

THE MAGAZINE OF THE



President: Bill O'Brien J.P. M.P.

ISSUE 7/02 - December 2002

AGM / New Council / Dredging

IN THIS ISSUE

3	Chairman's Column/ New Council	Sue Burchett
4	The 2002 Annual General Meeting	Stuart Sampson
6	Infra-Dig (BW Dredging Policy)	Adrian Stott
9	E-mail Bulletin and Web Survey	Webmaster
11	Worried Woman of the Waterways	Dot
12	It's a Bit Steep! (Reasons for subscription rise)	
14	Charging in Gear - Does it glaze bores?	Tony Brooks
16	Editorial	The Editor
17	Notices	
18	BW Direct Debit policy	
19	Boats without moorings	Sue Burchett
20	Rivers (inc EA Floodline Quickdial)	River Users Rep.
22	Flying the Flag	Stephen Peters
24	More Flexible Terms for Thames Visitors	
25	Letters	Yourselves
31	Council Contacts	

2003 CALENDAR

Council meetings	Copy dates
-------------------------	-------------------

Jan 25th	Feb 1st
March 8th	March 15th
April 26th	May 3rd
June 7th	June 14th
July 19th	July 26th
Sept 6th	Sept 13th
Oct 4th	Oct 4th
Nov 15th	A.G.M.
Nov 29th	t.b.a.

CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

I certainly didn't expect to be writing to you as chairman again. As it was a very sudden appointment, due to the resignation of James, this is going to be a very short report.

We have a stand at the Earls Court Boat Show for the first and I suspect the last time. As we have taken on this commitment we want it to be a success.

The dates are January the 2nd to the 12th and any member who can spend a few hours helping will be welcome. It may be the only place to find a seat!

We are also involved at the Penton Hook show 16th - 18th May. Please keep these dates free. How about spending the summer on the Thames starting with



Penton Hook and ending with the IWA National Festival 22nd - 25th August?

I personally would like to say goodbye to David Fletcher as Chief Executive at British Waterways. However as he will be involved with the Waterways Trust, AINA and the IWA, his considerable

energy and enthusiasm will not be lost to the system.

I also welcome Robin Evans as the new Chief Executive and I hope that we can have a constructive relationship.

I look forward to working with our new Council and representing all boaters on the Inland Waterways.

Wishing you a happy Christmas and a very happy Boating New Year

NEW COUNCIL

Following the first meeting of the 2002/2003 Council the following officers have been chosen:-

Chairman - Sue Burchett

Vice-chairman - Trevor Rogers

General Secretary - Carole Sampson

Treasurer - Stephen Peters*

Stephen is to hold this post as point of contact while the transfer of the treasurer's duties is being arranged.

It was mainly as a result of Sue's willingness to stand as an alternative candidate that Council agreed to hold a formal election for Chairman rather than ratify the choice made at the informal proceedings on the day of the AGM.

Following the announcement of the results of this, Graham Freeman, Caie Graham and James Mason announced they no longer wished to serve on Council.

Peter Lea, a member and past Chairman, who was observing and helping with the count, was then co-opted to fill one of the vacancies. His help and knowledge of the Constitution will be valued both by Council and the membership.

The meeting ended in an atmosphere of friendly co-operation and a firm resolve not to let any past disagreements get in the way of honouring NABO's commitments to its members.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held 23rd November 2002 in the Bonded Warehouse, Stourbridge

Chairman's Address

After the initial formalities, the outgoing Chairman gave a well prepared and positive report. He began by emphasising how NABO had grown in stature from a pressure group to a body that the navigation agencies now respect and approach, in spite of its apparently small size - "*Never mind the width, feel the quality!*", he said. He claimed this was mainly due to NABO's attendance at an ever increasing number of meetings, especially now that it had more than a full complement of Council members including Regional Secretaries for all areas. He quoted his own commitments for the year including 68 User Group meetings, 15 national meetings, 8 council meetings (in fact 9!) and 13 public events. If you add to this the meetings attended by other members of Council, including BSS and local User Groups, it gave a fair measure of NABO's current workload.

He then commented that the outgoing Council was actually three co-opted members in excess of the statutory sixteen. All were volunteers, claiming only petrol expenses in return for the sacrifices they made.

NABO's advances in electronic communication was next in his list of achievements. The facts that Council members were almost all able to use e-mail, and that the website was improving all the time, both made com-



Fear not! NABO News is not going to fill up with presentation pictures, but Andrew and Roger have really earned this. Photo: SS

munication within Council and with members very fast. Contact with members and the general public was also benefitting from NABO's presence at events and shows. Application had been made for a stand at next year's Earls Court Boat Show, and plans for what is expected to become the Thames's major annual event at Penton Hook, '*Boats on Show*', were well advanced. So much so that NABO is now a shareholder in the event and has been given the go-ahead to hold a boat gathering as part of it.

Progress was being made to simplify the BSS, mainly by applying pressure from within - the Association being represented on all the major BSS Committees. In due course he hoped a new guide would be published with substantially fewer requirements.

On the BW Moorings and Licence issues, he said NABO had also been campaigning hard. It had approached the Office of Fair

Trading about the mooring fee rises and BW had to admit it got it the consultation process wrong. NABO was also pressing through parliamentary channels for a regulatory body for waterways.

Winding up, he again praised and thanked Council members, in particular Andrew Sherrey and Roger Davis who were standing down after long and worthy service. In recognition he then presented them with engraved plaques.

Financial Statement and Subscriptions

NABO's Accounts for 2001/2002 were then explained. Where figures differed significantly from the previous year, it mainly due to increased activity and various 'one-off' payments like the 10th Birthday celebrations room hire. Sara Davis's efforts were recognised in the improvement in advertising income.

The meeting then had to consider Council's proposal to increase all except 'Family' subscriptions to £15. An amendment from the floor to increase the rate for Associated members by only £2.50 was incorporated.

Having heard figures for NABO reserves, some members felt they could stand being tapped further to finance the extra demands. Countering that, it was pointed out that NABO's campaigning fund should match the ever increasing price of legal services, and that an unacceptable extra workload would be placed on Council volunteers if smaller but more frequent increases had to be applied. Interim results of the members online survey were then read out showing nearly half the sample would sanction a £10 rise and only one in six would object to the rise proposed. The motion was passed with only two votes against.

Constitutional Changes

The changes outlined in Issue 6/02 of this magazine were put to the members. It was soon made clear by members on the floor, those who had been been closely involved with the Constitution in the past, that no changes could be implemented without full and timely notification of the whole membership. The new Council would work on this in the coming year.

Election of Council for 2003

The sixteen nominations exactly matched the constitutional maximum for elected members so the new Council was approved in one motion. Deliberations 'in camera' resulted in the following:-

Chairman: James Mason

Vice-chairman: Graham Freeman

General Secretary: Carole Sampson

Ratification of these and decisions on other positions would be left to the first Council meeting on 7th December.

A.O.B.

Discussion centred around 'Crime on the Cut', a.k.a. *Towpath Awareness*, and the new Vice Chairman promised that, now that the BSS simplification is under way, NABO could concentrate more on this issue.

