an expanded, vibrant, largely self-sufficient waterways network'. The inquiry heard from user groups, MPs and individuals—including JCB director, John Keyes—on subjects such as BW's financial framework as well as its

relationships with users and Government departments. In April, the inquiry unexpectedly announced a further evidence session after Barry Gardiner MP criticised BW for their poor communication to his office. According to the uncorrected minutes, the Minister for the Waterways said, 'I slate them [BW] for not being transparent and saying when they find out that they

have got it wrong'. Since then, in a motion proposed by Councillor Dhall, Oxford City Council resolved to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Select Committee to 'highlight BW's poor performance and wasteful conduct in discharging their public duties'. For further details about the inquiry go to [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)

**Thanks to 'Dusty' for his contribution towards the printing costs of this newsletter.**  
*Diesel, gas bottles and coal delivered directly to your boat*  
**Dusty**  
**07986189074**

## Flog it! BW auctions off Oxford moorings

Oxford boaters were relieved when BW returned on plans to remove rights to transfer moorings when selling an Agenda 21 boat. BW had previously threatened to change this aspect of Agenda 21 mooring agreements which would have resulted in a considerable financial loss for many boaters.

However, at the same time as they conceded

on the issue of transferability, BW announced their plans to auction off two vacant moorings to highest bidders.

Just how this sealed bid process will work is as yet unclear. But BW say the system will allow them to achieve market value for the moorings and this will inform the fees for the rest of Agenda 21 in the future—fees that are already sub-

ject to steep yearly increases...

Meanwhile, the situation regarding mooring transfers looks likely to be more serious on Hythe Bridge Arm. 'Polite negotiations' are ongoing in order to achieve an agreement between BW deriving fair benefit from their asset while avoiding direct financial loss for current individual moorers.

**Members of JCBLtd receive a free postcard with this issue of JCB News.**  
*These beautiful cards, created by director Adrian Arbib, are on sale in shops around Oxford. Proceeds go towards JCBLtd.*

*Not yet one of our 128 members? Send off the membership form on the back page.*

## Friends of the Oxford Canal Basin (FoxCan)

FoxCan say, The City Council is now debating whether to adopt the West end Area Action Plan (AAP). The AAP says that Worcester St car park should disappear under new buildings and that these should be arranged around a central public

space. FoxCan agrees and proposes that the 'public space' should be a working canal terminal.

If you would like to see a canal terminal reinstated on the Worcester St site please tell Oxford City Councillors

and planning officers and contact and support FoxCan. The next step is May 14th when broad city council approval won through FoxCan's efforts will face a crucial test at a meeting of the Executive Board.

[www.foxcan.co.uk](http://www.foxcan.co.uk)

# JCBLtd

## Current Directors:

Adrian Arbib, Mark Davies, Helen Fraser, Ant Goodall, Bruce Heagerty, John Keyes, Matthew Morton, Esther Pozzani  
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*Congratulations to our patron Philip Pullman who was awarded freedom of the City of Oxford... In a ceremony this January the celebrated author was given the Keys to the City by Oxford's Mayor*

## Your boatyard needs you!

**Do you have some time and energy to put into your community? Would you like to be a JCB director?**

JCBLtd is nearly one year old. By the end of the summer it will be time for our AGM and that means time to vote in your directors.

To remind you of our policies, each year between five and nine people can be voted in as directors, 70% of whom will be boaters. Directorship lasts for one year so all those currently on the board must be voted in again if they wish to continue as directors. Every paid up member has the right to vote—and to stand themselves.

“We all wish we had our yard by now,” says current director, Esther Pozzani, “But there is no doubt that working for JCB has been rewarding. I’ve learnt a lot and I am pleased to be working for my community”. **If you think you might like to stand as a director and want to chat about what would be involved, then please get in touch.** If you would like to see minutes from fortnightly board meetings, these are held by our Company Secretary, Rob Valentine.

## Jericho Community Boatyard Ltd Membership Form

Name:.....

Boat name if applicable:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

Telephone:.....

Email:.....

I am able to help with the following:

Distribution ....

Publicity.....

Fund raising.....

Events.....

Other.....

Membership costs £5 per JCB year. Cheques should be made out to Jericho Community Boatyard Ltd and sent together with this form to Memberships, JCBLtd Northway Workshops, Dora Carr Close, Oxford OX3 9RF