

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT NORTHFIELD BIRMINGHAM ON SATURDAY 9TH OCTOBER 1999.

1. Apologies for absence.

Sadie Dean; John Denton; Peter Foster & Geoff. Rogerson, who had an accident on the way to the meeting.

2. Accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.

Nigel Parkinson had sent his apologies. The number of members recruited at Worcester were approx. 50.

3. Matters arising.

Geoff. has written a piece for NABO News on B.W. Waterways Standards.

Area managers on the Thames are to give extra training to lock keepers and assistants regarding the safety issues of stopping engines in engine rooms whilst tied in locks.

Stephen Peters' guidance papers are being prepared.

Mark Bensted and Matthew Routledge are trying to dredge to a lesser profile. National agreement has been reached on profiles for narrow canals. Philip Ogden has figures for all canals. According to B.W. Southern G.U. is broad to Berkhamstead although a 14 ft boat will get to Calcutt. Wide beam boats also historically went to Wendover. Wide beam boats are unable to pass in the Tring cutting. Philip Ogden to write to Paul Wagstaffe about the updated Wide Water Workshop. **Action Phillip**

A letter has been received about planning permission for residential mooring being refused on the grounds of being a Linear Ecological Site. Passed to Christine Denton, to liase with RBOA.

Action Christine

There is a meeting on 8th Nov. with Brian Glicksman.

Peter Lea to attend

A meeting on 9th December with Lord Whitty.

New chairman to attend

There is no progress to report on representation with European Committees.

It was reported that Ripon boat club has an excellent relationship with B.W. and doesn't want the boat rocking over Linton Lock. Simon reported that Ripon Boat Yard has doubled its prices since B.W. have taken over.

4. Regional Reps reports

a) Rivers:- Peter has replied to the consultation paper on Commercial use on the river Nene.

The dry dock at Newark has closed due asbestos and Health & Safety issues. Alternative facilities are required.

b) London:- No meetings to report on. No reply received on visitor moorings at Little Venice.

c) South:- Spot dredging is an issue on GU south. Boaters are to be issued with cards as B.W. doesn't know where the bad spots are. Matthew Routledge has money to spend and has invited boaters to write in with a wish list for "little things that make boaters life easier." Note in NABO News **Action Wendy** If lack of towpath edge cutting is an Environmental requirement we wish to see a copy. Invoke the Waterway Standards in discussion on this issue.

There followed a discussion on area reps boundaries and duties. The area rep finds others to go to meetings that he is unable to attend. All correspondence is to go in the first instance to the area rep and then be dispersed to any interested parties.

Christine revealed that the K & A is a Honey Pot site. Charges have doubled where B.W. have franchised out. Peter explained that Honey Pot sites have to be specific areas, they cannot be whole stretches of canal. Phone Paul Wagstaffe to remind him of National definitions. **Action Christine**

d) Midlands:- Mooring bollards/rings above & below locks. A reply has been received from Paul Wagstaffe. The subject is now with Stewart Sim.

A reply has been received from Paul Wagstaffe on waters edge grass cutting. This subject now passed to Roger Hanbury, at Glocs.

A reply is awaited from Roger Herrington about Mr. R. Curran the patrol officer.

John has a meeting with B.W. on 29th Oct. when he will raise the issue of advising people on the track of stoppages.

John is to use B.W. stats to publish a damming report on water depth.

Action John

12th Oct. meeting at Fradley to be attended by John issues to be raised:- lock bollards, grass cutting, & Northern Oxford duckweed.

12th Oct. meeting at Lapworth, Chris Boxall to attend, raising the issues of Moorings at the top of Hatton, grass cutting & lock bollards.

e) Sadie's report hasn't arrived.

f) North East:- Problems at swing bridges are arising due to return chains (which lie on the bottom of the canal) getting caught on propellers. There is 1 on the Maccelsfield; 3 on the Upper Peak Forest and 2 on the Lower Peak Forest. Snippet needed for NABO News. **Action Simon**

Peter Saville has been sacked as he was too friendly to boaters.

A 72 year old lady has had her licence withheld as she does not move her boat enough. Simon is to pass information to Peter on B.W. surveillance and information collecting for licence evasion. Peter will then take up. **Action Peter**

Mr. Sains maintains that he is applying the mooring's matrix for the first time as it previously didn't exist and is putting costs up by 1/3rd. Simon is to take this up as it is nonsense and costs can only go up by 1 bollard at a time. **Action Simon**

Members are complaining about B.W. charges. B.W. consult about licences & mooring matrix & then do what they want.

Regular comment is needed in NABO News over high prices. **Action Simon**

A discussion was held over prices. It was suggested that the majority of our members maybe happy with the prices that they are paying for their "Gite in the Chilterns". It has been forgotten that it was pontoons and small cruisers that kept the system open for years. There is real concern for people on low incomes.

The cross reference of canals with MPs needs updating. Peter to contact Neil Edwards. **Action Peter**

If B.W. pays rates on a site such as a marina Moorers cannot be charged rates separately by the Council for the same mooring.