In conclusion

A productive meeting, but one couldn't help detect undercurrents of criticism about some aspects of the way NABO is being run. If these are addressed, in combination with the big advances being made now, then the future looks bright. (or is it teal blue?)

Infra Dig – BW Breaks Its Word on Dredging

Although building and restoring waterways is the glamorous bit, it is actually maintenance that has the biggest effect on boaters. After all, if you can't get to the latest addition to the network because the route to it is impassable for your boat, that addition isn't worth much to you, is it?

Over the last 20 or so years, the condition of waterways equipment (locks, etc.) has improved substantially. But one particular waterways maintenance problem has remained. The bottom is often still far too near the top. There is a large dredging backlog. And unfortunately, BW seems reluctant to deal with it properly.

How Big a Channel?

First, an unavoidable bit of technical stuff, to get to grips with what dredging is needed.

Each waterway was built to a specific gauge, i.e. to pass craft up to a maximum beam and draft (also length and air draft, but those aren't relevant for dredging). This means that the walls and sills of all the waterway structures – locks, bridges, stop plank narrows, etc. – are all at least as wide and deep as the gauge craft. But it also has important implications for the channel.

There are many engineering treatises on what size of channel is needed for navigation by a given size of vessel. The following is based the Fraenkel report, a study done for the government in the 1970s into waterways standards. Although this report is now over 30 years old, it is specific to our waterways and still valid.

Fraenkel points out that there are three vital channel measurements: depth, width, and cross section.

Depth: The channel must be significantly deeper than the boat. Otherwise, the boat will be able to move only very slowly, and will be almost impossible to steer. In order to ensure there is always enough clearance below the gauge craft, even allowing for normal variations in the water level below weir, siltation between dredging operations, and the stern squat of motor vessels under way, Fraenkel says that the channel should be built, and dredged, to a depth at least 30 cm deeper than the draft of the gauge craft.

Width: Craft need to be able to pass everywhere in the open channel. This means that the width of the fairway, the part of the channel with at least the prescribed depth, must be at least twice the beam of the gauge craft.

Cross section: As a boat passes along a waterway, water must move the other way to fill in the hole left behind the boat. If the cross section of the channel is not much bigger than the under-water cross section of the boat, that water flow will be hampered. The level of the water right in front of the boat will rise, and the boat will travel (much) more slowly and burn much more fuel as it tries constantly to climb that hill of water. Also, its wash will be alarming, and damaging to the banks. Fraenkel says that the channel cross section should be at least 5 times that of the gauge craft, and should never be less than 3.5 times.

How to Dredge.

It turns out that most artificial channels – canals and river lock cuts, even very old ones like the Wey – were indeed built to approximately the Fraenkel standards. Couple this with the costs of setting up a dredging operation, such as assembling the equipment and arranging the disposal of the dredgings, and it is clear that the sensible thing to do is always to dredge out all the accumulated silt, to recover the constructed profile of the channel.

For a long time, BW wouldn't do this. It preferred to spend its dredging budget just on creating a narrow notch down the middle of the channel over a greater length, rather than recovering a proper profile over a shorter one. Although this can seem seductive to boaters, it is a bad approach.

First, the channel is still too small after dredging. Boats still have to travel slowly, and pass cautiously. There is too much wash even at slow speeds, quickly damaging the banks and filling the channel with mud, thus shortening the time until when the next dredging is needed. Even a small amount of rubbish on the shallow bottom will bring boats to a halt.

Second, the arrears never get caught up. On average, the same amount of silt falls into the waterways network each year. So, to prevent the network from getting shallower overall, at least this amount must be removed each year. But this amount is roughly the same no matter how deep the waterways are. So, once the arrears are caught up, it costs no more to keep the network at its proper depth than to keep it too shallow. BW had simply been unwilling to spend the extra money needed to clear the arrears, which is a capital sum unrelated to the annual maintenance dredging budget.

However, after considerable user lobbying, BW announced three or four years ago that it had adopted the policy that it would always recover the original profile when it dredged from now on, except where this would cause engineering problems, or violate nature conservation legislation (e.g. SSSIs). It also started getting extra grant from government specifically to tackle dredging arrears. The user organisations were jubilant.

How Not to Dredge.

But boaters soon realised that there is a big difference between policy and practice. BW immediately started bobbing and weaving.

Its first gambit was to say that it often didn't know what the original profile of the navigation is. Fair enough, as the canal companies may never have had as-built drawings, and many records have been lost anyway. But when users said they would accept as a standard a fairway at least as deep as the nearest sill plus 30 cm, and twice as wide as the locks, BW still hummed and hawed. (Note that simply dredging down until puddle is encountered is not a good idea, as it is very difficult to do without damaging the lining, and anyway quite a few navigations are unlined).

Then it turned out that almost all dredging contracts were specifying the same depth, 1.4 m (4' 6"), even though many waterways were built deeper than this (for example, the Kennet & Avon had a fairway "one fathom" (1.8 m) deep, and the Stort navigation was built to a depth of over 2.0 m). Waterway managers confirmed that they had been told by Watford that this was to be the standard across the network. Users said that they would accept a standard profile for the narrow canals, but each wider navigation should be treated individually. BW (reluctantly) agreed.

But dredging this standard notch down the middle still continued, despite BW's denials.

Putting It to Bed.

Eventually, a deputation of users from NABO (Peter Lea), IWA (Liz Payne), and DBA (myself), went to Stewart Sim, BW's engineering director, to deal with this. After over a year of pressure, he finally agreed to a standard procedure for specifying dredging dimensions, with the following steps:

Well in advance of letting the dredging contract, the waterway manager will identify the length to be dredged. He will also provide to user representatives his best estimate of the original channel profile of that length, with copies of all the evidence he based this estimate on (sill depths, lock widths, historic records, surveys, etc.).

The user representatives will review the manager's estimate, and either accept it or supply their own evidence to support changing it.

Following discussion, a final estimate of the original profile will be agreed, for use for that length from now on (the procedure needs to be done only once ever for each length). The dredging contract will specify the agreed estimated profile. The length to be dredged will be as long as can be achieved at that profile with the budget available. We were optimistic the issue had finally been dealt with.

A Rude Awakening.

Unfortunately, we seem to have been naïve.

We have not yet seen a single case of a waterway manager following the agreed procedure.

We became suspicious over a dredging project from Hanwell to Brentford on the Grand Union, where no original profile estimate was presented. We were told this was just “spot dredging”, so the procedure didn’t apply. However, this had often been the excuse of Mark Bensted, BW’s London director, who has said several times that he does not support the original profile standard. Several miles and several locks is a rather long spot, I suggest.

But the proof came with a project at Milton Keynes on the same canal, this autumn. As is shown in the minutes of his user meeting, waterway manager Malcolm Routledge presented no profile estimate, and openly sought support from users for dredging a longer stretch at a profile he knew was smaller than the original. He then had the dredging carried out to a fairway depth of (guess!) 1.4 m. The canal was (re)built at least 1.7 m deep on this stretch, possibly as much as 2.0 m. Stewart Sim later confirmed that all waterway managers had been made aware of the original profile policy, and the agreed procedure. So Malcolm had simply ignored them.

