



NABO Policies

April 2013

NABO Council develops policies from time to time and these form the basis of our consultation with navigation authorities and other user groups. These are reviewed in consultation with the membership and are therefore the nearest we can get to a consensus of opinion within our Association. Please consult Council members if you feel unable to represent any of the policies shown below, or if you wish to propose an amendment to a policy.

1 NABO's role

NABO is dedicated to promoting the interests of private boaters on Britain's canals, rivers and lakes. NABO was formed in 1991 and represents over 3,000 boaters, predominantly on the waterways operated by the Canal & River Trust (CRT) and the Environment Agency (EA). Views of members are obtained through correspondence, Association publications, surveys, open meetings, and face to face contact with boaters at boat shows and on the waterways. NABO will work positively with all navigation authorities, principally CRT and EA, to represent boaters' views.

2 Waterways Regulator

NABO welcomes the continued presence of the Waterways Ombudsman and the scrutiny this brings to the activities of CRT. NABO would wish the Ombudsman to have a remit covering all inland navigation authorities, to provide a uniform approach applicable to all waterways not presently included in the various Ombudsman schemes. This should also encompass the navigation functions of the EA.

3 Boater safety

NABO will actively promote safety issues among boaters and other canal users, and contribute to the work of the Boat Safety Scheme.

4 Consultation

NABO is committed to meaningful consultation and would like to feel more confident that the views of users are being taken seriously. There should be meaningful consultation for all significant issues that affect boaters (for example stoppages, terms and conditions, priorities for maintenance expenditure, mooring regulations, use of powers from the 1962 Transport Act and changes to waterside furniture). The application of rules should be consistent across the system. There should be no opportunity for individual Waterway Business Units or Partnerships to interpret the navigation laws.

5 Licensing, Regulations and the law

NABO will monitor all legal cases made available the Association and take legal advice on matters of interpretation and senior court judgements. NABO believes that all regulations must be applied equally to all boaters and have national legality. CRT, being established by statute, must have rules that are in accordance with the powers granted to them by Act of Parliament, and must be seen to exercise and test their interpretation in Court. NABO will challenge CRT where in its view, CRT are exceeding their powers. NABO does not support 'Roving Mooring Licences' or 'Community Permits', which are from time to time a proposal of CRT but not designated in BW Acts.

6 Licence and Registration Evasion

NABO does not condone licence/registration evasion and will do all it can to promote compliance on behalf of the navigation authorities.

7 Mooring Abuse

NABO supports a 'fair use' policy for all parts of the waterways. Unauthorised overstay on moorings is a national problem that navigation authorities and land owners should address. We agree in principle with CRT's 'Guidance for boaters without a home mooring', dated September 2012, and will encourage bona fide navigation. Enforcement must be seen to be even-handed and not discriminatory.

8 Visitor Mooring Charges

NABO is opposed to charges being applied to visitor moorings. NABO believes that if such moorings are included in the licence fee, then there should be no further charge. This should be by default 7 or 14 days and only shorter where the demand for mooring in that location exceeds the supply and it is not possible to provide sufficient extra moorings to satisfy that demand. A mix of available mooring durations is NABO's preferred option. Where a vessel overstays the advertised mooring period, NABO will support the application of CRT's charges, but not the refusal of a licence on these grounds alone. NABO would like to see a test case to underwrite the legality of the level of charge.

9 Boating Cost Increases

NABO will seek justification and wherever appropriate challenge any increase in licence, permit, mooring or other boating fees that exceeds the rate of increase to which pensions are linked.

10 Scope of Licence and Moorings Terms and Conditions

NABO believes that licence/permit Terms and Conditions should be restricted to those essential to the successful administration of the system and be transparently based on the applicable laws. Safety requirements should be limited to those that protect third parties from proven risks.

11 Mooring Fee Justification

NABO believes that navigation authorities and service providers should offer written terms and conditions for boaters. A justification and breakdown of mooring fees should be available to all. NABO does not support the auction of CRT moorings, and prefers a waiting list system.

12 Vegetation Management

NABO believes that vegetation should be managed so it does not impede or prejudice the safety of activities concerned with navigation.

13 Dredging and Channel Dimensions

All navigation authorities should recover the original profile of channel dimensions whenever dredging takes place, except where exceptional engineering or usage reasons exist. Dredging at designated mooring areas should be sufficient to allow deep-draught boats to come alongside the bank.

14 The role of CRT

NABO believes that CRT should place its obligations as a navigation authority at the top of its duty priorities, and only conduct other commercial activities as a means to further this aim. NABO believes that property development, pub management, water distribution, communication data distribution, marinas, event organisation, nature conservation and development of the waterway corridors as linear public parks should not in any way prejudice the maintenance and development of the waterways as routes for travel by water.

15 Cycling

NABO is against any organised cycling or performance events on the towpath. Boaters and pedestrians should have priority over cyclists on the towpath and we remain very cautious, on safety grounds, of the 'upgrade' of towpaths in order to create cycle ways. NABO is in favour of any steps taken to ensure that cyclists slow down before passing moored boats and pedestrians. CRT should take responsibility for allowing cyclists on towpaths and enforce its bye-laws

16 Angling

NABO is opposed to angling-only lengths of bank. Boaters should have sole use of lock landing stages and facilities points and priority at designated visitor mooring sites. Elsewhere, priority should be on a first-come-first-served basis.

17 Crime and Vandalism

NABO will support all agencies and do whatever else is necessary to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour on the waterways.