

**MINUTES OF THE NABO COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE WAGGON AND HORSES, OLDBURY,  
SATURDAY 9th MARCH 2002**

**Those present-**

James Mason: Chairman	Mark Northing: Midland Secretary
Sue Burchett: Vice Chairman	Helen Gardner: London Secretary
Graham Freeman: General Secretary	Peter Foster: Rivers Rep North
Roger Davis: Membership Secretary	Geoffrey Rogerson BW/EALiaison
Stephen Peters: Rivers Rep South	Stuart Sampson: Publications Editor
Andrew Sherrey: Treasurer	Ann Berry: Events and Marketing
Aileen Butler: Minute Secretary	

Council welcomed Ann Berry who is taking the position of NABO's Events and Marketing Officer

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Michelle Harris, Gordon Reece and Trevor Rogers.

**2. Accuracy of Minutes**

The following corrections were made to the minutes;

Gordon Reece is NW Rep

Stuart Sampson is Publications Editor

User Group S R or RS remained a mystery.

**3. Matters arising from minutes not covered elsewhere**

- i It was agreed that the minutes and action list should be distributed earlier to be useful. **James** agreed to Do this.
- ii Peter had had a meeting in Newark with the EA and hoped for the dredging profiles to be available soon. The dredging should help flood relief.
- iii James had a meeting with Peter Lee and Adrian Stott about the dredging in London. They thought that the original profile had been agreed, however Stuart Sim had since intervened and the subject seemed to be back to square one.
- iv Peter mentioned that the Trent Boating Association (TBA) were concerned that the RYA could not represent them, as TBA are not a national body. The Severn Goup were in the same situation. This was a good reason for NABO to be their representative.

**Action Points** were then taken. Outstanding points were;

- v **James** thought he should not write the article on dredging profiles for the newsletter until the outcome of a further meeting on London dredging profiles was known.
- vi **Graham** circulated sets of the BW Acts to any Council member who wanted one.
- vii Circulation of the new K & A Newsletter was passed to Geoffrey.  
Geoffrey had spoken to Paul Wagstaff about angling lengths. NABO needed to have definite evidence of 'angling only, no mooring' signs. This could have the opposite effect with 'no angling' stretches being rescinded. 'No angling' signs at visitor moorings were a breach of BW's contract with angling clubs The pilot scheme on the K & A would not affect other canals.
- viii It was suggested that Stuart should request reports from members on the website.
- ix There had been a meeting of Patrol Officers and parish boundaries were acceptable to them as mooring boundaries. They could recommend 28 day/ 10 km to continuous cruisers. There had been some discussion of refusing licences to those not

bona-fide navigating.

- x BW now had 'BW Aware' stickers for offending boats. It was suggested by Council there could be notices for boaters needing to stay longer on public moorings stating they had BW permission to overstay the designated time. This would also be more acceptable to other boaters.
- xi There were more details on BW's charging policy at Llangollen. It was proposed there be advance booking for overnight mooring. This would enable boaters with limited time, for example hirers, to be sure of being able to stay in the town. BW had also suggested 2 hours free mooring for 'shopping'. Council thought this time inadequate to take full advantage of the stay in town and both shop and see the town. BW justified their charging policy by stating that Llangollen did not qualify as a 'usual canal' and there was therefore no policy of casual mooring. It was agreed that Michelle's opinion be sought.
- xii A draft document had been circulated on full canals about the rise of mooring charges, which amounted to 50% over 3 years. Council thought it would be useful to have notification of those canals with waiting lists for permanent moorings. Geoffrey agreed to re-circulate the existing draft and then revise it in the light of any comments.
- xiii Michelle had in hand the draft NABO policy statement on angling only lengths.
- xiv Council had not yet received details of Aquafest from Gordon. Sue, Stuart and Mark had completed their tasks.

#### 4. Correspondence

James had received a letter from Dr Greener asking for suggestions for the appointment of a new Chief Executive of BW. There had also been a letter from EA about the jobs they were advertising. An invitation had come from 'Unlocked and Unlimited' to their introduction of restoration and the Waterways Trust. Graham and Sue would attend representing NABO and WRG respectively.

#### 5. Treasurer's Report

Andrew pointed out that expense claims needed proof and details of expenditure to satisfy the auditors. All Council members could receive a sample claim form at the meeting or by e-mail.

Council agreed that records over 6 years old be destroyed.

It had come to light that the signatories for the C&G account had long left Council and new signatures were needed, which necessitated a new mandate.

It was agreed that James and Sue, as existing signatories would sign until the next meeting to enable there to be enough expenditure to cover expected expenses. The 4 signatories would be proposed at the next meeting.