Bad Faith?

Mr Routledge is no fool. He certainly would not have prejudiced his job by flouting national BW policy. So it is hard to avoid the conclusion that his bosses had said that it was OK to do so.

It appears that BW has simply told us what we wanted to hear, and is actually keeping on doing just what it always has. So, have we reached the position where it is actually a waste of time negotiating and agreeing with BW? That would be very sad. But if it is the case, we will have no alternative but to go over BW’s head, and take the matter up with the government.

Surely we should be able to trust the custodian of so many of our waterways.

News Flash.

BW has just said that this problem has been caused simply by a misunderstanding, and that its regional directors are confirming to the waterway managers that the procedure must always be followed. It has also agreed that an upcoming dredging project on the Stort will be used as a model for applying the procedure, and that the original profile estimate for the length concerned will be made available to users soon.

Watch this space.

Adrian Stott



Members' Bulletin List - Join the club!

You can keep abreast of the latest from NABO by e-mail. You just need to be a member and give us an e-mail address where we can get messages to you. About a third of members are on our list so far and more are applying as they get to hear about it.

If you want to be included, or your e-mail address has changed since you last gave us one, please contact the Membership Secretary. Use mem.sec@nabo.org.uk so your request will automatically reach whoever is taking over the job when Roger finally hands over the reins. We are keen to ensure the list is restricted to bona-fide members.

DON'T PANIC!

- Your address will not appear on other members' bulletins
- Nobody is privy to the addresses on the list except the host administrators who have a strict privacy policy. Not even our webmaster can view or edit the list directly.
- There is a form in the members-only area of the website where you can opt out if you find the bulletins intrusive, or contact the webmaster who can do it for you.
- Only one person can transmit the bulletins so you will not be swamped with messages.
- The system can only handle plain text so you won't be spending on-line time receiving unnecessary images and fancywork.
- The bulletins will be used for news flashes, announcements about password changes and pointers to new material on the website. Rarely will there be more than a nominal page of text in each one, and, although there may be as many as one a week while the system is growing, it should settle down to half that or less, depending on what is worth reporting.

Survey of Members

On November the 8th one of these bulletins went out inviting on-line members to fill out a website survey form expressing their feelings about NABO itself. Most of the questions were multi-choice and could be analysed numerically, but space was given for verbal comments too, where many members expressed some very encouraging sentiments.

By the time of the AGM the number of returns was about double the number of members who could get to Stourbridge, so they formed a useful addition to the 'voice of the membership'. This was useful in giving pointers on issues like the subscription increase, although not constitutionally valid as a poll in itself.

NABO was given a clear vote of confidence for its attitude, only two members thought NABO too confrontational and two thought it was 'going soft' when the results were worked out for the AGM. Most agreed it was confrontational at the right times.

The fact that only 'on-line' members could respond meant that questions about the value of the website and e-mail bulletins scored more than they would if all members were involved. Perhaps also there was a bias when members were asked what level of

subscription increase would cause them to resign. This tended to be higher in the evening when those who could afford home computers would be replying than at lunchtime when many would have been using their work PCs.

On the whole the results were on the supportive side of predictable. Members are least keen on merchandising and advertising, and, it appeared, preferred to give money themselves as subscriptions rather than have NABO expending effort using commercial means to raise it.

As far as questions about this magazine are concerned, there was a significant demand for more articles of a 'practical nature'. The only thing people would sacrifice to make space for these is advertising, so maybe we need a bigger magazine.

Full results are available on the website. Regrettably there were few entries from cruiser and wide-beam owners, and a poor return from the more northern reaches of the system. NABO hasn't forgotten you, even if you have forgotten us.

Keep an eye out for more surveys, probably regarding issues other than NABO itself. We now have a quick way to canvass a fair sample of our members, which will further improve our credibility, providing you keep responding. Many thanks to those who have.

Me again!

Advertisement

Advertisement

WORRIED WOMAN of the WATERWAYS

Hello again, it's me Dot, the Worried Woman of the Waterways.

Are you looking forward to the **Jolly** festive season and getting about on some winter **jaunts**? or do you regard it with dejection as a closed season to be endured until BW decide that the winter repair jobs are done?

I'm worried that some of these **jobs** seem to be taking rather long and, come the spring, we will have to plan our journeys to bypass them.

At least at this time of year I don't have to worry about crowds of boats **jamming** up the system and long queues at the locks. How annoying these can be when folks are inconsiderate and some try all sorts of tricks to 'queue **jump**'. These times can be quite jolly with us boaters having a chat and a good moan or laugh at the things that befall us.

In Autumn I think of the other kinds of **jams** and I'm off collecting nature's harvest. What luck that most of the modern boaters don't go for such things and leave the blackberries, crab apples, damsons, elderberries etc for me, though I always worry that my favourite spots will be picked bare before I get to them. Why are all the best damsons near locks or narrows where you will cause the other sort of jam if you hang about for long?

Other **J** things I worry about include - the attitude of many waterway employees, do they really care about us or the waterways or is it just a **job** to them?

Joggers, when I see these panting along the towpaths I worry 'Is that really good for them? Wouldn't they be better off working a few locks now and then?' I would let them open a few for me!

Joshers, are these lovely old boats, with their beautiful lines, disappearing? So many are being 'converted' or modernised with longer (misshapen) cabins. I worry, who can afford to own one and keep it original when mooring and licence fees are so crippling. Don't think that BW will keep this bit of history alive. In some areas they try but mostly they haven't a clue!

Junk, (some of you may think that is what I write) - the junk that worries me is in the waterways in ever increasing amounts. In some city centres they employ folk to clear it away. In one they have devised a method of scooping it off the water. That is only the bits that show! We are worried by underwater unseen hazards that can jeopardise our safety. The other sort of junk that worries me is talk about the past and how things used to be, but I think I have mentioned that before! Then there is the Chinese **junk** that they wanted to build as a floating restaurant. How very traditional! How would that contribute to safeguarding our heritage.

I wish you all a **joyous** festive season to end this **jubilee** year. More from me in January, if my worries don't get the better of me.

Your friend WWW DOT

WHY A 50% INCREASE? IT'S A BIT STEEP!

It's down to growth pains. Eight years ago, when the £10 sub was set, NABO was a little outfit where stalwarts like Andrew Sherrey and Roger Davis could spare an hour or two a week to work on a few membership renewals and the odd Standing Order. Now Roger reckons it takes him on average 10 hours a week to look after NABO members and there is no way we can expect another volunteer to take on that work load without paid help.

Just the same argument can be made for book-keeping assistance as there are now hundreds of Standing Orders. Labour doesn't come cheap these days.

Of course the increase is going lose NABO members, so we will not get 50% more income, but as our resident wise-guy says, "It's only a couple of pints each!"

Council will, of course, be looking for ways to give you more for the money. This is happening already, but who can put a value on all the extra representation work NABO does? A price, yes, petrol costs have doubled over the eight years, and the number of meetings has soared.

