

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT LANEMARK NUNEATON on SATURDAY
18th March 2000

Members present, Sue Burchett, Roger Davis, Sadie Dean, Derek Hackett, James Mason, Phillip Ogden, Stephen Peters, Trevor Rogers, Geoff. Rogerson, Andrew Sherrey and John Stevens.

1 Apologies for absence received from, Christine Denton, Derek Richardson and Peter Foster.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be accurate.

3 Matters arising.

John has requested a list of boater operated pump out stations from Paul Wagstaffe. He has been told that this will be published on a web site and there is to be a BW leaflet on the matter. There is a new system being piloted in the NW and Peak and Potteries areas. This involves a waters edge connection, to prevent sewage pipes over the towpath, and use of an adapter that boaters will need to purchase. **John** to monitor progress on this and keep us informed.

4 Finance

Boating Etiquette Leaflet.

This has been amended and will be produced in colour.

It was felt that having our logo so prominently on a document that set out to aid boating was too good a chance to miss.

The latest draft of the leaflet was circulated to council for a later decision on contributing £250 to the financing of it.

Stephen is producing a **NABO** leaflet to cover river use, as this is not included in the boating etiquette one.

Payment for Newsletter.

Wendy requires payment, she is willing to produce six editions each year.

This was discussed fully and it was agreed to ask her to come to the next council meeting at a fixed time to discuss future arrangements. These to include the contents of the magazine and sending a disc of it to Mike for the web site.

Advertising Charges.

Derek Hackett is having difficult sorting out who has paid what in the past. It was agreed that he would do his best to recover what he could but mostly make a fresh start.

Charges are to stay as they are for the present.

Communication

There was much discussion about methods of getting connected to the E-mail.

It was agreed that council members wishing to get connected via mobile phones should pursue what avenues they could but, as there is a price war going on between mobile companies, the situation may get much easier and cheaper soon so some members may prefer to wait.

Most members feel strongly that we must aim to communicate this way.

Sadie has had difficulty with the "Hot Mail" system as libraries are reluctant to let their computers be used for this.

The possibility of financing insurance cover against libel was discussed. Stephen said that as we are not a corporate body NABO can't be sued, only individuals!

Sue asked if the council were interested in making a contribution to the Anderton Lift restoration appeal but it was thought that this would create a precedent.

Payment for sites at festivals.

NWF will cost £90

Little Venice will cost 66p per square foot.

There will be no charge for Canals 2000 in Birmingham.

Attending the Ecoboat gathering in Norwich was considered not viable but a venue in the Broads area where more boaters would attend should be sought.

Simon's claim for expenses for producing the unpublished magazine was agreed. **Andrew** to write to tell him so, ask for the return of some documents etc. and send a cheque.

Andrew handed out a Budget Report and went through it.

All council members were asked to complete expenses claims up to 31 March and fill in list of stock held by them.

Andrew will be unable to attend AGM in Leeds

5 Area Reports

Rivers

Stephen's report was discussed and the following action agreed: -

Sue to bring up the question of the reinstatement of our representation on RYA Inland Waters Panel, when at the next NINE meeting. Should this take place **Sue and James** can attend.

Roger is to get a print price for an A5 leaflet form of the River User Guidance Notes that **Stephen** has produced. Once agreed 2000 copies will be produced for all members and for use when we have a stall. It will be regularly updated as required.

Sue to write an article for the Newsletter about the complicated issue of boaters paying council tax. There is variety of interpretation in different areas.

London

James has entered into correspondence over the GU Character Study having no reference what ever of channel dimensions, which was also pointed out by Trevor; the reply from Bruce Harding is evasive and unsatisfactory.

The London User Group meeting highlighted problems with Mark Bensted liaising with NABO via James. In subsequent correspondence it has been pointed out that Mark "Has not got the sympathetic attitude towards moorers that we expect from BW".

South

Trevor's report was read and discussed. It was suggested that some go straight to the editor for inclusion in the Newsletter.

Of special and immediate concern are the proposed meetings between BW and anglers that will exclude boaters we want to be present at these meetings. There are proposals to have lengths of canals exclusively for angling where no boats are to moor, and an intention to control boating.

Midlands

Hopwas is reopening soon, ahead of schedule, dredging is to be to a 4ft 6ins profile.

There is to be an 18-month closure of the old main line in B'ham. (Spon Lane to Smethwick).

Much concern was expressed over the proposed **water transfer scheme** for the South Oxford, not least being the lack of consultation. **Trevor** to ask questions at the Oxford South users meeting. **Chris Boxall** and **Derek Hackett** to go to Lapworth meeting on 11 April if possible.

