

Minutes of Council Meeting held at Northfield Birmingham on Saturday 24th April 1999

1. Apologies for absence

Bill Finch, Peter Foster, Nigel Parkinson

2. Accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting

4a should read DETR not DTR

3. Matters arising from the minutes

The Gloucester & Sharpness temporary mooring charges are to be deferred to the next meeting.

The moorings at Sutton Cheyney are up and running.

The B.W. permission for events was brought up at the users' forum meeting. AWCC have taken it up with Watford. IWA confirmed that this doesn't comply with their agreement with B.W. This is now being rewritten by B.W.

Kennet and Avon conservation plan. Claire Roberts is to arrange a meeting before the end of the year to review this.

Bow Locks. This was raised at the National Users Forum. EA are now working with B.W. to see if they can overcome this problem.

John Stevens is working with the Police and B.W. to produce a piece on towpath awareness also a map of access points to the canals on the internet.

Member who believed that oil lamps and securing baths were in the BSS has been put right.

Peter Lea has written to Tony Mason. This matter is now dealt with.

At this point Simon Greer was introduced. Bill Finch is to be removed from the back page of NABO News and Simon's details to be inserted..... **Action Wendy**

John Denton is still liaising with Wendy over the map of reps' areas to go in the NABO News.

Action John & Wendy

4. Major national issues.

Amendments to Recreational Craft Directive. Nigel attended a DTI meeting and took note of objectives.

A watching brief is to be kept at present. RYA's unhelpful comments were read out by Stephen. Peter has written to the DTI with our concerns over the engine exhaust and sound emission requirements and asked to be on the consultation list.

5. National Meetings.

a.) NINF:- The channel dimension draft paper ^{AND THE ONE} on lock measuring ^{VS} has been adopted as the views of all user groups.

The B.W. parallel trust was considered as a method for B.W. to increase revenue but it was thought unlikely to receive much money from boaters.

Bernard Henderson is to stay on until July. Robin Evans takes over from Ian Valder. David Fletcher is to stay.

Reciprocal licences:- two proposals are being discussed, either a 2-3% increase for all boaters or a golden licence which may be purchased by choice but which will be ~~very~~ much more expensive.

It was mentioned that B.W. are charging £15 a night to camp at the Braunston show.

A paper on continuous cruising is to be issued before July.

b.) AINA:- Ports are not included in this forum. Strategy and methods of raising money were discussed with the Lake District adding 10p to trips & 50p on boats.

Neil Edwards gave an excellent speech. It was noted that IWA seem to be getting tougher. NABO should be aware that a B.W. trust may take IWA members and IWA may take ours.

c.) EANNF:- Lord de Ramsey chaired part of this EA meeting. There was an update on the closed fishing season. The restoration policy was redrafted to make more user friendly. EA is not only not supporting restoration on the Wey and Arun it is not listening to input and is refusing to discuss the issue.

EA want powers to make abstraction licences have a ^{LIMIT} time control and to be able to restrict in times of need. The Government is determined to toughen water control. This will include B.W. abstraction.

DETR and the government understand our concerns.

(NOT ON THE THAMES)

EA funding was mentioned. The Thames is 70% funded by users. Fewer boats are using the Thames so there is less reason to increase the size of the locks. It has been suggested that EA ask for a one off grant. A minimum lock size of 22mx4.3m has been agreed. The channel dimensions apply to canals not rivers.

The lack of flood warnings on the Nene was discussed. It was suggested that water flow warnings were needed. There is now a residential boater's policy on the Nene by agreement with RBOA.

5d) PWG:- This meeting was referred to as the David and Alan show. The minister appeared not to understand questions asked although they had been faxed to him previously. Alan Meale did say that he was keen to support restoration and eliminate problems with road planners.

6. Update on other national issues

Dredging on the Slough Arm and silting at Bow remain an issue. A formal complaint against Mark Benstead has been initiated as he has not replied to letters.

Peter wanted to take up the matter of B.W. withholding a cruising licence as the end of garden mooring wasn't recognized by B.W. but was advised that due to 1995 ruling that we would lose and have costs awarded against us. Simon told us of a case in Chester where a boater successfully argued in the small claims court that if parking a car for one hour he wouldn't be charged for a year. The encroachment of the canal on private land would also negate charges. You can't sub-let or lend an on line mooring but you can moor for 14 days. NABO hasn't an official stance on moorings.

The Broads are joining the BSS at April 2005 at the earliest.