We also hope you can see better value in this magazine. If you agree the cover price of one issue nowadays would be around £1, add post and packing, and multiply by 7, then there wouldn't be much change from your present £10, would there? So where do we get money to pay for everything else?

Going back to the paid assistance – again the rise defeats itself by making more work. That's why it is better to have one steep rise and then fix it for a few years instead of, say, having all those Standing Order increases to chase every year.

In the previous financial year we had to milk over a grand from the campaign reserve, we can't go on doing that, we should keep it topped up. (It's as though we've bought a 12 volt fridge, we need to run the engine longer or the batteries will go flat.)

If you still prefer the pints, sorry to see you go, we need you – we're not here just for the beer.

Thinking about it?

Doing it?

Having it done?

INSPIRATIONAL – IT'S HAPPENING RIGHT NOW!...

DIARY of a NARROWBOAT FIT-OUT

ISSN 1476-5772

Share the excitement, the anguish and the triumphs in full daily detail. The Diary is building over 36 months into about 400 pages of valuable insight and information.

It's interactive - you can join in!

Monthly subscription: first 12 months £10 or the full set £28 or ask for details:

Inland Waterways Books,
1 James Street,
Stoney Stanton,
Leicester LE9 4DL

Phone (message for Doug): 01455 - 274638
Email: douglas@mixedmoss.fsnet.co.uk.mailloc

Indispensable. Entertaining! Don't build yours without it!

Advertisement

Advertisement

Running engines in gear whilst moored.

Your editor recently asked me to comment on running engines in gear whilst moored. I gave him a very technical answer, and agreed to try to simplify it. I acknowledge help received from Lister-Petter's technical department in researching this phenomenon.

First there is the matter of why they are running the engine. Many say they are battery charging, but I suspect many are also heating their water by calorifier. Which ever they are doing, they cite "bore glazing" as the reason for running in gear.

In the first case, the amount of waste heat generated by a diesel engine is less than a petrol engine so it takes a time to bring the coolant up to temperature, and then more time to heat the domestic water. There is not much one can do about this other than to ensure the calorifier is piped to give the quickest warm up time. This usually requires it to take the hot water from the engine head and return it to the main coolant return pipe. This just minimises the problem, it will not remove it, and whilst trying to heat water the cylinder bores MIGHT, and it is a big might, start to glaze.

What is glazing?

An engine's cylinder bore should be covered in thousands of tiny scratches. These allow the piston rings to "grip" the metal bore and work correctly. If those scratches are either worn off, or filled in, the rings will not do their job and the engine will burn oil and lose compression – this gives blueish exhaust smoke and poor cold starting. The notion that a smooth surface makes it harder for the rings to do their job is counter-intuitive, and I can not explain it, but I do know it happens.

Is glazing real?

Yes it is real, although I suspect not as wide-spread as boaters have been lead to believe. What engine mariniser is likely to

say "yes our engines are subject to bore glazing at low power and speed"?

When British Gas changed their van fleet to models with newer engine designs the bores started to glaze. The emergency engineers spent all night in lay-bys with the engines running to keep the cab heater warm and the bores glazed.

How bores glaze

The main cause, for inland marine use, appears to be incomplete combustion of either fuel or lubricating oil on the cylinder walls. This is influenced by engine design, fuel quality (but probably not in the UK), lubricating oil properties, and injector maintenance.

The engine design problems are related to cylinder wall temperature – if it is too low the fuel or lubricating oil will not burn away to ash, instead it undergoes a process similar to varnish making. This leaves a "sticky" residue on the cylinder walls to be spread about by the piston rings, and fill in those scratches. It is less likely that a "proper" marine engine or older engine design would be affected in this way, so it is important that modern industrial or automotive derived engines are run with pressurised cooling systems and the thermostat temperature as designed. Thus they will run at over 100°C, keeping their cylinder walls hotter than operating them un-pressurised, with a typical 70 degree direct cooled thermostat.

The other main causes of incomplete combustion are: piston design (US & Japanese designs might be more at risk than European ones – I can give no other guidance here) and lack of, or too hot intake air. The latter two may be more of a problem on "fully soundproofed" engine installations. Remember that a 1500cc engine at 1500rpm needs about 800 litres of air per minute – now, what do 800 litre wine bottles look like? Try to ensure minimal obstruction to the air supply to your engine room.

The part the oil plays

The lubricating oil has two main ingredients, the base oil, and the additive pack. It would appear that the additive pack is more of a problem than the base oil. In fact, the base oils have changed little over the years.

Look at a can of oil and you will see some numbers like 20w50 or SAE30. These describe how runny the oil is. Look at the small print and you will see something like API CH4, API CE or API SE. These are performance standards and API stands for American Petroleum Institute (there are European and engine makers standards as well, but API is the most well known).

http://www.api.org/programs_services/quality/oilchart.htm for more info.

Taking the first letter after API, S stands for Spark Ignition (petrol engine) and C for Compression Ignition (diesel engines). We are only concerned with those starting with C.

As the base engines are designed for more and more severe duty (like turbocharging or hurtling up and down motorways) and as bearing surfaces get smaller (to allow lighter, cheaper, higher revving engines) the oil's performance has to be up-rated by increasing the amount of additive pack. Unfortunately for us API tend to state that the latest standards supersedes the earlier ones, so the availability of older spec. oil diminishes.

In our particular use, the additive pack appears to enhance the glazing, so we should be using the oil specification for the engine when it was built. One must

always check the manual, but I suspect, many "modern" units originally demanded a CC or CD oil. This can be hard to get apart from engine manufacturer's brands or independent oil companies like Morris or Comma, but if you look hard in autofactors you may find it.

Try to find what oil was originally specified for your engine and use it; as long as no one is forging the labels just go by the SAE & API characters. I have seen an engine's manuals where the base (industrial) engine quoted CE oil, but the mariniser's manual quoted CC/CD!

Is your engine likely to glaze.

The only answer I can give is "I do not know", and I rather suspect the makers do not either. We tend to operate our engines outside the experience of the original designers – low speed, low power, and lots of idling, so the only people who can answer this is ourselves.

We need someone to collate details of confirmed glazing by engine type, use, servicing details, and oil grade, and then, over time, we might start to get some idea. Failing that you will just have to keep asking other boaters, but do not accept every answer as fully true. I know that over 7 years on a large hire fleet running BMC1.5s and 2.2s, Lister SLs and the odd Perkins 4/10x and Volvo MD, I never found sufficient glazing to worry me – but it was in the 1970s so CC/CD oil would have been high tec.

Tony Brooks MSOE AMIRTE AMIMI

Good News for those boating or planning to visit the Middle Level Navigations. The Commissioners are dredging the very narrow and shallow bit that has been a problem for boaters for some years. It is below Ashline Lock and along Whittlesey Dike towards Angle Corner.

Work is going on as I write and the bit done so far is now a pleasure to use, I have just travelled that way.

Sadie Dean

It was touch and go but I am still sat at the editorial keyboard, so you will have to put up with my observations for a bit longer. Please don't ever confuse them with NABO official policy.

