



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

NEWSLETTER

June 1995

Editor's comment

You will all have spotted last issue's deliberate error. I'm afraid we are all behind the times in this remote part of Northamptonshire!

This slim little volume won't take too long to read, but has some interesting news, including the Date We've All Been Waiting For (see page 5). We are also including some membership leaflets - can you find another member or two?

The disappointing experiences of a hirer (see letters) is a salutary warning to us all. I think, I hope, they were unlucky, but ... a little courtesy goes a long way.

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Published by

**National Association of
Boat Owners**

NEWS

Chairman's comment

So the dates of the compulsory compliance with the Boat Safety Scheme has finally been set, the first boats on BW's waterways being required to comply by their next licence renewal after 1st January 1997.

When it was announced that the Boat Safety Scheme would be made compulsory back in 1990, there was no consultation and it was announced the start date would be in a matter of months.

There was a backlash from users, part of which resulted in the formation of NABO, and the standards were withdrawn.

Consultation was entered into in 1991 to produce acceptable standards, but with so large a volume of consultees, the standards ended up as little more than a collection of anecdotal evidence. We have always held the view that a particular standard should only be compulsory if there is demonstrable evidence that not complying with it would result in a significant risk to safety. BW have always refused to consider degrees of risk and made very little effort to collect evidence.

One advantage of the consultation process was that rather than boats being required to be tested by qualified surveyors, they could be tested by suitably trained inspectors. The inspectors' training scheme has been taking a long time to set up and as yet not all the modules of the training course have got a course provider. Although we had been assured by BW that the Boat Safety Scheme would not be compulsory until there were sufficient inspectors in place to deal with the potentially large demand for Boat Safety Certificates, it is difficult to see how the courses can be provided and a sufficient number of inspectors trained before the deadline of January 1997.

Since the large unwieldy consultation meetings, BW have set up an alternative Boat Safety Scheme Advisory Group made up of 10 users and surveyors (including NABO Council Member Nigel Parkinson) which does appear to have the potential to be more effective.

What is particularly disappointing, however, is that the start date for the standards

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Chairman's comment (continued)

was not discussed with the Boat Safety Scheme Advisory Committee. It was kept secret so that it could be announced at the Nottingham Boat Show. But what is the point of an Advisory

Committee if their advice is not sought?

And if there aren't sufficient inspectors when the time comes, BW will have earned all the criticism they will surely get.

NEWS

View from the Council meeting held on 13th May, 1995

Hello, it's Moley again! Interesting meeting in May. Nobody seems to know I'm there.

The Forum (its proper name has got longer than ever!) seems to be working well with a shared view of how to answer the review of navigation functions. Whilst it would be nice to have a new body to take over all navigation throughout the UK, realistically the option of an umbrella body is OK. It is also cheap which will commend itself to politicians....

BW's licensing review was discussed but no way of spreading the load could be achieved and one thing to be avoided at all costs was pay as you go. This would allow the Treasury to say a waterway was

uneconomical and it should be closed. Costs must be kept down and any increase in administration would have to be passed on. The present system at least is cheap to run and police.

Anglers have a new enemy! Mountainbikers. They are also ruder in the South than in the Midlands and the North! NABO needs to issue some guidance and it is proposed that an agreed code of conduct should be drawn up with anglers. Do we keep to the middle, slow down, speed up, stop to rescue flies in trees etc? Seems a good idea. The problem is that there are lots of anglers outside the club scene who will never hear the message, let alone abide by it....

NEWS

View from the Council meeting (continued)

The big topic this time was Boat Standards. The first meeting of an advisory group took place and it seems that (as usual) contrary to undertakings previously given BW is proposing to announce (and no doubt will have done by the time you read this) the date for the start of the compulsory scheme. They have already said that 16th June 1998 will be the date when all new boats have to meet the full standards. But BW have said they will remove the exemptions from that date too for pressure testing of fuel tanks and drip trays (petrol engines only) on existing boats. The group say they will resist this but some lobbying of your own will help. Pressure testing will be very expensive (indicated at three figures) and the cost of

modifications for this and a drip tray could well be prohibitive to the ordinary boater. Whilst Moley is willing to accept reasonable safety requirements (even in the absence of any statistics) those which involve considerable expense for no apparent safety benefit are unacceptable. NABO must press this point home. The terrible and tragic accident on the day Council met appears to have been the result of falling off the back of a boat. No amount of pressure testing or drip trays will ever be an answer to this eventuality which cannot be legislated against. No activity is ever entirely safe (even breathing, as any asthma sufferer will tell you) and attempts to restrict the freedom of us moles without good reason must be resisted.

