

RECOVERY OF THE CANAL INFORMATION CENTRE

In draft, and should be developed and revised as ideas and comment are included

Following the rejection of the planning application:

Resolutions

There will probably be a long list of suggestions for alterations and improvements, including:

- Open side door as separate entrance, and fire exit (safety needs to be checked)
- No music broadcast through the building
- Signs on entrances etc to identify 'Information Centre'
- No A boards, and no banners and adverts
- Look into upstairs facilities (originally intended as offices for running the centre)
- Redesign internal arrangement for 'information' use
- Road signs reinstated

Enforcement

Legal proceedings could be instigated to enforce the s106 agreement for provision of a Canal Information Centre, if necessary. It would be preferable for the reinstatement of the centre to be achieved by agreement between the various parties and the community.

A way forward

It will be necessary to bring ideas and details together to establish the way forward for the Information Centre and its future operation and management. This must be a joint effort.. We must establish some principles of understanding and intention from the two main authorities involved, LB Camden and British Waterways. There are a number of guidelines and requirement that need to be laid down, as these authorities are accountable. It was their shortcomings that contributed to the current problems.

Working together

With the premises reverting to Information Centre status, the Starbucks operation will be as an ancillary provider of hot drinks. This will not affect their professionalism of service.

Staffing

Ideas are already floating around for ways of providing volunteer staff from various local people and a wide range of community groups, as well as from local businesses and traders. This will be a major undertaking.

Finances

An unknown quantity. A certain amount of financial support might be required for the running of the Canal Information Centre even though the operation would use teams of volunteers.

A vital service

The Canal Information Centre at Camden Town will be the only information and visitor facility on the canals in London. A good standard and example needs to be set to establish a network of worthwhile and active visitor centres around our capital city.

Garden

Occasional use of part of (what was) the cottage garden, for information, promotion of canal and heritage etc, and events.

Security

The premises could provide the focal point for coordination of management and security of the canal corridor from Southampton Bridge to Kentish Town Road Bridge.

TO BE CONTINUED