'Think Different' or conform? This is a fundamental choice in life, not just a message in a computer advertisement, and I think is it at the heart of what has been happening with NABO in the past year. Our past chairman has been visionary in his prospects for NABO and put a lot of thought and hard work into trying to dispel the 'NarrowBoat' misconception that has fettered the organisation in his eyes. Changing the Constitution to include sea going yachts may be taking it a bit far, but we could stretch our current definition of 'inland waters' to allow the owner of any boat that uses estuaries or rivers to join even if they cannot access the 'connected system'.

However we come back to the same old problem when somebody tries to implement change – failure of 'the means' rather than 'the end'. What James perhaps lacked was the true understanding of how boaters think (if they do, that's one of the joys of boating, you don't really have to!) I don't think he has ever given himself any chance to enjoy the pleasures he has spent so much time and effort promoting on our behalf. Maybe now he is no longer rushing around to meetings, he can actually get afloat and sample some of the fruits of his labours.

Trying to get a consensus out of boaters is no mean task anyway. There may be a higher than average number of dark blue, 55 ft, cream coach-lined semi-trads on the cut but even amongst the owners of those will be a full spectrum of opinion on such matters as the dreaded 'continuous cruisers' issue. It's back to 'Think Different' again, does this mean NABO's task is an impossibility? I don't believe so, it's all down to communication, a leader must turn around on occasions to see if his followers are still close enough to know where he is leading and ensure they haven't struck off on a different path, particularly if they know the one he is on leads to a precipice!

To the future – we have Sue back in the reins, shuffling up the stairs to meetings having probably endured journeys from wherever *Nackered Navy* happens to be tied up, as she is a real boater, more so than many others on Council. Back she may be, but backward we must not be. If we can build on the progress James has made, and re-establish the openness and frankness that Sue nurtured in her time as Chairman, we should be in line to serve the boating cause as never before. It would be a great shame if members were to leave because of the personalities involved, NABO's powers are bigger than any one individual's powers of persuasion, even that of our ex-chairman, whose unstinting giving of same must be appreciated by us all.

Finally, seasons greetings (probably belated) to you all.

Stuart Sampson

Editor– NABO News, 48 Old Lane. Bramhope, Leeds LS16 9AZ

NOTICES

POST FOR NABO NEWS

The Editor is still on dry land for issue 1/03 so please send contributions to

48 Old Lane, Bramhope,
Leeds LS16 9AZ

E-mail still-
news.editor@nabo.org.uk

If you are over
60 years old
have you
claimed your
winter fuel
allowance.

Helpline
0845 9151515

Lister LPWS3 with Delta Gearbox
Can be seen running
Lancaster Canal

£1600

Tel: 01253 873939

SORRY!

*Just to say I should have
attributed the photo of ice
outside the NABO stand
at the NWF to Tom
Crossley.*

*Thanks Tom, I didn't
know who had taken it
when I was sent it.* SS

PASSWORDS

Any guidance papers or moorings tables still protected will open with password '**Branch**' (Capital B)

The members-only website section has a **new password**, which has been sent out to on-line members via the members' bulletin list. This is because many copies of NABO News have been given out at events with the old password in them.

If you have not been given the new word please e-mail: **webmaster@nabo.org.uk** with your name, membership number (and type of membership if not 'full') to be given the password, and, if you want, to be put onto the bulletin list.

Centrica (nee British Gas), the operator of the DBA propane national buying scheme, has sold its bottled gas division to Flogas UK Ltd as of December 1.

Flogas assures me that the scheme will continue to operate exactly as before, using the same telephone numbers. All accounts within the scheme will be maintained.

If anyone has trouble signing up to the scheme, or using it, please let me know.

Adrian Stott dba@enable.telinco.com
07956-299966

BW DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENT

It seems there is some confusion amongst customers regarding yearly Direct Debit payments for moorings and licences. On BW's scale of charges, only the multiple instalment rates are mentioned under DD (for Direct Debit), no mention is made of a single instalment annual payment. However this option is shown on the renewal form.

What needs to be emphasised is that the yearly Direct Debit option is not offered as a way to ensure your fees are paid indefinitely. The mandate has to be renewed annually, which negates most of the convenience of the Direct Debit anyway.

British Waterways seem to consider that boats are sold or moved so frequently that they would get an undue number of complaints if they were to debit for fees without annual confirmation from the customers, which is a shame. Surely the onus should be on boat owners to tell BW if they move or sell their boat and can't complain about being charged if they don't?

People are being sent reminders because they are under the impression their original renewal notices are for information only and their accounts will be debited automatically, as happens with most household bills on Direct Debit these days. Thankfully BW are prepared to be flexible when there is a genuine misunderstanding, and they have even been known offer the prompt payment discount when approached by telephone as soon as the reminder arrives and payment is made by credit/debit card on the spot.

Advertisement

Advertisement

BOATING WITHOUT A PERMANENT MOORING

I have been asked to write an article about 'continuous cruising' (as it has erroneously been named) or 'boating without a permanent mooring' as it is more correctly known.

One of the causes of the problems BW is having with 'continuous mooring' is self inflicted. On buying a boat and applying for a licence you are told that you can't be issued with a licence if you haven't a mooring. Fair enough, but you are then OFFERED a Continuous Cruising Licence. If the boat has been bought for accommodation either whilst working or for permanent residence and you need to stay in one area you then have the problem of not being a "bona fide" continuous cruiser and risk harassment by BW and derision from other boaters.

There are many reasons why some boaters do not have a permanent mooring.

One of the joys of boating is being able to move around –why keep a car in a car park and never use it? Are people with moorings jealous of other people's freedom? Perhaps they would they like the time to move at will, or maybe they find they are they paying for a piece of towpath with no facilities and so are envious of others mooring next to them for free.

There are some boat dwellers who are constrained by work and usually move around in one area. This may be their only chance of owning their own home, so before we condemn them for not having a mooring ask:

- a) Are there residential moorings that they can rent?
- b) If yes, are they affordable?

I suggest the answer to this (in the south especially) is probably 'no' to both questions . If the answer is 'yes' then the "I don't want to be tied to one piece of bank all year" may apply. But these boaters are called "bridge hoppers" used as a derogatory term. Why should one boater have the need to look down on another because they use their boat in a different way. It must be remembered that one of the joys of living on a boat is being able to have a different view at will.

Then there are 'continuous moorers' i.e boaters with a 'continuous cruising' licence that do not move. These are the ones that seem to be causing most of the trouble. Again ask:

- a) Are there residential moorings available?
- b) are they affordable?

Yes, these boaters should move every 14 days to another 'place', but if it is not enforced they are not going too. How much do we want BW to spend on enforcement? I suggest that the money spent on reviewing licences and mooring charges would have gone a long way towards improving the track.

Finally we have the financially independent and the retired, often on very low incomes. These often pay for a winter mooring – having cruised all summer it can be nice to stop in a convivial place, join the skittles team and the local library. Many also pay to leave their boat in a marina when they need to. Should these boaters, rather than be charged for moorings they don't want or need, be given a licence rebate because the stoppages prevent them cruising?

If continuous cruisers are priced out, the only boat movements will be weekends and holidays, making for a very sterile canal system for much of the year. There is a real danger of the canals becoming a static boat park.



