

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE FEBRUARY 2013

AVON NAVIGATION TRUST ELECTS NEW CHAIRMAN

John Tomsett has been confirmed as the new Chairman of Avon Navigation Trust (ANT) having been elected by the Management Council of Trustees at a meeting held on 29th January 2013. He succeeds David Bolton who held the post for the past ten years.

Recently retired from an international senior management role with an American Corporate, John has involved himself in a number of charities including ANT. He first owned a cruiser in 1973 when, together with his wife Jill, they completed the Avon Ring. They were so taken with the beauty of the Avon that they completed the Ring many times during the ensuing years and then relocated to the Avon Valley. They currently live at an Evesham riverside property where they also moor their narrow boat. John is a life member of ANT and an active volunteer. He was formerly the Reach Master at Evesham Lock and then took responsibility for Offenham Lock two years ago. John has held the position of Deputy Chairman of Reach Masters, the volunteer wing of the Trust, and was elected to become a member of Council two years ago.

John said 'On behalf of the Council and the Trust's membership, I would like to record our thanks to my predecessor David Bolton. David has been Chairman for nearly ten years and has skilfully led the amalgamation of The Lower and Upper Avon Navigation Trusts into the single Avon Navigation Trust, which formally took place in 2010. David appointed Clive Matthews as the General Manager of the Trust in 2009 and since then has worked with him to turn ANT into a professionally run, well respected Navigation Authority that is recognised and well thought of by all our stakeholders, customers and waterway organisations. David will continue to be a key member of Council and intends taking a major role in the formulation of our five year strategic plan'.

Looking to the future of the Avon Navigation following the significant improvements made in recent years, John said, 'I am enthusiastic about my present and future close working relationship with Clive Matthews, the ANT General Manager. Together we have ambitious objectives to be realised in the future for the further enhancement of facilities on the river for the benefit of boat owners. Our determination to progress the refinement of our locks and the installation of additional overnight moorings are two of our immediate priorities. Clive has very successfully established a first class working relationship with the Environment Agency, the Canal and River Trust, where he currently volunteers as a Waterway Partnership Member, Local Town and District Councils and many of our stake holders and user groups. In the last four years Clive has turned the Trust into a highly respected, well run navigation authority and I intend to work closely with Clive to further build on this excellent foundation, turning the Avon Waterway Experience into one of the best in the country.'

Speaking about the importance to ANT of volunteers, John said 'We have recently launched a new initiative to attract new volunteers to further strengthen and expand our established base of enthusiastic supporters. We are hugely appreciative of our volunteers who dedicate so much of their time and energy to help make the Avon Experience what it is today. I intend to work closely with our volunteers and staff to ensure that this experience is enhanced and the Avon continues to be a friendly welcoming waterway'.

Clive Matthews, said 'I have worked closely with John for some years, as a volunteer, and I very much look forward to working with him as Chairman, building on the achievements of the last four years. John's professional experience and enthusiasm for the Avon will bring a new focus and energy to the Trust and I am sure that he and I will make a good team, taking the Trust to the next stage in its development.'

Anyone interested in volunteering is invited to contact the Avon Navigation Trust office or go to its web site, www.avonnavigationtrust.org.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

A picture John Tomsett, Chairman and Clive Matthews, General Manager at the Trust Wharf is attached. Avon Navigation Trust is the independent charitable navigation authority that runs the navigable part of the River Avon from Alveston Weir above Stratford upon Avon to where the Avon meets the River Severn at Tewkesbury.

Clive Matthews, General Manager.

