MK III WHEELYBOATS have been launched on the River Frome at Wareham Boat Hire in Dorset and on the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal at Maunsel Lock Canal Centre in Somerset. They are the third and fourth Wheelyboats supplied by the Trust in partnership with Countryside Mobility, a project which is transforming countryside access for disabled people in the south west (see feature on page 7).

Half of the funding for the Wheelyboats came from Natural England as part of its Access to Nature programme with the balance coming from the Nineveh Charitable Trust, Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation, Frognal Trust, Good Neighbours Trust, Elmgrant Trust and the Norman Family Charitable Trust. The venues themselves funded the 15hp Suzuki outboards which had been generously discounted by Suzuki GB. Both Wheelyboats are fitted with bimini covers funded by Awards for All and Maunsel Lock’s Wheelyboat needed an extra ramp to help with access from the tow path and this was funded by Arundel & District Rotary Club following a talk and slide show on the work of the Trust. Countryside Mobility and the Trust are extremely grateful to all the funders for their invaluable support.

The Wheelyboats will provide disabled people with access to several miles of pleasure boating. Wareham Boat Hire’s is, in the main, self-operated while Maunsel Lock’s has a helmsman provided for the majority of trips because of the locks that need passing either side of the Canal Centre. A team of volunteers has been recruited to help.

Most Wheelyboats operate on stillwaters but all of the last eight Mk III Wheelyboats have been supplied to either river, broad or canal demonstrating the versatility of the craft. These two have been fully fitted with drive-from-wheelchair consoles, folding bench seating and, the latest option, bimini covers. For bookings and enquiries:

Wareham—www.warehamboathire.co.uk 01929 550688, 07730 485558
Maunsel Lock—www.maunsellock.co.uk 01278 663160, 07971 827339

Wareham Boat Hire’s Wheelyboat was launched by Wareham’s Mayor, Cllr Keith Green, on 10th April

Maunsel Lock Canal Centre’s Wheelyboat was launched by Cllr Peter Downing, Chairman of Sedgemoor District Council, on 15th August
Feildes Fun ‘Weir Active’ Project Launches Mk III Wheelyboat

A MK III Wheelyboat was launched at Fieldes Fun’s Weir Active project on 11th July. The launch was presided over by guest of honour Kay Twitchen OBE, Chairman of Essex County Council. Fieldes Fun’s new Wheelyboat is being used for pleasure boating on the Rivers Lee and Stort in Hertfordshire. The Weir Active project, after which the Wheelyboat has been named, is located on a one acre island between the two rivers and provides disabled people from Essex and Hertfordshire with a community outreach and activity centre. It offers a range of therapeutic activities to disabled people, their families and carers.

Accessible boating in the Wheelyboat is just one of a number of activities that will be available at Weir Active. There is a wheelchair accessible boardwalk at the river’s edge with a decked area for fishing and birdwatching, a canoe deck, raised beds and a sensory garden. Facilities for art and photography are being built. The Weir Active project provides individuals, groups, families, volunteers and carers with a purpose-built facility in which to meet and integrate. The entire location is wheelchair accessible and has state of the art loos and showers, including adult lie-down changing. Work on the building and grounds has been funded by Veolia Environmental.

The Wheelyboat is powered by a 1kw Torqeedo electric outboard and is the very first to be fitted with a bimini cover for protection from the worst of the elements. It was very hot and sunny for the launch and the bimini cover proved to be a very effective and very welcome sun shade.

Feildes Fun and The Wheelyboat Trust are very grateful to the Wheelyboat project’s donors: Awards For All, AJH Ashby Will Trust, Essex Millennium Fund, Hertfordshire Community Foundation, Co-operative Membership Community Fund and FSJ Charities.

For more information on Weir Active and the Wheelyboat now operating there contact John Bridges on 01992 447321, e-mail weiractive@gmail.com.

