

**Minutes of a Council Meeting of the
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS
Held at Wolverhampton Boat Club at 10.45am
on 10 June 2017**

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

Members: Frank and Gillian Spragg

- 1) **Apologies for absence:**, Phil Goulding, Richard Carpenter.
- 2) **Minutes of last meeting**
 - i. **Minutes for Saturday May 2017** approved unanimously. Actions are complete unless recorded below or updated in agenda.
 - ii. **Matters Arising and actions:**
All actions are covered in notes below.
- 3) **Policy Discussions: Matters requiring agreement and action from this meeting**
 - i. **Canoeist's – tunnels and locks.**
Mike reported on ongoing correspondence with CRT after issues on K&A with canoeists insisting on using locks. There appears to be difference of opinion within CRT. There has also been a report about with canoeists going through a 1 ml tunnel on the L&L. We will continue to press CRT on this as we take the view that boats and canoeist should not mix in locks. Mark will press Ian Horsfall, Mike will press mark K&A and David will press NAG. MT,
MR, DF
 - ii. **CRT Licensing review**
CRT are now finalising the user's meetings, and will hold a wind-up meeting on 25 July. It is understood that boater having been selected and then not turning up to the various workshops and CRT are inviting more in the expectations of no shows.
CRT have introduced a new licence group for rented boats with permanent moorings. This is not understood as it can only apply to a limited number of craft, and does not address the real issue of rented boats CC'ing in London. We note that IWA and AWCC continue to use the discussions to push their views on minimum range for CC'ing. This was not what the consultation was about. CRT need to reduce the complexity of license options as it is currently unmanageable.
Continue to monitor outcome via NAG and CRT Council meetings SR, MT
 - iii. **Red diesel**
The Government consultation is about urban pollution and not about tax paid. We have seen DBA response but there is nothing much in content here. The real problem is boaters burning wood, which we believe to be exempt under the Clean Air Act. We should encourage boaters to burn smokeless fuels, or use specialist stoves made for clean burn of wood. Peter will include in an article for NN. Stella and David will work on this. SR DF
 - iv. **Third party enforcement trial.**

CRT have announced an enforcement trail on 16 long term mooring sites around the country but mainly in the SE. The intention is to enforce mooring discipline on permit holder sites only, rather than everywhere. CRT staff will do the spotting, but the enforcement company will follow up over stayers with action. Fine of £150pd are proposed, after 48 hours' notice to leave. We question whether this is legal, as we consider this sum to be punitive rather than based on real costs. We have previous legal advice on this and also correspondence from Sally Ash. Our concern is that this will also spread to other areas of mooring.

MT, MR

4) Reports on Key Issues

i. NAG Licensing & Mooring

Equalities Commission. We had understood from CRT that they would update their procedures to take account of school children's needs, but a recent change has been made. We understand now that CRT's Counsel's view is that the Act does not cover school children and they will not be changing. We hear that enforcement officers are being flexible so long as parents travel further in holiday time. No objection to this but we recall that being flexible has not helped CRT in the past, just accused of bad management.

MT

ii. NAG Operations

Peter Birch CRT has been advising on dredging plans. Their future programme is based on 2500 complaints of grounding. The survey boat will verify, and corrections will be planned as next year's programme. CRT are silent on vegetation issues. NAG are chasing them. We do not see the strategic changes promised last year. Edgbaston tunnel is on the agenda for next week. CRT want to do it.

DF

iii. Update on CRT/EA coming together

Following the general election and a hung parliament, we do not expect anything soon on this item.

iv. London Moorings.

CRT have published a paper on this, covering central London rather than the whole area. Workshops have produced lots of ideas, but we are not sure that they can be accommodated in the space available. CRT want to designate some areas for commercial activities, and this takes away moorings. There is a drive to reduce 14 day moorings, together with introduction of another 20 permanent ones. This is a drop on the ocean. This has taken a lot of time and effort for 18 months and probably goes nowhere.

v. Boater reps on CRT Council

Various items already covered in the meetings. Additionally, Stella reported dismay in CRT after further delay to EA decision because of the election. Welfare office reports 170 referrals in the last 12 months, including 20 directly from enforcement. CRT call centre is on alert for the issues. We understand that 748 exemptions under the equality act are in place on the system. We understand that winter mooring will be only for 4 months this winter partly due to the early Easter.

SR

Feedback for NABO Regional Representatives

PH had contacted all representatives and would seek regular input.

Mike reports from:

Mon & Brec.