British Waterways claim to land

It has come to our notice that BW are approaching landowners with claims that they own a 15' strip on the offside of the canal. Sometimes this is the case, sometimes not.

If you own canalside land, and

are approached by BW in this way, we advise you to take legal advice.

We would like to know of any further cases of this kind, so please let us know your experiences.

NEWS

Dates for the introduction of the Boat Safety Scheme

BW announced the dates from which boats will have to have a Boat Safety Certificate (BSC) at the Nottingham Boat Show. Until this announcement, the dates had been kept secret, even from the Boat Safety Scheme Advisory Group, and despite their commitment to consult users about the dates.

BW and NRA will be contacting boatowners soon to let them know the details

BW and NRA are phasing in the scheme at different speeds, as follows:

BW registered vessels

Boats built after 31st December 1970 will have to produce a BSC from *1st January 1997* when renewing or applying for a licence.

Boats built before 1st January 1971 will have to produce a BSC from *1st January 1998* when renewing or applying for a licence.

The £20 discount BW allow on licences to boat owners who voluntarily obtained a BSC will cease on 1st January 1996.

NRA registered vessels (Thames and Anglian regions)

Boats constructed between 1960 and 1970 - 1st January 1997

Boats constructed between 1971 and 1980 - 1st January 1998

Boats constructed between 1981 and 1990 - 1st January 1999

Boats constructed in or prior to 1959 and other boats covered by the scope of the scheme - 1st January 2000

Other waterways

Implementation on the River Medway will be subject to modification of local legislation.

Upper and Lower Avon Navigation Trusts are also adopting the BSS, with introduction coinciding with BW's implementation dates.

Latest on Mr Finch

News circulated at the Nottingham Boat Show that Mr Finch is now enjoying Her Majesty's hospitality in Reading Prison. The expected length of his vacation was not announced, however.

NEWS

Boat Safety Scheme: Nigel Parkinson

The Boat Safety Scheme is the new name for the joint BW/NRA attempt to impose uniform construction standards on all private and hire boats. It is ENTIRELY SEPARATE from the European Recreational Craft Directive which applies only to boats built after 16 June 1998. The Scheme is managed by a joint BW/NRA committee composed entirely of people from those organisations. Naturally NABO expects that there will be consultation before changes are made.

There are two further committees which make inputs to the management committee.

The first is the Advisory Group, comprising various representatives from boatbuilding industry, Surveyors, the Marine Safety Agency and Users. Interestingly, there was no hire boat business representative at the first meeting. The NABO rep is Nigel Parkinson. This group is expected to recommend to the management committee whenever it feels changes should be made to the the scheme, its scope and management, or to the training and qualification of the

Examiners who will award the Certificate.

The other committee is the Technical committee. This smaller committee comprises representatives from BW, NRA, one Surveyor rep and one User rep. The user rep has not yet been determined but NABO will be as closely involved as possible. This committee is expected to oversee the Standards themselves, both for content and interpretation. A major task will be to conduct a review of the Standards every so often. Any changes proposed will have to be approved by the Management committee.

The present state of the scheme is that the standards are already in force on the Thames, with NRA planning to introduce the scheme fully in phases. BW have just announced the dates on which they will phase in the scheme - see details on page 5.

The aim is to have an MOT style process, where boatowner finds an approved examiner who will inspect the boat against a check list to determine if a certificate can be awarded. These examiners will first need to

NEWS

Boat Safety Scheme (cont)

have completed a modular course covering the areas to be examined (Gas, Engine installations, Fire prevention, Electrics etc) and have successfully passed a 'Test' inspection.

The Modules for most of the courses have been designed and a trial run to check technical content was held from 4-16 May. I have no feed back as yet on how that went. BW have identified colleges in Southampton, Lowestoft, Bournemouth and Berkshire who are willing to deliver the modules that have been designed. They continue to try and find others to fill the gap in the middle!

Finally, your friendly neighbourhood Surveyor may well be able to issue Certificates now, but he's still going to have to complete the course if he wants to continue. BW and NRA are keen to eliminate any variability in the scheme's pass/fail criteria.

