

Appeal Reference: 3273053

Witness statement by Ian Harvey - Hewletts Reservoir.

My name is Ian Harvey and I have been a Tennant and now the owner of Hewletts Reservoir Lodge since 1987. I also collaborated on the book "Troubled Waters" which I know has been referred to in evidence by parties at this inquiry and relied upon as a good source of information in relation to the topic of Heritage and Hewletts Reservoir.

I am currently retired but I was employed by Severn Trent from 1978 until 2005. From 2007 until 2015 I worked as a contractor but with no responsibility regarding Reservoirs.

My last role as an employee was Team Leader / Supervisor and I was responsible for the operation and maintenance of reservoirs and boosters in the Gloucestershire area of Severn Trent Water. This also included the security of the sites. I was initially based at Dowdeswell Reservoir near Cheltenham and then moved to Staverton Depot near Gloucester.

In relation to the referenced book "Troubled Waters" and the evidence submitted by the appellant, there are a few points that I would like to draw everyone's attention to in relation to the listed pavilion.

The building has always been known as "The Gazebo". It was used as an office where the Custodian would work from on a daily basis. In my earlier years I carried out some of his work when he was on holiday or off sick. The role of Custodians came to an end in the 1980's and would have been confined to specific sites e.g. Hewletts Reservoir and Churchdown Reservoirs. This role probably started at the time the reservoirs were first constructed.

The pavilion is located on the west of the reservoir complex and I understand it is described by Historic England and quoted in the appellants Heritage evidence as probably being a former valve house. I am unsure why anyone would come to this conclusion. I can only imagine someone has mistakenly given Historic England this information. There is no evidence on any of the reservoir drawings that indicates this was the case and I have never known it to be called a valve house. There is no equipment in the building itself or signs of equipment removal which would suggest that it had been a valve house. There is an 'Air Valve' adjacent to the building but this is not manually

operated. The valves connected to the reservoir mains are at either side of the building but several meters away from it.

This pavilion or gazebo was a convenient building to be used as an office having a phone line connected. Diaries and log books were kept there along with other working items used in daily operations. To my knowledge no valves have ever been located at this building.

Historically, Custodians were common place at major reservoir sites throughout STW until the automation of alarm systems were introduced and eventually this role became redundant.

The building is an attractive victorian listed 8 sided building. I don't know the reason for the design of the building with all of its windows but clearly, this would allow good visual observation of the reservoir site and land beyond. This would have been an advantage to site security in the days of the Custodian.

There is a weather vane on the building which I can only assume was there to record wind direction. This, the weather conditions and rainfall were recorded on a daily basis in the past.

There is just one other point I would like to mention about the complex as a whole which might be of interest.

The reservoir site would have been an impressive work of engineering when constructed. There would have been good views to a large expanse of water and wildlife with No. 3 & 4 Reservoirs being open. It would also have been a good vantage point to view Cheltenham and its surrounding area. I believe from conversations I had with former employees that this site was open to the public at certain times.

It is quite possible I suppose that at some point in the future this historic complex could be opened up for public viewing. The views from the pavilion building should therefore be preserved as they are now, to maintain a visual connection between the complex, the wider area of Cheltenham and its suburbs. Maintaining these views would also show what the outlook for the custodian would have been during his working day

I hope my statement is useful and provides some clarification about what the pavilion was actually used for.