Whilst the Welsh Government supported winter work on the Mon & Brec has been most welcome it is disappointing to see that the extensive work on the vital lift bridge at Talybont has resulted in failures twice in the last few weeks. Likewise, the pump out at Brecon (the only CRT pump out on the canal) has failed yet again. Otherwise, it is brilliant to see that most hire companies are doing well and the support they receive from the CRT Lockees is welcomed.

On the K&A there seems to be more bridge and lock failures than before? And, as has been reported before, the number of canoes and kayaks who seem to believe they can use some of the most dangerous locks on the system has led to NABO officially raising the matter with the CRT Director responsible. CRT's policy is clear but clearly not being applied – even by some CRT volunteer lockkeepers?

"Locks, weirs and sluices can be very dangerous. Don't stay aboard your craft in a filling or emptying lock - carry it around. If it is too heavy, use ropes to keep control from the side."

Graham reports for the Mid-Thames:

1. Greatly saddened by the recent death of stalwart NABO rep Dennis Hill. He fought hard to support and further the interests of Thames boaters, and for many years was also secretary then Commodore of the Radcot Bridge Cruising Club. (Mike Rodd has more detail, Paul).
2. EA have recently appointed 4 new lockkeepers, including 2 on the upper Thames, plus new Reliefs, so it is hoped that this will lead to improved and extended manning of locks - especially needed by those of more advanced years navigating the manual locks on the upper Thames.

Joan from the East Midlands Our boat is currently laid up in Dobson's boatyard at Shardlow waiting for new floorboards to be fitted so we've done no boating since last September.

I'm not able to attend local CRT Meetings because they're always held on Tuesdays when I have other commitments.

David from NW and Boarders

Boaters overstaying on visitor moorings in Nantwich. CRT take no action despite complaints. Day hire boater injured after falling in, arm chewed up in propeller. Air ambulance used

5) **Web matters**

The web site is running on the latest software in all categories. Back-ups have been done. There has been no effect from the recent ransom-ware attacks. Advise on ransom-ware was circulated to council plus addresses. Alison now has access to all levels on the web site, but not as yet to Heart Internet.

The hit count on items posted on the web site was reset in April. The numbers had saturated and told us little about what was going on. Currently the highest hit number is 615 and refers an item from 2004 on BW Acts. The recent item on renting boats sits on 312. I will reset the counter from time to time. I have created a new location for technical

articles from NN, as these can be hard to find, particularly if they have a quirky title. I am in the process of loading these up. I can always use more pictures suitable for the banner at the top on the web site.

I have a few comments on the NABO promotion text and will incorporate as due course. Other comments welcome.

I have been managing the Twitter account regularly and block around 6 people daily, mostly because they are advertising, but also for bad language and politics or nothing to do with the waterways.

Email. There have been occasional rejections of AOL mails since the last meeting but none known to me in the last two weeks. Heart Internet also reported problems, now fixed. The last bulletin was accepted by all AOL and BTInternet addresses, though there were two rejections (probably lapsed addresses). The spam detection remains at the highest setting.

6) **BSS Matters**

There was an AC last weeks. BSS advised that examinations for the new hire boat requirements were proceeding with too many queries. But the level of preparation is poor with 50% failure in 88 examinations.

Examiners expressed the view that in general, the worst boats they see are those either new or 4 years old coming for the first examination. Builders quality is not to be relied upon.

The MAIB report is now issued on the Broad's CO fatality. BSS will now consider.

DF,
MR, AT

7) **Finance**

i. **Draft accounts for 2016/7**

Helen tabled paper setting out the accounts, showing that despite membership fees being slightly below budget, and with no expenditure on legal fees, we are in the black. These have now gone to the Auditor for review. A proposed budget for 2017/18 was also tabled and comments are required.

All

ii. **Insurance provision**

Helen is about to renew. It was noted that the company has limited cash and cheque liability to three days before banking. We do not achieve this and cannot do so ever. Richard, Helen and David to consider. Can we move away from cheques? What is our real risk if a member's cheque is stolen?

HH,
DF, RC

Current balances

Barclays current account £5554.01
Barclays deposit account £13,766.12
PayPal account £201.89

9) **NABO News**

Peter wants to have more technical articles.
Howard A has promised to do a review on past publishing of NN
Articles for the June issue, copy date 17 June 2017.

All

- Stella's column

SR

- Gas testing items
- MAIB report
- Old legal cases e.g. wasting water
- Mon and Brec report
- Update on insurance wording

DF/PF
PF
PH
HH
HH

10)

AOB

The next meeting will be 9th September at Wolverhampton BC. We do not at this time expect to hold the July meeting.

RC

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DSF 21/06/2017

Approved



*on behalf of Chair
9/9/17*