

**Minutes of a Council Meeting of the
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS
Held at Samuel Barlow PH, Alvecote Marina Tamworth, at 10.45am
on Saturday 22nd April 2017**

Present: Stella Ridgway (Chair), Helen Hutt, Peter Fellows, Phil Goulding, Paul Howland, Mark Tizard, Mike Rodd. David Fletcher

Members: Alison Tuck, David Cowstick

1) **Apologies for absence:**, Richard Carpenter, Ken Hylins

2) **Minutes of last meeting**

i. **Minutes** for 21st January 2017 approved unanimously. Actions are complete unless recorded below or updated in agenda.

ii. **Matters Arising and actions:**

Barclays account: Mike has now been added to the signatories. Barclay have made a donation following the delays in completing this.

iii. **Bookable moorings at Rembrandt Garden for 2017.**

Word is that these are fully booked. There is general agreement that bookable moorings are acceptable so long as there is some alternative.

3) **Policy Discussions: Matters requiring agreement and action from this meeting**

i. **CRT Licensing review**

CRT have now issued a formal consultation on this matter, including invitations to workshops. The review is headlined as cost neutral and aimed at simplification of the system to make it cost effective to administer. However, the reality is that it is being targeted with current issues like zoning, cc'ing and wide beam impacts. RBOA have recently issued a press release suggesting a range of 200 miles and limiting ccers lifestyle.

Council agreed that

NABO believes that the Canals are a resource that should be available to ALL boaters regardless of age or personal circumstances. It is not for the Canal and River Trust or boating associations to prescribe a boater's lifestyle.

NABO believes that it is for CRT as the Navigation Authority to define what constitutes 'bona fide' navigation. Further we believe CRT has in effect defined 'bona fide' navigation by having granted full 12 month licences based on the cruising patterns to those who were previously only granted restricted licences. We do not see how CRT can subsequently legitimately change this definition. We remain keen for CRT to enforce regular movement using its existing powers.

We noted that CRT are engaging with the Equalities Commission and that this is causing them to think again about cc cruising patterns. It is apparent that they have no policy or procedure for compliance with the law, and that requirements for minorities must apply to all users.

The invitation to apply to attend the workshops are available by email. It is clear that CRT are trying to preselect attendees by views. Can they be trusted or is this a reasonable way to manage the situation and prevent the event be swamped by a vociferous minority?

ii. Red diesel

The Government has announced a consultation about the use of red diesel in urban areas, though it is clear that the general election in June will interfere with the timescale. We need to generate views, and should consult with DBA. We noted that RBOA took the lead on this least time but this was by Rex Walden, and he is no longer involved. Stella and David will work on this.

SR DF

iii. Peer to peer renting

CRT are proposing a Hire boat licence together with BSS. Matthew Symonds has a draft document also requiring a long term residential mooring. They are also thinking about a letting licence. The recent sinking of a spot rented boat with pseudo ownership is a case in point. The boat was handed over with defects and no instructions. It looks like that current proposals will have no impact on the issue as they will not address those who are evading the basis rules. Licence termination is not a threat. Mark will work on draft proposals through NAG.

MT

4) Reports on Key Issues

i. NAG Licensing & Mooring

CRT have started a rebranding exercise in preparation for the Defra contract renegotiation. Other current issues are access to water at the Olympic Park which include security concerns and outsourcing of enforcement. It is reported that 1/3 of boat CC'ing as moving less than 20 miles since the current enforcement push began in MAY 2015. About 20 boaters out of 2000 are challenging the CRT movement records.

MT

ii. NAG Operations

There has been no meeting since the last report. The next meeting is in June. There is no progress on vegetation, CRT are silent. We are looking again at Minimum Service Standards. There are 5-year repair times allowed and these will be challenged. We are also looking at management agreed deviations from the requirements to see if we agree.

DF

iii. London mooring strategy group

The current group of representatives have had 3 meetings. They are to produce a plan in September and although this is branded as local, it will undoubtedly be a model for elsewhere. It is expected to encompass chargeable elements of visitor moorings, residential moorings and 14 day casual moorings. There is a plan for 125 new rings, 210 new moorings, 404 permanent moorings, although the vast majority are existing bank with rings fitted. David Williams will attend a workshop on 26 April. The expectation is that the majority of central London moorings will be timed with a £25 overstay charge. There are currently no plans for additional service facilities beyond those that have just opened at Alperton. There has been an increase of 350 boats in 2016, and of the 2000 boat in London, 40% are CCers. Mark will stay in touch.

iv. Update on CRT/EA coming together

This is now regarded as a political problem, and nothing is going to happen until after the General Election in June. We are hoping that the Bridgewater operations might be transferred too. EA have won their court case over marina vessel registration.

v. Report on winter moorings workshop.