RIVERS



EA Floodline Quickdial Numbers

If you need to know about river conditions, ring EA's Floodline service, which uses a pre-recorded 'menu' to subdivide the country progressively to pinpoint the river stretch you want.

This is time consuming and expensive if using a mobile, so here are some 'quickdial' number sequences for navigable rivers. Key in these numbers when the message prompts you for them and this will save you time. The rivers are arranged more or less north to south.

Editor's note:- EA point out that the database is being developed so the codes may change.

First: dial - 0845 988 1188 When prompted, dial the number for the river:-

Ure		021211
Ouse	(Yorkshire)	02124
Derwent	(Yorkshire)	02124
Ribble		021315
Aire		021311
Calder		021312
Don		02132
Trent	Wychnor	0521641
	Non Tidal	052221
	Upstream of Stockwith	052222
	lower	052223
Weaver		0223
Churnet		052142
Witham		031351
Dee	(Cheshire)	0225
Soar	Upstream of Cotes	052233
	Upstream of Kegworth	052234
	lower	052235
Nene	(Cambs)	03312
	(Northants)	032112
Great Ouse		03321
Lark		0353
Wissey		034161
Avon	(Warwicks)	052441
Severn	Upstream of Tewksbury	052323
	Upstream of Gloucester	052411
Cherwell		0112311
Thames	Strong Stream	011131
Thames	Upstream of Oxford	0111225
	Upstream of Wallingford	0111234
	Upstream of Windsor	011125
	Upstream of Teddington	011126
Gade	(G.U.)	0112211
Lee & Stort		0112111
Kennet		0112441
Avon	(Bristol)	045221
Wey		0112442
Medway		01264

MEDWAY NAVIGATION BYELAWS

The Environment Agency has reviewed its proposed byelaws for the river Medway following responses received from a number of user groups and national bodies during the consultation period between May and August 2002.

It had been suggested by the IWA that some of the byelaws might not be valid due to lack of statutory authority for them. This view has been rejected by the EA but a number of contentious proposals have been re-visited and modified in the light of comments from NABO and others.

It appears that our view that the speed limit should remain at 5 knots (rather than a lower metric speed) was shared by the Medway River Users Association and the Agency has agreed to our request. Other navigation authorities please note: it is possible and permissible to express boat speeds in knots rather than obscure kilometres and seconds; even international standards published by ISO contain references to speeds in knots.

The requirement for a vessel to be under the control of a person aged over 16 years has been amended by giving the maximum engine power rating as 7.5 kW or 10 horsepower in imperial units. So much more British!

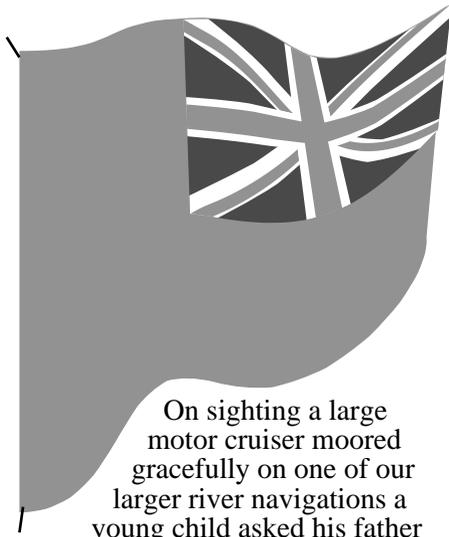
Three consultees, including NABO, had questioned the earlier draft requirement for Third Party liability insurance and the amount to be specified. The outcome is that the new wording will specify insurance for "such liability as may be incurred", thus acknowledging that the maximum amounts of maritime insurance claims are governed by international convention.

We appear to have been a lone voice in calling for the powers to introduce and apply the Boat Safety Scheme on the Medway to include a less onerous regime of standards and a simplified appeals procedure but it seems that the Medway River Users Association has actually pressed to have the BSS imposed on the river. Nuff said!

With the inclusion of a few minor amendments made at the behest of the British Canoe Union, the byelaws have now reached their final format and the EA intends to submit them to the Secretary of State for confirmation. It is anticipated that a period of formal consultation and ability to lodge objections will then ensue before the byelaws become operative on the Medway

TO BOLDLY GO

BW Monthly tells its readers that the new Sanitary station cum visitor centre planned for the southern end of the Harecastle Tunnel is expected to use 'innovative materials such as pre-rusted steel (Corten) to echo the industrial heritage of the site'. Another innovation planned for a sanitary station in Stalybridge (Hudersfield Narrow) is a roof designed to catch rainwater to flush the toilet and disposal pan.



Flying the Flag

On sighting a large motor cruiser moored gracefully on one of our larger river navigations a young child asked his father why the vessel appeared to be flying a New Zealand ensign at the stern.

His father quickly put him straight. This was a British boat flying a blue ensign. He explained *“They have a complicated caste system in the UK yachting world, rather like India. The top bananas get a white ensign like you see on warships, the next level down get a blue ensign and the plebs fly a plain red ensign. If you have a red one or a blue one with fried eggs on it you are slightly higher than the plebs.”*

If this was all very confusing for a child, it is equally obscure to most inland boaters who rarely see a canal boat flying any flags. So, here is a NABO guide to flag etiquette, purposely abbreviated and simplified to make it understandable.

The only correct ensign to be worn by any British ship (i.e. a cruiser or canal boat) is the RED ensign; unless the owner has a special relationship with certain yacht clubs or has served in the Royal Navy. Note that ensigns are “worn” and not “flown”. Important to get the terms right.

It is not permissible or legal to display a national flag such as the Welsh flag or the flag of St George in place of the ensign. And it is not unknown, although rare, for the owner to be fined for such indiscipline. These national flags can be flown from a mast or a radio aerial if so desired.

A Union “Jack” flag should never be worn on a boat (unless you are a warship of Her Majesty’s Navy!), although it is not uncommon to see this malpractice being perpetrated by those who know no better.

So who can fly a blue ensign on a yacht? Only members of specified yacht clubs that have permission from the Ministry of Defence for their members to wear a plain blue ensign or a defaced blue ensign incorporating the insignia of their club. Such a special ensign must only be worn when the owner is on board or in effective control and only in conjunction with the burgee of the club which is flown from the main masthead.

Similar rules apply to defaced red ensigns and permits to fly such ensigns must be kept on board at all times.

The white ensign is worn only by British warships and on yachts whose owners are members of the Royal Yacht Squadron – a very exclusive group of boat owners. We know of at least one narrowboat seen on the Warwickshire Avon legally wearing this distinctive ensign.

Before a ship can display a special ensign it must be registered as a British ship, either on the Small Ships Register (SSR) or on Part I of the full Register. It is quite possible to have any cruiser or canal boat registered subject to its size or tonnage. The SSR is affordable but full registration is both complicated and expensive.

What other flags do vessels on inland waterways fly? It is common to see the flags of organisations such as the RNLI or the RYA being proudly flown by members and supporters of such bodies. Many clubs and navigation

trusts have their own flag for use by members – the Lower Avon and Upper Avon navigation trusts, for example. And, of course, NABO has a smart light blue pennant to advertise the fact that you belong to the only association that represents your interests as an inland boater. But you will probably have already purchased one at the modest price of £7.50 + 50p p&p.