5. National meetings

a) The Environment Agency AGM had reps covering every form of wildlife.

b) 23rd October NINF meeting.

Peter to attend

11th November E.A. National User Group meeting.

Peter to attend

26th October Parliamentary Waterways Group meeting.

Sue to attend

6. Discussion on major issues.

a) The way forward discussion paper: Peter congratulated Christine and John on producing a good paper. It was agreed at the Hockley Port agm to have a rivers section. Concern was expressed about a possible lack of liaison between the two committees. Simon suggested that using modern technology, emails and chat rooms could overcome the need for more meetings. NABO has the funds to assist members with getting the necessary technology. Two secretaries need a change in the constitution. Every council meeting has to be notified to all council members. It was suggested that if needed, a special general meeting could be held by publishing the date venue etc. in NABO News and having the meeting before the usual Council meeting. Peter suggested that the paper should be rehashed and then discussed by the new council. **Action Christine & John**

b) Boat Safety Scheme changes. The changes are to sections 7 & 8 of the BSS gas systems and appliances. The changes being to British standard 5482 part 3 boats and small craft. All appliances to have on/off taps and labeled open/shut. All to have flame failure devices and except cookers to be room sealed. A flue spillage test will be needed. All examiners will need retraining and Corgi registration which will be prohibitively expensive. What arrangement is to be made for boats that fail? B.W. is being very helpful as it believes it will add to costs without any safety benefits and they suggest that we lobby in the strongest way. Nigel has responded. Nigel is to send a couple of lines to Peter so that he can also respond. Nigel to do a report for the next newsletter. **Action Nigel & Peter.**

c) NABO's policy on towpath moorers without permits:- The "What is not continuously cruising" paper was discussed. Simon stated that it is a legitimate lifestyle and that historically some working boats moved very short distances. This subject was considered by Parliament 4yrs ago and they decided that B.W. was aggressive and that the law should be left purposely vague. Nigel's position is that we either have a tight rule or risk being taken to court. It was noted that many boaters feel that they have to pay for a mooring therefore everyone should. Comments are needed on this paper. **Action all**

d) BW's membership scheme. Simon has produced his own questionnaire that is to be reproduced in NABO News. **Action Simon**

B.W.'s questionnaire was biased. David Fletcher wants a meeting to put his view.

e) Mooring wardens: Their employment is a matter between them and B.W. but they should be declaring their "perks" for tax. We believe that they should be clearly named and carry ID. Peter to write to clarify their responsibilities and duties. **Action Peter**

7. Press matters Wendy's resignation was greeted with regret. Simon is to consider liaising with Wendy to reduce the load for the immediate future.

The canal magazines need to be sent to the new chairman in future. **Action Andrew**

A new press officer is also needed as Christine Lea is leaving. Our grateful thanks for all her past work was recorded.

8. Rallies and marketing Christine stated that she is wanting to give up this role after the agm. Are we taking the stand to Aylesbury next year?

9. Membership Our membership losses are well down. Fewer members are selling their boats due to rising costs.

Ralph Naylor believes that we give little encouragement to cruiser owners to stay members and suggests a separate cruiser section. **Action Stephen**

The NABO boat safety survey is to be ended. The updated list of complimentary NABO News was circulated.

10. Treasurers report.

There was no report.

11. Annual General Meeting.

John Denton, Peter Foster, Peter Lea and Nigel Parkinson will not be standing for Council. They were given many thanks for the stirring work that they have put in on our behalf.

For the meeting we need:- 4 chairs and table for the present chairman, vice chair, treasurer and secretary. Spare copies of the constitution and membership list (**Roger to provide**). Minutes of the last AGM. and voting slips if more than 16 prospective council members (**Sue to provide Christine for copying**). Accounts (**Andrew to provide**).

A sales table is needed.

A map for the meeting at Northfield is required for the two new members of council. **Action Sue**

For the first meeting of the new Council remember:- To set agenda; Audits; record new signatories;

bring diaries; get Melanie to book hall; go through last mins; bring tea & coffee. **Action all**

12. AOB. Residents of an unadopted road are causing access problems for Valley Cruisers. Christine is to attend a meeting about this. It is noted that it is purely a legal matter. **Action Christine**

Adrian Stott has suggested that NABO joins the Dutch barge associations scheme to buy cheaper gas.

This was agreed and will be published in NABO News. **Action Wendy**

Our web site now has its own Domain name. The web site needs a council member to liaise with Mike to provide information. **Agenda item next meeting**

Francis Hart suggested that the vice chairman of the Parliamentary Waterways Group is asked to be president of NABO. This would give us our own MP. **Agenda item next meeting**

Guide to interest groups passed to Roger to deal with. **Action Roger**

A firm of solicitors with the name of Knights will give talks on avoiding legal problems. It was suggested that we try to get them for the AGM. **Action Peter**

Carole Sampson suggested that our members worked with her to produce an accurate canal guide. The offer was declined.

Stephen Peters gave a vote of thanks on our behalf to both Peter & Nigel.