Bimini Covers—keeping the worst of the weather off

THE THREE latest Mk III Wheelyboats have all been fitted with bimini covers—canvas roofs that provide a measure of protection from the elements come rain or shine. Like most Wheelyboat innovations they came from the need of a single project upon which their wider benefit immediately became apparent. They are fitted with quick release brackets so putting up and taking down is done in a matter of minutes. Our thanks go to C&J Marine based in Chichester for their help with the design and manufacture. Bimini covers can be retro fitted to most Wheelyboats, certainly Mk IIs and Mk IIIs, and will be particularly beneficial to those that are mostly used for activities such as pleasure boating and nature watching. The bimini pictured costs £1,150 + VAT. For more information contact the Trust.
UK’s Remotest Wheelyboat Launched

A COULAM 16 Wheelyboat specially designed for disabled anglers was launched at Badanloch Estate, Sutherland on 6th May. The new Wheelyboat was funded by a grant from Lord Leverhulme’s Charitable Trust. ‘Sally’ as she has been named is the most remote of all Wheelyboats operating in the UK and her launch demonstrates how important it is that opportunities for disabled anglers should exist everywhere, even in the wilds of Scotland.

Badanloch Estate’s 27,500 acres is set in the wide open spaces of the far north of Scotland and lies off a single track road at the source of the famous River Helmsdale. Sutherland is renowned for the quality of its game fishing and the estate’s six lochs have a combined area of nearly 3,000 acres with fishing for brown trout, salmon and sea trout.

For bookings contact Bryan Lyall on 01431 831232, e-mail bryan.lyall@hotmail.co.uk.

New Wheelyboat Model

CONCERNS ABOUT the rising cost of aluminium have been the principal factor in convincing the Trust to undertake a major development project to design a new Wheelyboat model. Aluminium costs have spiralled so much so that the cost of building a Mk III Wheelyboat has risen by nearly 80% since production began in 2006. The new Wheelyboat will be similar in size to the Mk III (about 5½m) but will be built in GRP (glass fibre) and is expected to be up to 30% cheaper to build. It will also be designed for use on inshore waters with an outboard up to 60hp, thus filling the large gap in performance between the Trust’s two multi-purpose Wheelyboat models, the Mk III and the Mk IV.

Developing the new model is a joint venture between J M Coulam Boatbuilders and the Trust with costs, about £50,000, being shared. Compared with aluminium, development costs are high as a prototype needs building first to provide the plug from which the production mould is taken. However, the end result will be the most versatile Wheelyboat model ever built with unrivalled performance in its class. As well as building and supplying Wheelyboats, the Trust’s principal role is to help organisations and public venues acquire Wheelyboats by raising funds to discount their cost. The new model will bring down the cost of individual Wheelyboat projects and thus make them quicker and easier to fund. Disabled people will benefit from a new model that gives them safe and hassle-free access to a wider range of waters and activities including power boating for the more adventurous. The new model will also double as a safety and rescue boat.

The formal launch should take place in late spring/early summer in 2014. The Trust is very grateful to all its donors who are making this exciting new development possible.
New Homes for Mk I Wheelyboats

MK I WHEELYBOATS, the original Wheelyboat model, have not been manufactured since 2000 when they were superseded by the Mk II. However, they are a very useful addition to small fisheries where a wheelchair accessible fishing boat is required to give disabled anglers access to the water. As a consequence, whenever the Trust upgrades a fishery’s Mk I to a newer model, e.g. the Coulam 16 Wheelyboat, it recovers the Mk I, repairs and refurbishes it and finds it a new home. Repair and refurbishment gives the boat another ten years of useful life.

Refurbishment can cost as much as £2,500 depending on the work required but it is a much cheaper option than building a brand new boat. Like all the Wheelyboat models it supplies, the Trust can raise funds to help fisheries acquire refurbished Mk Is. The Mk I supply is finite (80 were built in total and most are still in operation) but there are a few spare currently. For more details contact the Trust.

The two latest Mk Is to be rehomed are those now operating on South West Lakes Trust’s Burrator Reservoir on Dartmoor and Caurnie Angling Club’s Antermony Loch in Dunbartonshire.

Burrator—www.swlakestrust.org.uk
01822 855700, 01752 560538
Caurnie AC—www.antermony.com
07776 498325

Alan Faulkner Memorial Award 2013

THIS YEAR’S Alan Faulkner Memorial Award has been won by Carsington Water Trout Fishery for providing disabled anglers with the most outstanding service, facilities, opportunities and access. They win a 4hp Suzuki outboard donated by Suzuki GB, the award’s sponsors, and a framed certificate. Lord Hertford, owner of Ragley Hall, presented the award on behalf of the Trust at the CLA Game Fair held at Ragley in July. Well done to Sarah Barratt and her team. Keep up the good work!