If any member has a specific query concerning the wearing of ensigns or flying flags on a boat our Rivers Rep will be pleased to assist you.

Stephen Peters

Website Advertising

We are still unsure how or whether to use the NABO website to provide space for advertising.

First of all we must ask ourselves why we should do this. Is this just a money spinner, or are we trying to provide a useful service to members and visitors?

If it is just to make money for NABO then how much do we charge and what degree of prominence on the site do we offer? Everybody hates whirling banners and intrusive advertising, but the more of that they get the more they might be prepared to pay.

Alternatively we could set up a properly indexed area of our site where someone in need of a product or service could easily locate a supplier or choice of suppliers. This would require a fair bit of work and planning, and in the end might not be specially lucrative.

I really am open to suggestions on this, and even a little assistance might be appreciated. If we choose to go down the second route perhaps you as members, might like to sound out anybody with whom you are doing business as to whether they would like space, and what they would be prepared to give for it.

Your hard working webmaster!

Advertisement

MORE FLEXIBLE THAMES REGISTRATIONS

In 2003 you can 'mix and match' visitor registration certificates on the Thames. Any combination of six one-day, two 15-day and one 31-day certificates can be bought in a year, giving up to 67 days in total. This should make it easier to visit the NWF at Beale Park in August and/or the NABO boat gathering planned for 16th to 18th of May that accompanies the Penton Hook 'Boats on Show' event.

Thames Waterway Manager Eileen McKeever has plans afoot to offer 31 day certificates at the cost of 15 days for the NWF, NABO is enquiring whether discounts can be made for members visiting its gathering. Look out for further news in this magazine and the NABO website.

Contact the EA on 0118 853 5650 for registration certificate details. The website www.visitthames/boatsonshow will carry information about the May event.

COMMERCIAL WATERWAYS

Stoppages in the Northeast

NABO added its voice to the CBOA and others and convinced BW to have the various works on the Yorkshire commercial waterways running at the same time. Now three maintenance jobs and Railtrack's stoppage at Goole will all happen in the first sixteen days of March.

Strong Stream conditions

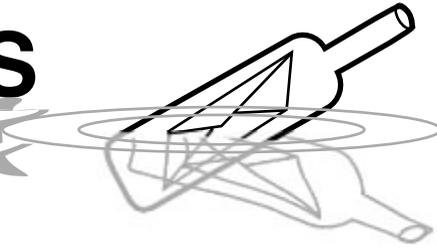
There are still concerns about the accuracy of the level indicators on the Aire and Calder. British Waterways' policy is now not to prevent pleasure craft proceeding when the indicators show red, but to warn skippers not only of the dangers of navigation, but also the possible dangers to their insurance cover. They then switch the locks to user-operation so they cannot be held responsible in any way or be seen to be aiding passage.



Photo: SS

Bank Dole Lock in last summer's floods, The cut, foreground, should be about ten feet higher than the River Aire beyond!

LETTERS



Thank you Mr Fletcher

As David Fletcher's term of office with British Waterways comes to an end, and I know he gets a copy of this newsletter, I would like to thank him for all the good work he has done during his term of office. The canal system and attitude of British Waterways staff has improved considerably.

Christine Denton

She sent this when his departure was announced, now seems a better time to print it so we can all add "hear, hear!" - Ed.

Licence Fees 2003 - 2006

In their background preamble, BW refers to increased navigation miles, why does this have to be paid for by increased licence fees? This mileage has usually started out as a lot of hard work by enthusiastic volunteers, with BW only taking over when the unpaid volunteers have turned it into a viable option. Once the waterways are open, BW wastes no opportunity to advise boaters that the canals are for everyone, we gain no priority over anglers, walkers, cyclists or environmentalists, but yet we seem to

be the only ones who have to pay for it. Local councils see them as tourist attractions, but, more often than not, it is the boats that make them so attractive. Their efforts at persuading us that we are getting a good deal by comparing us with the EA is a false comparison, BW's extensive waterway network cannot be compared to the infinitely smaller EA networks. Everyone knows that costs usually decrease when factors are scaled up.

Why is BW so keen to change the index they use? What makes the Average Earnings Index more suitable than the RPI, especially as a large percentage of boaters are retired.

BW seems intent on bemusing us with figures, taking something simple and easy to understand and turning into a much more complex affair. In their summary they appear to want to include a percentage for increased mileage and for previously charged major structures, but I would have thought that these should be considered as part of the Construction Index, which they insist upon using. What has the Corporate Services Price Index to do with the licence fee, other than that a means to raise the percentage increase to boaters?

It would seem to me that they could reduce their labour costs in one area, if they stopped trying to justify their unfair exceptional increased charges to boaters. These justifications have all been heard before when we were hit with increased mooring charges. Are we paying twice for the same thing? It must take a lot of time and effort, endless brainstorming, numerous iterations, computer time and printouts to produce a document such as this, and that other over complex effort in fee restructuring, the Clearwater Project. Is the aim to take something simple and easily understood by all and to turn it into something you need a legal brain to dissect?

Why don't BW use all this initiative and labour to come up with other money spinning suggestions. The captive customer, the good old boater is becoming tired of continually digging deep into frayed pockets. With inflation so low why should we have to pay such hefty increases? Mooring costs in this area were increased by over 20%, and now another "over the top" increase in licensing.

It is time there was an independent arbiter to curb the abuse of monopolistic power that BW currently exercises.

Kay Wardle
on behalf of
Pewsey Wharf Boat Club

More on Licence Fees

I went into our web site and looked at the new BW proposed craft licence fees. The ingenuity and effort they put into designing ways to confuse us and increase the fees is truly astounding. I see BW have even got the stealth element added, reasonable this year but wait until next when the dust has settled.

More specifically, on one of their points, my boat can only occupy 50 feet of water at any time so the length of canal available in itself is not a valid criteria. If they are going to use the Environmental Agency as a comparison they should also factor in width and depth which make the rivers more attractive. Finally they should deduct winter closures from the calculation.

I really think it is time the canal system was divided into two, East Canals and West Canals. This together with the EA would get some element of competition into navigation and prevent some of the unilateral thinking we currently have to accept.

Richard Waddy

Is NABO changing?

I have attended most of the NABO AGMs in the last 10 years. In each of these, the Chairman's report was a full and interesting description of NABO's activities in the previous year. We would hear about the major issues, the problems encountered, now NABO was approaching the problems and details of progress. Proposals for change were described in advance.

This year proceedings were different. The Chairman's report was brief, patchy and, to me at least, rather obscure. Perhaps I was not sufficiently in the know! The accounts were presented as professionally as ever. However, two voting agenda items were presented in a quite extraordinary way. The first concerned raising the annual subscription fee from £10 to £15. This is a 50% increase, following an eight-year moratorium. There was an attempt to take the motion to a vote without any discussion! Unheard of and unjustified. Why should an increase be needed? The accounts did show that meeting expenses had increased, in line with the Chairman's statement but this increase to £15 will bring in an extra £ 10,000 every year. With net current assets of £26,000, why might this be necessary? If there was another reason to require an increase in the reserves, it was not mentioned.

