

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of BOAT OWNERS

## NEWS from the Committee Meeting...

...held on the 11th April 1992 at Hockley Port on the Birmingham Canal Navigations.

The Treasurer presented her Report and a Budget. It was noted that the funds were in better shape due to some very generous donations. Thanks were expressed to those members.

Membership 663 to date.

There has been a delay in the production of the car/boat sticker. These are, however, now available and can be obtained from Jon Darlington, 111 Maas Road, Northfield, Birmingham B31 2PP. Please make cheques/postal orders payable to "National Association of Boat Owners".

Prices: 1 sticker £1  
2 or more 75p each

Prices include postage.

Sales of the NABO Sweatshirts have been most encouraging but again there has been a production delay. We hope that members will be patient as a result of these minor irritations. Plans are in hand for the design and production of Posters and Leaflets which can be used wherever two or more boats are gathered. Further meetings with Waterways Groups have helped to spread the message and recruit new members.

The NABO response to the BW Leisure and Tourism Strategy was with one minor addition approved and will be forwarded forthwith. Do you wish to know what has been said on your behalf? Send an SAE to me, (Neil).

## Decisions taken:-

To appoint a new member to the committee as representative of the South Western Region (see below).  
To take up representation on the Middle Level User Group.  
To delay the introduction of a Committee structure.  
To contact all British Waterways manager for a copy of their 4 year plans.  
To establish contact with the National Rivers Authority in order to ascertain their attitude to boaters' interests.  
To adopt a Logo. Our thanks to all who submitted designs.

## **Policies being monitored:-**

Waterways Bill progress.  
Transport and Works Bill implementation.  
Certificate of Compliance implementation.  
BW Leisure and Tourism Strategy implementation.  
Broads Bill Byelaws progress.  
Safety Inquiry progress.

## **South West Region Representative.**

Mr. D.J. Wetton of Bristol has been newly appointed to this position. One of the most urgent tasks for his attention is the state of the Kennet and Avon canal which may be summed up as desperate. If you have experienced this canal's difficulties we would be pleased if you would write with your comments to Mr Wetton via the general correspondence address.

## **BW Bill**

Parliament dissolved -

General Election -

Parliament re-assembles.

But the British Waterways Bill is still around. NABO was first to deposit its petition opposing the Bill. The final date for depositing petitions is the 15th May, 10 days after the expected date of the first reading in the Commons. The second reading is the one at which the Bill will be 'fully' debated by MPs. Who is your 'new' Member of Parliament? Are they interested in the Waterways? Have you lobbied your MP about the Bill? Will you lobby them again or for the first time? Let us know. NABO is producing a lobbying pack against the Bill. Now is your opportunity to use the arguments effectively.

## **Latest News on Certificate of Compliance**

Another meeting was held in London on the 23rd April to discuss the technical content of the UK Harmonised Boat Standards. Although some progress was made there was still the same refusal to recognise the importance of evidence in determining the need for each requirement. One or two interesting changes came out of the meeting.

1. The introduction of Compulsory Compliance with the Standards will be delayed. They were due to be enforced from the first of January 1993 for 'newer' boats (first registered after 1st January 1970), and on 1st Jan. 1994 for older boats. The new situation is that the standards will only be introduced after a minimum of 12 months' notice for 'newer' boats and 24 months' notice for older boats. The date at which this notice will be given will depend on:-

a) the date the BW Bill comes in to force as an Act of Parliament - this is the Act which gives BW the power to enforce the Standards.  
b) the acceptance of the standards regarding the EEC directive currently being drafted for the standards of construction of new vessels.  
In other words we don't know when they will be introduced. But don't think they won't be!

2. BW will continue to offer £20 off licence fees each year for anyone with a Certificate of Compliance.

3. The new Harmonised Boat Standards will come into effect as soon as they are published (which BW hope will be in the next couple of weeks or so) for anyone wishing to have a Certificate of Compliance. This decision was taken after surveyors at the meeting reported that they had legal advice not to survey any more boats using the old standards, apparently simply on the grounds that there are new ones.

### **Have you noticed any changes?**

Are you able to buy your licence in the same way this year as in the past? Many agencies have been discontinued and some Clubs are no longer able to issue licences. Let us know if this situation affects YOU.

Have you had the price of your moorings increased without any good reason? Sometimes the same mooring has been 'upgraded' without any change in facilities. Have they tried this one on you yet? When challenged the price has, in some cases been reduced. Let us know.

Have you been unable to move your boat due to a stoppage or shortage of water? Did you ask for a refund of part of your licence? What was the response? We would like to know.

Does the group/body/organisation/club where you moor intend to monitor your response to the Certificate of Compliance regulations? Do they usually undertake other peoples' dirty work for them? Some people don't. Are you being harassed? Let us know.

### **What should Boaters be doing?**

You will, no doubt, have noticed the back page of the last 'Boater'. The Complaint Form can be used to report the falling standards of the navigation. Please remember to let your committee members know about your complaints then we can follow them through as well as assess the scale of the problem.

## **NABO comes to you.**

Committee members will put in an appearance at Anglesey Basin, Ashby, Stafford, Worksop, Wakefield, Huddersfield, Windmill End and Stourbridge later this year.

## **Editor's Note.**

After the major success story of the Garrison Flight in Birmingham which was only closed for 4 years, can we expect to see the same 'rapid' movement take place to ensure through navigation on the Kennet and Avon (water shortage), Ashby Canal (dangerous bridge), Shrewley Tunnel (delayed opening), closure to repair lock on Lapworth Flight after long Winter Stoppage, Rebuild of Shadehouse Lock after rebuild of Shadehouse Lock on the Trent and Mersey and then collapse, slow drying concrete causing extended closure on the Southern Grand Union etc, etc?

There is of course no shortage of 'progress' for development plans at Burton, Warwick, Newbury, Fazeley and many more places. For of course the provision of 'tea shops and craft outlets' together with an audio-visual facility is the latest in a long line of "better things to do" for the managers of our navigations.

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