Electrolux have rebuilt their fridges to comply with the BSS. Gas water heaters will require a balanced flue to comply. Solenoid actuated battery master switches are now disallowed due to the way that they are installed.

Nigel is to be asked to raise the profile of the BSS and write an article for NABO News for the issue after this.

Action Nigel

John Stephens is to take over from John Darlington at the Fazeley BSS advisory committee meetings.

Action John Stephens

John showed photos of railings at Farmers Bridge locks and suggested that there was a conflict of interest between the safety of single handed boaters and walkers. Other areas need bringing to our notice.

Overhanging trees were commented on. B.W. are supposed to cut back twice a year. Trees are also being allowed to grow between the towpath and the canal.

7.) Regional reps - communication of issues and views.

The reps were concerned that there was insufficient time to air the issues, that came up at the meetings that they attended, at council. A second meeting running in tandem was considered and abandoned as it is important for the reps to know what is happening in a wider issue and Peter can't be at both meetings concurrently. The agenda is to be revamped. The meeting will start at 9.45am and end at 3.30pm with one hour for reps' reports. Item 7 will come after item 3 with each rep having his own slot. It will be helpful if each rep produces a written report which is sent out by Melanie with the agenda.

Action all reps

Simon was asked to present a paper on his views after a couple of meetings.

Action Simon

8.) Reports on other meetings attended and local issues

Jim gave his glowing report on London docklands and B.W. management especially Sue King. Peter brought up the matter of boaters being moved out of the Paddington Arm without being offered alternative moorings.

John Stevens gave a written report. B.W. want to allow fishing on visitor moorings during the winter. The planning proposal for the Old Mail Sorting Office was discussed, with NABO taking issue about any loss of boaters' facilities.

Stephen Peters had nothing to report.

Geoff. Cycling continues to be a problem on the K&A. NABO council are unanimous that cyclists should pay for a licence with safety being the main issue. London has a similar problem. It is mass cycling that causes the majority of problems, this is also against B.W.'s own by laws. This seems to be being ignored by B.W. as the local councils are paying for towpath maintenance. There is also a problem policing cyclists. Ian White has the overall responsibility for cycling for B.W.

Top pounds on the K&A are to be dredged to form reservoirs

Sadie has written to all members in her area and is getting responses. She is educating the commissioners. Locks are being lengthened but the winding holes are too short. It was agreed that if we are to pay for cruising the Middle Level we require adequate facilities. Sadie is to send a copy of the letter from the commissioners to Neil Edwards and also draw the commissioners' attention to AINA principles.

Action Sadie

Simon's report included the news that Bugsworth Basin is now open, again boats are being moved without an alternative mooring being offered. B.W. are putting up no mooring signs at private householders request. B.W. have generalised powers to restrict mooring but no specific power. Simon is to be provided with both a list of members in his area and a list of willing helpers.

Action Roger & John Denton

9.) Press matters

Wendy stated that she is boating for all of May. Sue and Peter made arrangements to get copy to her in time. Roger has agreed to help proof-read.

Action Roger

10.) Rallies and marketing

Christine took names of volunteers for Braunston and arranged to get copies of NABO News for the shows. Andrew is to order polo shirts in various colours.

Action Andrew

Day Star has received their donation.

The site of the stand for Worcester has been sorted to be next to the bar and outside the main trade show.

Christine brought to our attention a Millennium function at Birmingham National Arena and Gas St. basin that would be very boater orientated. No date was given.

Lock day volunteers were asked for and found.

John Stevens suggested a slide presentation for NABO talks. John Denton & Roger are to liaise with John on this.

Action John D, John S & Roger

Newark the stall is booked

11.) Membership

Recruitment is up with 23 clubs joining. The Grand Union Canal Society asked us to affiliate with them. We wish them well but declined.

Mr. Ogborn criticized NABO News. Sadie to deal with.

Action Sadie

Colin Hughes & Bernard Jessop have not renewed..... **Action Peter Lea & Jim**
Council discussed appointing a President without coming to any conclusions.

12.) Treasurers report

Andrew has issued forms requesting that all expenses should be claimed up to the end of March 1999 and a list of NABO stock sent to him as soon as possible

Action all

13.) AOB

Stephen Peters explained the private service that he was offering boaters in disputes. He stated that it did not conflict with the work he did for NABO council is happy with this.

The next meeting will be at Newark on the 12th June with a 9.45 am start. Sue is to chase up the venue.....

Action Sue

Roger has proffered his apologies in advance