If you have any comments or problems please contact Nigel Parkinson, at the address on the back page.

New LPG gas regulations

As from 1st April 1995, new Gas Safety Regulations affecting LPG gas installations came into force. The regulations now require installers of LPG gas systems to be registered with CORGI (the Council for Registered Gas Installers) in the same way as installers of natural gas systems have been for some time.

This extension makes sense, as CO poisoning from LPG is just as deadly as from natural gas. There are also special requirements for LPG, such as the need for low level ventilation (LPG is heavier than air).

There has been some confusion over how this will apply to boats on the inland waterways, but the situation is this: only those working on hire boats must be registered; work carried out on other inland waterway vessels is exempt. So legally your own boat's gas system can be installed or maintained by any competent gas fitter - or by yourself, provided you can demonstrate your own competence. However, CORGI would naturally encourage you to go to a registered person.

THE ADVERTS PAGE (1)

INSURANCE

What will the name on your renewal notice be this year?
Why not find out what the only company to specialise in
Insurance for the Inland Waterways
for the last 18 years can offer you?

Our range of policies include:

- ★ Personal effects cover at normal premium rate.
- ★ No excess on third party claims
- ★ Semi-protected no claims discount
- ★ Up to 40% no claims discount
- ★ Cover with a major British Insurance Company
- ★ Residential and Commerical use
- ★ Wide legal protection cover
- ★ Fitting out risks
- ★ No survey on older craft if C of C in force

**OUR LATEST POLICY IS THE IWA MEMBERS
DISCOUNT POLICY ONE OF 8 SPECIAL
POLICIES WE HAVE AVAILABLE**

**If you want to choose the cover you want for
your boat then perhaps we should be talking!**

**Michael Stimpson & Associates,
6 Norfolk Road, Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 1QE.
Tel: (01923) 770425. Fax: (01923) 721559.**



NABO BUSINESS

NABO Sweatshirts - do you need a new one yet?

As reported in previous Newsletters, the NABO sweatshirt is now available with an embroidered logo and your boat name, as well as with printed logo (large or small). T-shirts and pennants are also available. They are good value, as the quality of T-shirts and sweatshirts used by the manufacturer is very good, and they wash and wear well!

T-SHIRTS

Heavyweight cotton, only **£7.50** each.

Colours: white, red, sunflower, navy, black, grey, bottle green, emerald.

Sizes: small (36"-38"), medium (40"), large (44"), X-large (46"-48").

SWEATSHIRTS

Heavyweight polycotton with either raglan or drop shoulder (please specify), only **£12.50** each, or **£17.50 with embroidered logo and boat name** of up to 15 letters.

Colours: white, red, sunflower, navy, black, royal, bottle green, charcoal, heather grey.

Sizes: small (36"-38"), med (40"), large (44"), X-large (48"-50").

LOGOS

Logo available on both in either black or white. Please state preference for large (full chest) or small (pocket size, printed on left).

Embroidered logo (small) + boat name available on sweatshirts only.

PENNANTS

Pennants with rope and toggle - only **£8.00**

Paie blue with black logo.

Please turn over for order form

NABO BUSINESS

NABO Sweatshirt order form

Please send completed order form, together with a cheque made payable to the National Association of Boat Owners, to Penny Barber.

Item type			
Item colour			
Item size			
Logo type			
Logo colour			
Logo size			
Boat name			
Price			
Total Price:			
Your name, address and phone number:			

THE ADVERTS PAGE (2)

A PHOTO IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Let me capture your boat on film.
I can record the results of your hard work, or
your adventures on the move. I cover the
country's waterways, and my work is regularly fea-
tured in Waterways World and elsewhere. If you
wish to discuss a commission with me, I'd
be pleased to hear from you

Membership Application Forms

You should find two membership application forms enclosed with this newsletter. I'm sure most of us know someone who might become a member if they were asked and were given a form. But please, no threats or intimidation!

For details of advertising in
this Newsletter, call
Nikki Timbrell on

BOAT PORTRAITS

unframed
(ink and gouache)

£85

PERSON PORTRAITS

unframed
(pastel) 12" x 16"

£125

Catch me at Braunston Boatshow,
on Nancy Bell here and there or
write to: Nancy Larcombe,

REPORTS

The Nottingham Boat Show

The Nottingham Boat Show has now become one of the major waterway events in the calendar, and, unlike the Earls Court Boat Show in January, or the Birmingham Boat Show in February, there is much more emphasis on canal and river boating. With the actual and potential membership of NABO coming from the inland waterways we have attended this show on every occasion, with satisfactory results, and this year has been no exception.

