

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

1. Apologies for absence

John & Christine Denton; Peter Foster; Simon Greer; Jim Hutchinson; Nigel Parkinson and John Stevens.

2. Accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting

Philip Ogden did send his apologies.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

Gloucester & Sharpness charges. B.W. Glocs. will harmonise the short term mooring regime and introduce the same charges for all craft as from 1/1/2000.

Grand Union south-still awaiting reply from Matthew Routledge regarding dredging not being in accordance with existing policy.

Canals being designated for fishing. B.W. agree that there must be less designation of towpath areas.

The complaint by a boater at Kinver was found to be groundless except on the issue of a Patrol Officers wife having delegated authority.

Middle Level bye laws will take time to implement. The law re closure for activities will be addressed when the time comes.

Red Diesel. It will be o.k. to use red diesel offshore ^{BUT NOT INLAND}. There are so many amendments E.U. member states are unhappy as it relates to an energy tax. The whole thing may get thrown out.

Packs of NABO leaflets sent to boatyards. Only Christine knows where they were distributed. We think about 25 boatyards have them.

4. Regional reps reports

a Rivers) Invitation received to E.A. agm on 15th Sept. Peter Lea to attend.

Action

Peter Lea

Stephen is to query why the E.A. Nottingham office is conducting a survey of recreational use of the River Severn

Action Stephen

Sadie has responded to Mike Smith regarding his perceived lack of response to his reports.

E.A. Midlands RFERAC chairman has agreed to investigate the problem of low water levels and the UANT proposals for a solution at Marlcliff weir.

b London) No report

c South) B.W. has a stated policy of reducing the no. of linear moorings ^{NATIONALLY} ~~in the S>E~~ APCO has criticised B.W. for creating linear moorings outside new marinas.

A Southern rep is required to cover the Oxford and the Thames. Roger reported on his holiday on the K&A. As a remainder waterway it puts other canals to shame. Both B.W. staff and fishermen were friendly.

d Midlands) Peter reported that B.W. doesn't get a grant for maintaining towpaths

John has heard reports new marinas wanting boats to have grey water containers. this is believed to be unworkable.

Towpath awareness was discussed at National User Group meeting.

Long Itchington embankment -B.W. has agreed to review the possibility of moorings to the north of the stoppage being made available to those that moor to the immediate south and wish to visit Birmingham for the Millennium celebrations

The missing bumping blocks have been replaced.

Being raised at the next User Group meeting.

Waters edge grass cutting John has received several complaints about the lack of.

The need for mooring rings immediately below and above locks for single handed boaters. Peter suggested that there would be no support from other user groups for rings, but strapping posts, bollards or original lock furniture being replaced would receive support.

e East Anglia) Sadie reported that the Huddersfield Canal doesn't seem to want boats at Stalybridge. To liaise with Simon and write to the Manager on NABO paper.

Action Sadie

Difficulties were experienced navigating the Middle Level this year as water levels are kept low for the winter and Easter was early.

Full length boats can now pass through Salters Lode when time and tides are right with liaison with the Commissioners.

f North East) There are problems on the Erewash due to low levels. Newark town lock is being improved. The proposed navigable draught on the Trent of 6ft is not sufficient as some boats have at least a 6ft draught.

Paul Monahan from Hebdon Bridge reported that the local council has written to boaters directing them not to move their boats during a 2 day fishing match. NABO has suggested a gentle cruise of several organisations.

The B.W. Trust is to take over the Rochdale canal.

5. National Meetings

a NINF) The NINF minutes have been circulated.

IWA released a classic press release on B.W. commitments

b B.W. National User Group Meeting). There are two backlogs of maintenance. Urgent dangerous structures that are costing 83 million and will take 7 years to complete and statutory long term maintenance costed at 160 million and needing to be dealt with over a period of time. B.W. want our help to lobby the Government for money so Peter has suggested a range of discounts for retired and new boaters. The B.W. token 10% to historic boats is a precedent.

Channel dimensions have been agreed for narrow canals but not wide. DETR state that discussion with other user groups is to continue.

c B.W. Annual General Meeting) The new Chairman Dr George Greener spoke a lot of platitudes. Alan Meale stated that the unsung hero of the waterways is David Fletcher. Again the meeting was given a very expensive presentation. Peter mentioned the Recreational draft directive on exhaust emissions to bring it to the Ministers attention. There are major changes of government attitude towards the canals. B.W. are closing wharves as the government states that it wants to increase freight.

6. Discussion on major issues

a) R.C.D. The 7th draft includes minor changes. Repairs to old engines are now allowed and an exemption has been extended to old boats that have changed engines.

Our thoughts have to be given to Peter by Mid August so that Peter can reply to the formal consultation.