The second motion was to change the constitution. The change was presented as a 'minor' change to enable the membership catchment to be changed from 'inland waterways' to 'inland and coastal waterways'. Minor? Certainly minor from the way the change was presented. But not minor from the effect it could have on NABO. 'Coastal waterways' would include all owners of sea craft moored all around Britain. These owners may, in the future, be affected by the BSS in the same way as we currently are. There the similarity ends as the two

communities have few common interests. How many seafarers have heard of the Pontcysyllte aqueduct or the Anderton Lift? Likewise, most NABO members are uninterested in coastguard facilities and RYA certification schemes. Broadening NABO's remit would either dilute Council's ability to manage our perennial problems concerning BSS, mooring fees and licences. This would create pressure to change Council's current 16 man, horizontal style, to a larger committee based structure. NABO would look ever more like the IWA. As it was, the floor pointed out that the constitution prevents such a major change, which can only be made after wide consultation within NABO and with a specially convened EGM or even at the next AGM. The constitution exists to prevent our society from being hijacked along pathways that members did not envisage when they joined. We change the constitution at our peril. It is our safeguard. Seafarers could even come to dominate NABO.

So it seems that there is a new direction. For the first time ever, I detected a change in Council style that is becoming more presidential, with control reverting to an executive. Previously our battles were with BW, now we need to pay attention to our own house.

Christopher Boxall
(erstwhile Midlands Rep)

Fishing Rage

I greatly enjoyed Canalman's piece on Fishing Rage in the October issue of NABO News, and - although I have absolutely no interest myself in fishing - I agree entirely with his doctrine of Live and Let Live.

We always slow down for fishermen, stick to the middle of the channel, and call "Thank you" to those who have moved their long poles to allow us to pass. Like Canalman, we often make a point of shouting a cheery greeting, and more often than not we elicit a smiling response from the bank.

We were therefore dismayed when we were shouted at by a fisherman this summer. We were travelling along the Basingstoke Canal at the time and - in my own defence - I have to say that I had not seen the fisherman who was completely hidden in the dense undergrowth which passes for an ecological towpath on the Basingstoke. The first indication I had of his presence was the sight of a tightening fishing line rising out of the water as it snagged on my bow. Then, as I drew level with the fisherman himself, he jerked into life and bellowed, " I didn't hear you coming. You are going too quietly." I could not help laughing at this and to my astonishment the fisherman laughed too, when he realised what he had said. I have heard of the Laughing Cavalier, but the Laughing Fisherman?

Now that was a first, so far as I am concerned, but maybe your readers know better.

David Simmons.

Prime mooring?

As the incumbent BW Chief Executive, Mr. Dave Fletcher is retiring soon, will his mooring spot on the Grand Union (S) canal at Bulbourne Lock workshops be available on a first come first served basis to the general public, or is that spot "reserved" as a perk for the person holding that office?

I find it a bit incongruent with Mr. Fletcher's position, that his (n.b) City of Gloucester has occupied that spot (very reasonably priced in today's "market") depriving an "ordinary" boater of the opportunity.

As finding mooring places on the cut is very difficult (most are full and have waiting lists), this would have at least freed one place up, and demonstrated Mr. Fletcher's concern for the "ordinary" boater.

Bill (by e-mail)

Teenage offenders

This is a response to a message on the Website Forum which deplores the behaviour of youths and how little can be done about it.

I partly agree with your comments but there is some way in which we/you can do something about unsociable behaviour.

All children aged 10 and upwards can be prosecuted for offences such as criminal damage or even threatening to commit criminal damage. If they are caught, I know this is not easy, but if they are and it is their first offence, they are likely to be given a "Referral

Order" which is a new order from the Courts. A contract is made at a panel between the young offenders and the community, two lay volunteers from the local community sit on these panels and form the contract. This would always involve completing some reparation work to the community to try and repair damage done as well making them do some activities to address their behaviour. Victims are consulted and their views taken into account.

In some cases the victims can meet the offenders to explain how they feel about the damage the offenders have caused.

As I work with young offenders and have been a victim of teenage vandals myself I feel that this new way of dealing with those offenders who are caught is better than previous Court dealings. We, the public, need to be active though - report all incidents to the police, work with any Community Safety Partnership and if possible, suggest ways to local Youth Offending Teams in which prosecuted youths can do some reparation work to make our waterways a safer, cleaner place to be.

Adam Petch

A Big Change

I feel I am about to join our friend Dot, or Mrs Dale who used to tell her Diary that she was 'Worried about Jim' (so my grandma told me).

I'm worried about NABO.

You know, the National Association of Boat Owners.

It seems from the AGM that there are those who think it is, or should be, the National Association of Ship Owners.

A slap on the wrist for those who took office on the council of our association and admit to ignoring the rules in the constitution and now want to change the constitution, the fundamental essence of our existence.

My suggestion is, that they form a National Association of Ship Owners and perhaps become affiliated to NABO once up and running.

Sadie Dean

Overstaying their welcome

Some members have permanent moorings and some do not. We all compete for space but inevitably those without permanent moorings take up mooring space on our navigations on an annual basis. I cruise for about 19 weeks per year and never overstay on popular moorings in towns, for example, because my boat is usually on the move. I have the advantage of old age and retirement. I pay my licence and NABO fee etc and have equal rights with other NABO members, rich or poor.

I resent boaters who overstay on visitor moorings whoever they are. IF BW tightens up on the abuse of the 'continuous cruising' licence BW has my support. Also I support BW if

they enforce a minimal time limit on returning to a mooring. As a comparison if caravans were allowed to take over our public parks, our parks would no longer be a place for all to enjoy And finally, or maybe not...

Name supplied

Think of a number

I assume you are working hard re Consultation on BW's new Licence Charges.

Let's stick to RPI not an amalgam of usages for Fire fighters, Civil Servants, the Financial Services Industry and Marconi Directors etc and the Building Industry (notoriously inefficient) and that index used for insurance and re-build criteria. They've even ADDED the discount of 4% instead of SUBTRACTING - surely some mistake?

David Bezzant nb Marsh Warbler
(Deputy Chairman
RYA Inland Cruising

Guides

I thought the guides produced by Carole Sampson which were included in the Newsletter were very useful and informative. Could I suggest that they, plus any others, are included on the NABO Website.

John Russell db Poachers Moon,

Good idea, we'll look into it
- Ed

And finally!

The **first** paragraph of BW Monthly for November reads:-

"A partnership combining public sector ethos and assets with private sector capital and expertise will deliver at least eight million square feet of mixed use development with an end value £1.4 billion"

Wow!, and so relevant to navigation.

NABO News is published by
National Association of Boat Owners
FREEPOST (BM8367),
Birmingham B31 2BR

Whilst every care is taken to ensure that the contents of this newsletter are factually correct, we accept no liability for any direct or consequential loss arising from any action taken by anyone as a result of reading anything contained in this publication. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Association. The products and services advertised in this publication are not necessarily endorsed by the Association.