The account currently held £34,000. It was estimated that £5,000 was needed for outstanding legal expenses.

Graham pointed out that future generation of finance would almost inevitably involve an increase in subscriptions. The subsequent increase in administrative work would mean the temporary employment of a part-time assistant.

James suggested the instigation of a business plan. This would be a necessity should NABO become a limited company by guarantee, especially if NABO assists TBA on the BSS, because at present NABO is able to pass on funding only to a charity.

Council agreed that a company be formed. The formal proposal was made by Peter and seconded by Stephen, NABO members would be informed by letter.

James agreed to speak to the Charity Commission about NABO's status.

#### 6. Legalities

This had been covered under other items.

#### 7. Membership Secretary's Report

Roger mentioned that members often gave donations to NABO with their subscription and this should be acknowledged in the Newsletter. It could also encourage others to do the same Stuart to note

Recruitment numbers had risen during January and February mainly from boaters on the K&A.

There had been many positive comments on NABO in the replies to the report on e-mail.

It was agreed that members should have joining forms that they would be able to give to others, and that forms should be sent to those paying by standing order who did not normally get them.

#### 8. Technical Committee Report

In Trevor's absence Graham gave an ad hoc report.

It appeared that BW were trying to impose the BSS clause that granted an initial certificate to sailaways, followed by annual examinations.

There was also the case of a certificate being refused on safety grounds due to inadequate ventilation on a boat previously passed by another examiner and with no changes in the interim. Ventilation should in any case not be a reason for failure as it was advisory. This showed the need for a recognised quality assurance and independent assessments of examiners.

The RYA was also dissatisfied with the BSS

Mark was nominated to the technical committee, as a civil engineer.

James and Graham would write an article on the technical committee for the Newsletter.

#### 9. Regional Secretaries Reports

##### Midlands

Ashby Canal. All 7-14 day visitor moorings had now altered to 48 hour moorings. Mark had written to BW about this, but said that he would like if possible to see the paperwork on the Stourport case which was similar. It was suggested that Mark speak to Dennis Smith and John Stephens and write again in the light of that information.

##### Northern Rivers

Lincolnshire Waterways Projects -which is the proposed reopening of waterways to enable boating from Boston to the Ouse. Peter reported there was definite enthusiasm from Lincoln Council and BW, but EA seemed to be less so. There could be a problem with bridge heights as it was wide water. The meeting had given Peter contacts with other organisations and councils.

It was agreed that James write for details of the Newark Aquafest 7-9 June to determine whether NABO should have a stand there.

#### North East

Stuart has mentioned that one of the locks on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal was 6ft 8 inches but had been assured that boats of exactly 6ft 10 would be able to pass. Carol Sampson had attended a local user group meeting which has been more of a road show for BW restoration with no mention of boats or navigation. It was proposed that the water supply to the Rochdale should work on a two year on, one year off basis

Stuart and Carol had been to a meeting on the Leeds Waterfront Strategy Policy but the impression was that it was more of a property development project and navigation was barely mentioned.

The Aire and Calder Navigation Skippers Guide was circulated to the meeting. Barge owners were keen for a similar Guide on the tidal Trent. BW were happy arrange for this sort of leaflet to go to hire operators and be available to boaters. It was agreed the leaflet should be mentioned in the Newsletter.

#### Southern Rivers

Stephen's report had been circulated

Worcester Forum - Dennis Smith would attend on Wednesday ~.

National Trust User Trust for the River Wey had invited NABO to attend a meeting on Tues 23 April.

River Wye Forum - James would attend plus one other.

#### London

Ron Bingham had approached Helen about the regeneration of the Limehouse Link. James will comment for NABO

#### BW/EA Liason

K&A - Stoppages should be January-March only and kept to a minimum. There had been many complaints about unlicensed boats moored on visitor moorings. BW were obviously not doing their job. There was also doubt about how the extension of the £25.50 charges per day overstay to the whole of the K&A could be enforced when it appeared that there was only one person to police the whole waterway.

Middle Levels - new by-laws were to be introduced, which included seemingly inappropriate clauses, based as it appeared to be, on those for the RIVER Medway. There was much in them that NABO would object to.

#### South

There had been two offers for the vacant representative position. It was suggested the area be split so as not to deter the Applicants. James and Graham to arrange meetings.

### 10 Current Issues

BSS - the user community continued to support NABO's attempts to simplify the scheme TBA had asked £50 of each of its members to fight it. The Royal Yacht Association (RYA) had been unimpressive in putting forward its complaint and requesting a reopening review.