There was discussion about the different piling and towpath edging in different region and the effects on drainage of the towpath and mooring.

The ongoing problem of moorers and BW at Kinver was raised and the importance of knowing the whole story and all points of view emphasised. The question of Section 8 procedures was raised and all members received copies of relevant documents.

John has received, and later circulated copies of, correspondence about grass cutting on towpaths

Our policy on this should be published in NABO News.

Trevor to gather policy documents and information to establish our official policies for publication.

Anglia

Mike Smith has agreed to cover meetings in the area and looks forward to receiving policy statements.

We have commented on E.A.'s proposals about the derestricted mile on the Nene and the positioning of signs.

There have been members' complaints about the dredging and overhanging trees in Kings Delph. This is being taken up with the Commissioners.

North East

The problem to users, caused by the closure of the small dry dock, has been considered and the large dock is being modified to take smaller boats.

We are concerned about the future of the small dock and think it should be preserved and perhaps used for mooring.

North West

We are now without a representative for the whole area.

These people will be asked to cover some areas: -

David Gerrard - the Lancaster Canal

Mr Cragg the Montgomery and Llangollen

Geoff. Barnett - other parts of the area

6 National & Private Meetings

NTA - It was reported that SUSTRANS say that they deal with walkers cyclists and the disabled PWG question revealed BW employ 25 staff at Watford and 20 in the regions for customer and marketing purposes.

The question of BW purchasing marinas is of concern to all, and the reasons given were most unsatisfactory.

Lord Whitty has said he will look into the problem of consultation on SSSIs.

He was made aware of boaters' feelings on the BSS scheme.

He now knows of the hazards that can be caused by cyclist on the towpath.

Derek is to formulate a survey to be put to members about the various towpath hazards.

Sue & Peter had a meeting with Brian Glicksman and Colin Jones of the DETR where: -

BW membership scheme, BSS, encouraging new boaters,

E.A.'s conflicting functions, and channel dimensions were discussed.

Steven Edell said that the change of reference was not relevant and he will act in problems between NABO and BW. (but not concerning the BSS).

Paul Wagstaffe discussed "section 8" the application of it, BW policy and problems.

The events application forms are still very long. Do SUSTRANS fill them in?

Will there be fishing matches in what was the closed season? Will they clash with boat gatherings?

Designated mooring areas may be changed.

Where notices say 14days max. in one year the 'in one year' no longer applies. Do all regions know this?

NINF meeting 8 April - **Geoff. and Sue** to attend. The question of members of different user groups supporting each other is to be raised and Sue to talk to Neil Edwards about letting IWA members know of the co-operation between user groups.

BSS advisory meeting, agenda items to be in by 11 April.

7 Discussion on Major Issues

Overstaying time on moorings

The 10km rule that BW is trying to introduce and have informed all those with Continuous Cruising licences about was not agreed by user groups.

Some patrol officers seem to be making up their own versions of this to harass boaters.

If hire craft are excluded from the rule what about timeshare boats etc.?

There are plans to change the boat licensing laws and conditions to include mooring laws but defining the length to be cruised is illegal and 28days return is not specified anywhere.

It is feared that as there is no law they can use as a lever to get rid of boats they will 'Section 8' them and refuse to renew the licence.

This to be brought up at next NINF meeting.

Derek and Geoff. to liaise and seek legal advice.

Locking top gate paddles for safety.

Sadie told of the urgent need for all top paddles on the W'ton 21 flight to be locked. The local vandals are emptying the flight on a regular basis, wasting millions of gallons of water, damaging the tow path and causing lots of extra work that takes BW operatives from other tasks.

John handed out leaflets explaining the types of locks in use, these are much more user friendly than the old L&L ones and as they are in place at the top and bottom of the flight, boaters have to obtain the required anti-vandal key to work the flight anyway.

BSS

Stephen elaborated on his technical report.

The Technical Manuals should be with Sue James and Stephen so that relevant up-to-date information is received and passed to council.

A letter expressing discontent with the present BSS system has been sent to Dr. Greener. It is a joint letter from – RYA, IWA, BMIF, RBOA, NABO, AWCC and TBA.

Cycling

Despite promises to the contrary SUSTRANS have organised a cyclethon that is to be held 22-25 June. It includes the South Oxford canal.

Have they got insurance?

8 Press, Publicity and Marketing

Some smaller stickers can be made from out of date large ones. **Roger** to order some round ones the size of a licence holder.

An order for pens was agreed.

9 Membership

Roger circulated a current report, which had interesting comments from members on the back.

10 A O B

There is a preview for the Canals 2000 event on 31 March **Sue & James** to attend.