Trust Helping National Angling Strategy

FISHING IS an activity that most people with disabilities can participate in very successfully given the right access and opportunities, etc (see above article). The Angling Trust, (angling’s governing body), is coordinating a national strategy supported by DEFRA called Fishing for Life to encourage more people, including disabled people, to go fishing. The Trust is sharing its knowledge and experience on an advisory committee that has been formed to help bring these aims about.

C16Wbt For Lake Of Menteith

A LEGACY has funded a Coulam 16 Wheelyboat for Scotland’s Lake of Menteith near Stirling. Christopher Graves, a long-time supporter of the Trust’s work, sadly died in 2011 and left a bequest in his will for a Wheelyboat to be provided on a trout fishery in Scotland. A C16Wbt, purpose-built for trout fishing, has been delivered to the Lake of Menteith where it is proving to be a very popular addition. There will be a formal celebration marking Mr Graves’ bequest which will be reported in the next issue.
DISABLED ANGLERS now have two Wheelyboats operating on the Norfolk Broads owned by the Pike Anglers Club of Great Britain and run day-to-day by Norwich & District Pike Club. While angling is the principal activity, the Wheelyboats are also used by birdwatchers and for pleasure boating. Both Wheelyboats were purchased by PACGB with grants provided by the Environment Agency. The latest to arrive is the Mk I (right) that used to be operated by the Broads Authority who kindly refurbished it prior to its rehoming. The provision of the Wheelyboats stems from an initiative by the Broads Angling Strategy Group to improve angling access. The Wheelyboats are available free of charge to anyone who finds bank access difficult due to disability. The two venues are the River Yare at Surlingham and Sportsman’s Staiths which is part of the Trinity Broad system. For enquiries and bookings contact Mickey Cox on 07899 913606, www.norwichpike.com.

THOUSANDS OF people attended the Chesterfield Canal Festival held at Staveley Town Basin at the end of June and, according to many of them, Wheelyboats were the highlight. The Trust was there with a Mk III Wheelyboat and spent the entire weekend taking festival goers, many of whom were disabled, on boat trips along the canal. The organisers, Chesterfield Canal Trust, were running trips in three canal boats, two of which are also wheelchair accessible. However, one young lady who uses a wheelchair remarked how much more fun the Wheelyboat was. She said the other boats, while enjoyable, made her feel like she was sitting in a bus! Being close to the water and feeling the sun and breeze on her face clearly made the experience even more special and memorable.

Derbyshire County Council took a very close interest in the Wheelyboat and the feedback from its users. It is hoped the event will act as the catalyst to provide a permanent Wheelyboat on the canal.

Events like the canal festival are important to the Trust and offer excellent opportunities to demonstrate first hand the benefits Wheelyboats provide. The Trust is very grateful to Chesterfield Canal Trust for inviting it to attend. For more information on the Chesterfield Canal visit www.chesterfield-canal-trust.org.uk.
Busy First Year For Thorney Island Wheelyboat

THE ‘JOHN Q Davis RM’, Thorney Island’s Mk IV Wheelyboat launched in June last year, has had a hugely encouraging first year with more than 500 people taking part in a wide range of activities. Most inspiring have been the groups from Help For Heroes’ Tedworth House Recovery Centre. Jack, one of the participants, said ‘This was the best activity we have done! It’s great to drive the JQD’.

In just one day in June, 90 scouts from Hayling Island were taken out (in shifts!). Other groups to have benefitted include the Army Welfare Service, Portsmouth College, Bordon Garrison and Glenwood School for children with learning difficulties. Thorney Island Sailing Club used JQD as a support vessel for their junior sailing week and she has been involved in two rescues.

Many thanks to: Chichester Harbour Conservancy who have supported JQD from the outset and this year have awarded a grant of £3,500 to purchase a reserve outboard and waterproof clothing; and Raymarine who generously donated a combined chart plotter, fish finder and depth sounder worth £2,500.

JQD will be on the water at the Southampton Boat Show (Sep 13 to 22) on Sea Rover’s stand in the marina—a tremendous opportunity to promote her availability and the work of the Trust.

From April to October, JQD operates out of Thorney Island Sailing Club who provide her mooring free of charge. From November to March, she operates from Hayling Island’s Northney Marina.

JQD will soon have her own website. In the meantime, to make a booking or enquire about her availability, contact Ian McCoy on 07850 638670.