Phil reported on the recent workshop attended by 11 users, though he was the only C Cer. The aim was to capture ideas on the stoppage planning and consultation process. Unannounced finishing delays are a concern. CRT did not push back on suggestions and agree that there is a problem. There will be feedback on CRTs thoughts from the meeting and probably a further workshop.

vi. Boater reps on CRT Council

Nothing to report. The next meeting is in May.

SR

vii. Feedback for NABO Regional Representatives

PH had contacted all representatives and would seek regular input.

Geoff Wood SE reports:

Just completed a 10-day trip from our marina at Yardley Gobion on the Grand Union to Marsworth and back and absolutely astounded by the number of wide beams both moored and moving. Of course, we are used to them on this part of the system but I can never remember so many, I would estimate well over 50.

Some mooring restriction have been put in opposite the very expensive new houses at Marsworth. Also, few boats moored at Marsworth.

About 200 metres of mooring rings have been put in above the Soulbury 3 locks.

David Fletcher reports for NW and Boarders

CRT are working on an application for Green flag status for the canal between Middlewich and Audlem. This is a Keep Britain Tidy backed venture, and is about keeping up standards of parkland. CRT did it for part of the Mac last year. I understand all regions are supposed to do something.

The user group meeting was held in Northwich. Poorly attended by users, only 10 there, outnumbered by CRT staff. Question whether this is cost effective? IWA are nationally complaining about planned HS2 impact on the Middleswich Arm. Multiple crossings, realignment, and loss of visitor moorings.

Mike Rodd reports from Wales, Mon & Brec:

This canal is essentially closed for 4 to 5 months as major work, largely funded by the Welsh Assembly, takes place relining parts of the canal, repairing the aqueducts at Goytre Wharf and Talybont, and doing other urgent tasks on this most vulnerable waterway. Of credit to the local CRT operators, where possible the rest of the canal however, has been kept in water. There is a noticeable increase in the number of continuous cruisers on the canal, something which until a few years ago, was simply not allowed. On a canal with few good visitor moorings, this is causing concern to both hire boat operators and private boaters with home moorings. Just back from a week on the Mon & Brec.

Amazing winter work, all done on time with some serious canal relining paid for by Welsh assembly. Also good vegetation cutting. An interesting development is the creation by the Waterway Manager of a small "advisory committee" with

reps from hire boat companies, marinas, and 3 boaters – including me as both a boater and NABO reps.

On the K&A there is much evidence that CRT enforcement activities continue to ensure that most continuous cruisers are moving in accordance with CRT's requirements. Users are also very happy to see much dredging taking place over the winter period.

viii. Reports from CBOA

No reports had been received.

5) Web matters

The web site is running well, and there are no issues. The settings for errors were check and amended and all is well. The March bulletin went out with only one rejection. There continue to a few BTInternet related problems, and Council members are asked to report these.

All

6) BSS Matters

There is a TC next week. The report from MAIB on the CO double death is still not out. Council agreed that we would support the requirement for CO alarm on boats.

MR

Finance

7)

i. Draft accounts for 2016/7

Helen tabled a paper setting out the draft accounts, showing that despite membership fees being slightly below budget, and with no expenditure on legal fees, we are in the black. There are some details to finalise, so the exact figure is not yet identified. Council members need to get expenses for 16/17 in now.

ii. Santander account and liability for past members

We are still holding provision against historic standing order pavements from ex members with which we have lost contact. The account is closed and any further attempted payments will be rejected. Council agreed that these provisions should be moved to donations in the year 2017.

Current balances

Barclays current account £5765.82

Barclays deposit account £13,766.12

PayPal account £115.55

8) Membership update and Recruitment

Membership is still decreasing slightly, mainly because of our ageing population! The magazines have gone out with the coal boat, but there is no flood of new members. Have they all gone?

We note that the insurance scheme has stagnated. Issues with Springer boats and liveboards are problem as our people are not competitive here. Helen will look at wording again and will encourage phone contact in the first instance.

HH

It was decided to consider a further distribution of NABO NEWS later in the year.

9)

NABO News

Articles for the May issue, copy date 30 April 2017.

- Stella's column
- Red diesel
- Licencing update
- Stoppages
- Ccers under attack
- Leeks on my boat
- Membership

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10)

AOB

The next meeting will be 10th June at Wolverhampton BC.

RC

DSF 28/04/2017