It was agreed there should be a letter to Dr Green and the Chief Executive of BW, requesting a review and copied to Lord Whitty and IWAAC. Michelle was aware of the legal and human rights aspects

#### Towpath

Stuart and the regional secretaries were asked to check on Sustrans involvement in the maintenance of towpaths whether or not they were providing funding. Sustrans is a national charity much involved in the provision of cycle paths. Geoff agreed to look at the Sustrans operation, including whether cyclists and anglers were in any way insured. Council acknowledged that BW had no funding for towpath maintenance, although an element of boat licences went towards it. This made provision of toilets for anglers, cyclists and walkers by BW extremely doubtful.

### Moorings

More were needed on rivers in the summer.

It was felt that BW policy of putting their charges on a 'commercial basis' was simply raising charges all round due to their monopolistic position. BW fixed their own prices without consultation which would include connection charges for other marinas.

James agreed to oversee a letter of complaint from NABO to the Monopolies Commission, perhaps drafted by Penny.

It was also deemed unfair that to make a field into a marina involved a private developer in a substantial process and expense, whereas for BW it seemed merely a matter of self-assessment.

There should be mention in the Newsletter of the appeals procedure against increased charges, which has to be in by 1 April. This appeared to be news to boaters and managers alike. Stuart should also point out in the Newsletter the tax element of the mooring charges.

Graham agreed to be the co-ordinator for mooring action and information.

### Full Canals

There was a suggestion that NABO should write to DEFRA on this problem, which had been foreseen 2 years ago. BW had not then accepted the findings and had gone ahead regardless without consulting boaters.

### Violence

The Home Office had issued a booklet entitled 'Under Lock and Quay' Stuart suggested inserting in the News letter a request to members for instances of violent behaviour and cited the information from a member of a man at Milton Keynes who cut the boat ropes.

Geoff agreed to write to inform BW of this instance. It could also be difficult to summon help when bridges were not numbered, or their numbers not marked on maps.

Stephen agreed to write to the Ordnance Survey asking for the inclusion of bridge numbers on their maps and copy it to BW and Nicholsons. Better and up-to-date signage should also help.

Signage Council agreed that there should be signs on the levels of water in rivers. EA seemed much better at this than BW and Government had told the two bodies to liaise on every possible occasion.

Stephen and James would write to BW on this, to be copied to EA, the Association of Inland Authorities (AINA) and the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Committee (IWAAC)

## **11. Any Other Business**

Appointments to Council The Council formalised the following appointments:

North East Secretary: Carole Sampson. Proposed by Roger, seconded by Stephen

Midland Secretary: Mark Northing. Proposed by Stephen, seconded by Helen

Events and Marketing Officer: Ann Berry. Proposed by Stephen, seconded by Stuart

There was some discussion on Ann's role and status. It was agreed Ann should try to increase membership and promote brand awareness, and publicise NABO at public events, especially to non-members. Although no longer a boat owner Ann was co-opted to the council as a full member.

This led to agreement that those members who had to give up their boats did not have to leave NABO. Stuart would put something to this effect in the Newsletter.

### The Newsletter

Stuart requested that Council approve a change of printer for the Newsletter. With increased and hopefully increasing circulation a larger and more sophisticated printer was needed, which could also reduce the cost per run.

Council agreement was proposed by Geoff and seconded by Peter, with the proviso that those currently involved in its production were given enough notice. This was agreed as 2 issues. Roger would inform the printer (Nigel) of Council decision

### ACTION POINTS

#### James

1. To distribute minutes and action points list soon after the meeting
2. To speak to the Charity Commission on NABO's status
3. To liaise with Graham on an article on the technical committee
4. To write for details of the Newark Aquafest
5. To comment to Ron Bingham on the Limehouse Link regeneration
6. To write, with Stephen, to BW on signage on rivers

#### Graham

To liaise with James on an article on the technical committee

#### Roger

To ensure membership forms are sent to members paying by standing order

#### Stephen

1. To write to the Ordnance Survey about bridge numbers
2. To write, with James, to BW on signage on rivers

#### Geoffery

1. To circulate again, for comment, the draft on full canals
2. To investigate Sustrans, including the insurance question
3. To write to BW about the Milton Keynes incident

#### Mark

To speak to and write to BW about mooring on the Ashby

#### Helen

To write an article on the diesel maintenance course

#### Stuart

To include in the Newsletter;

1. An article on the Technical Committee
2. Thanks for members donations
3. The Aire and Calder Skippers Guide
4. The appeals procedure for increased mooring charges
5. The tax element of mooring charges
6. Non-boatowners retaining their NABO membership
7. RYA's involvement
8. Request for instances of violence
9. To ask on the website for any reports on angling/mooring only signage

#### Michelle

To give an opinion on Llangollen Canal's mooring policy

### **12. Date of next meeting**

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2002 on Policy & promotion