Action all

b) BSS changes. The British Standards Institute has issued new standards regarding LPG. All gas appliances are to be room sealed except cookers. David Allison has stated that this should only apply to new boats and appliances fitted since May '99. Corgi has threatened legal action over this as this is now legally in force but B.W. are not enforcing it. All examiners and surveyors will have to be Corgi trained and under Corgi rules any system failing has to be disconnected until made safe by a Corgi fitter. All appliance burners including pilot lights must have a flame fail device. All flued appliances are to be tested to ensure the safe passage of combustuious gases to the outside. Multi cylinder LPG systems need non return valves.

Mr. Bitmead was recommended to survey boats for the BSS. Wendy to liase with Nigel and write a report for NABO news.

Action Wendy

Every boater has to be informed by B.W. and then has 56days for consultation.

David Smith has informed NABO of his action on plastic spillways which he has taken to the appeals panel.

B.W. ^{ARGUE} state that the appeal panel cannot consider issues on technical grounds.

c) Simon Greer's paper defered

Wendy showed us a handout, designed by her, to be passed to boaters. This needs the mission statement and slogan to be added. This was well received.

Action Wendy

d) BW/EA joint licence proposals. Peter is on the committee discussing this issue. Comments have to be in by 1st September but Peter would like our comments within the next two weeks.

Action all

The gold card option is preferred but the 1st of Jan date causes problems as it should be linked to the start date of licences. Both a pro rata payment and pro rata payback are needed.

e) Geoffrey has taken the Waterways Standards new draft to comment on.

Action Geoffrey

The 5th Ombudsman's annual report has been published. It was suggested that council members ask Watford for a copy

Our comments on the B.W.'s membership scheme and trust are needed by mid November. The comments at our meeting were "that anything that raises more money for the waterways is good news". "Membership is a good idea but the set up fees are coming from Government and therefore our money" A limit should be set to stop too much money being thrown at this scheme.

There is concern over membership diluting the voice of the track users. AWCC are supporting the scheme and want to affiliate. IWA don't.

This is to be an agenda item for September.

Action Peter

For a report on the National stoppages it was recommended that we referred to IWA Head Office Bulletin or Undercurrents. NABO receive a copy at the end of August. To be put in NABO News members wishing for advance notice can phone us.

Action Wendy

There is no notification of the stoppage at ~~2000000000~~ Sadie to liase with Simon and John **Action Sadie**
ANDALTON

7. Press matters

The cost of changing printers was discussed and found to be too expensive. The envelope stuffers are to get a pay rise. (from £4 to £5 per hr) but are to be asked to work within set time limits, 4 days from receipt. A tighter system is needed. Wendy to both monitor and praise.

Action Wendy

Peter hopes that Bob Clarke will publish his ideas for a discount for pensioners in Canal & Riverboat.

8. Rallies & Marketing

Point one of the Dentons notes was discussed. The majority of Council members are also IWA members. It was agreed that IWA is more effective now.

Wendy is to publish details of how to find the regional reps. It was felt that it wasn't a good idea to publish a B.W. map with the Anglian waterways missing.

Action Wendy

9. Membership

Roger reported that membership is up we are not losing members. 3000 by 2000 hasn't worked as only 9 members have claimed their £5. People paying by standing order will be sent cheques. Members comments were discussed along with B.W.'s lack of policy on cyclists and towpath shufflers. Roger read out a very interesting letter which Wendy is to ask permission to include in NABO News.

Action Wendy

GOBA

~~GOBA~~ doesn't wish to be affiliated but has asked to be sent NABO News.

Bernard Henderson needs to be swapped for Dr George Greener. *(MAILING LIST FOR NABO NEWS)*

Roger has two printers and a 386 computer not being used. Agreed to advertise in NABO News.

Action Roger

10. Treasurer's report

Accounts will be available at the next meeting.

11. Annual General Meeting

London Canal Museum requires a deposit but has adequate facilities and will provide tea and biscuits. £50 is to be given to Gloucester Museum as a belated donation.

Ian White has offered the new B.W. Leeds offices for the 2000 venue. Peter is to thank Ian for his kind offer but it will be up to the next council to decide if it wants to use B.W. premises.

Action Peter

12. Council membership time limit

It was stated that the chairman needs to change regularly to be able to keep up with his day job. We can't get enough council members anyway so a time limit could be counter productive. Sue suggested that council members advertise that they will be in a certain pub for an occasional evening. NABO members can then meet them to discuss issues. Hopefully this will bring willing volunteers to our notice. Sue is to contact council members to get feedback.

Action Sue

Discussed putting our boat names on the back page but thought it would be too cluttered.

13. A.O.B

Linton Lock management has passed to B.W.

Oxford IWA want a speaker for 12th January at Thrupp. Make this an agenda item

Action Peter

Geoff has volunteered provisionally.

Cycling update :- Ian White has agreed that there is not enough enforcing. Town & country towpaths need to be treated differently. Local councils are being asked for money for towpath instatement and maintenance. Are counterbalanced gates the answer to speeding cyclists. The gates on the K&A are now locked open.

Wendy passed Trevor Rogers name to Geoff as being willing to help.

Sue & Sadie gave their apologies for the next meeting. Someone to do the minutes will be required.