THE ANCHORITES, a club founded shortly after the Great War whose members have a background or interest in all things maritime, have chosen the Trust as its charity to support this year. Fundraising began with a charity dinner in February on HQS Wellington moored on the Thames. The Trust was represented by Alistair Scott, Trustee, and Andy Beadsley, Director, both of whom informed and entertained with after dinner speeches. All funds raised will help pay for a new GRP Wheelyboat (see page 3) for the Trust to use as a demonstrator at shows and events. The Trust is very grateful to their President, Commodore James Fanshawe CBE, and to all their members.

Harbour residents basking in the sun. A large number of trips in JQD include a visit to the inlet where the seals are found.

A group from Help For Heroes’ Recovery Centre, Tedworth House—‘the best activity we have done!’
A CHARITY is enabling people to venture and explore outdoors on land or water regardless of how far they can walk, through the use of ‘Trampers’ and ‘Wheelyboats’. The Countryside Mobility scheme, run by Devon charity Living Options Devon, is ensuring that the South West is a truly accessible environment for everyone by improving access to the countryside for people with limited mobility. Based on the principle of urban Shopmobility schemes, Tramper all-terrain mobility scooters are now available at more than 30 countryside venues across Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire and Somerset.

As well as the Trampers, Countryside Mobility also helped supply four Mk III Wheelyboats in partnership with The Wheelyboat Trust. Designed to provide disabled people with hassle-free and independent access to waterborne activities, Wheelyboats enable adults and children with limited mobility the opportunity to participate in a wide range of water based activities. Users board via roll-on, roll-off bow ramps. With plenty of space on board, Wheelyboats enable the whole family or a group of friends, etc to enjoy time on the water. The south west is the busiest region for Wheelyboats available for multi-purpose use with a total of 16 operating from Dorset to Cornwall.

Wheelyboat users hire the boat for a full or half day, with price varying depending on the site and receive instruction on the boat’s safe operation. To use the Trampers, people simply choose their site and arrange their first visit. On arrival they join as members of Countryside Mobility which costs £10.00 per year or £2.50 for 4 weeks. Training is provided on how to use a Tramper, lasting approximately 15 minutes. They are then given a membership card which enables them to use a Tramper at any partner site without the need for further training. The scheme has been supported with a grant from Natural England as part of its Access to Nature programme funded from the Big Lottery Fund’s Changing Spaces programme.

Full details about Countryside Mobility and a list of where Trampers and Wheelyboats are available can be found on the website www.countrysidemobility.org or by phoning 01392 459222. You can also find out more by following them on Twitter @CMSouthWest or on Facebook - CountrysideMobility. For a list of all Wheelyboat venues in the UK and Ireland go to www.wheelyboats.org.
IN MAY, Bill Quarry (pictured centre), who looks after the Tweed Wheelyboats cycled from John O’Groats to Lands End as part of the ‘Propjogle’ fundraiser. His strenuous efforts raised a fantastic £11,000 towards the running and upkeep of the Tweed Wheelyboats. Well done Bill!

BARNEY WILSON was the Trust’s longest serving Trustee and died suddenly but peacefully in February. Barney, who contracted polio when he was only 18 months old, used a wheelchair later in life and knew first hand the benefits Wheelyboats bring. A keen angler, he landed a 40lb salmon on the Tay on his first proper outing which was also his wife Jane’s birthday. Barney was a partner in the law firm Slaughter and May and headed their pensions department. He is remembered with much fondness.

@WheelyboatTrust

PLEASE DONATE—IT’S VERY EASY....
Our work is entirely reliant on income from donations, we receive no statutory funding. Enclosed is a Gift Aid form for single or regular donations, or donations can be made online at www.justgiving.com/wheelyboattrust or from our website, www.wheelyboats.org. We welcome legacies, so please remember us when writing your will. Members of clubs/societies/fisheries—please nominate us as your charity to support.

OUR ENORMOUS thanks go to the following trusts, organisations and individuals for their recent generous support:

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CONGRATULATIONS TO Rutland Water, last year’s winner of our annual award, sponsored by Suzuki GB, presented to the fishery that makes the most effort to accommodate the needs of disabled anglers.

IN OUR ENORMOUS thanks go to the following trusts, organisations and individuals for their recent generous support:

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