The traditional wet weather normally associated with this event merely occupied a 45 minute session on the first morning, and the resulting reasonable weather saw a considerable increase in attendance. As it happens, NABO does not depend on good weather bringing the crowds to our tent - the sort of people who join NABO are the dedicated types who come to the show anyway, to look at boats, engines, and bits and bobs. The General Public, who are attracted by good weather, are not going to sign up with NABO with the same readiness as they volunteer for a ride on the Trent.

It was nice to be able to erect the tent without any mishaps - last year we had a force nine gale to contend with, and it was like trying to control a wayward barrage balloon! This year, however, there were no problems, and we even had a helping hand from the BMIF stand next door, who also lent us a piece of carpet for the floor. The stand on our other side was occupied by a gentleman selling prints by well known waterways artists, and he was one of the first to sign up as a member. Having friendly neighbours was another reason why we enjoyed the Show.

Another reason was in meeting the innumerable friends and acquaintances, members and non-members, who called in for a chat, and one of the great benefits of these events is that it gives us the chance to talk to our members, and to ask them what we are doing right, and, more importantly, what we are doing wrong! It was most gratifying to discover that, generally, our members are pleased with our efforts. We were also invited to a buffet lunch in the BW tent, which

REPORTS

Nottingham Boat Show (continued)

gave me the chance to meet such BW stalwarts as Jim Kelly, David Allison, and Ian White, and take part in interesting exchange of ideas. I also met there the new president of IWA, Audrey Smith, the ex-president, David Stevenson, and a number of people from other waterways groups. In fact the scene there reminded me of Christmas Day in the trenches eighty years ago, when troops on both sides got together.

One interesting visitor to our tent was the member who actually gave us the tent. He was pleased to see that we were still using it, but I had to tell him that we were looking to buy a fire-certificated marquee for these large shows.

Finally, I would like to thank the stalwarts who staffed the stand so enthusiastically with me: Christine, Joan, Mij, Val, and Fenn the dog.

Grand Union South User Group meeting

Nikki Timbrell and Peter Lea attended a User Group meeting for Grand Union South on 22nd May. The main subject, presented by BW, was the plans for Fibreway on the GU canal.

Fibre optic cables are due to be laid in a huge 'figure of eight' over the whole country, linking all centres of population, and canal towpaths provide the ideal route.

The Edinburgh to Glasgow cable was laid in early 1994, and the Basingstoke canal towpath was tackled in the autumn of 1994. The Grand Union project is due to go ahead this autumn, as

soon as the customers have signed on the dotted line. Three pipes (4"-5" across), each containing four ducts, will be laid in the towpath at a depth of 24". The work will take place at an incredible rate, and the towpath will be reinstated immediately. Everything will be covered, even the access man-holes.

BW assured the meeting that the lessons have been learnt from the disastrous first attempt in Scotland, and that BW inspectors will ensure that all aspects of the contracts are adhered to. There will be an inspector to every 3 work gangs.

REPORTS

Grand Union South meeting (continued)

BW were cagey about what they will earn from the project, apart from saying that they will receive a fee from the installation stage, and a percentage of Fibreway turnover thereafter. The only cost to BW of the installation will be the supervision element.

Other matters discussed included the water supply, Boat Safety Certificates, and moorings. Fishermen and boaters also clashed, providing a lively interlude!

Boddington reservoir which feeds the southern Oxford canal is getting low following the long

dry spell, and Stage 2 restrictions are now in place at Claydon and Napton locks.

Chris Mitchell is due to send out a letter to all boatowners whose boats are moored on GU(S) but who do not have a recognised permanent mooring, pointing out the requirements of the BW Act concerning moorings. The letter suggests that a suitable mooring will be offered as soon as is practicable, but that in the meantime, everyone without a permanent mooring should be looking to find one.

LETTERS

A sad experience on the Llangollen canal

As family who attempted to have a relaxed week on a hire boat from Bunbury to Llangollen, free from any stress, I have to report an unmitigated disaster.

It was probably as much our fault for picking a Bank Holiday weekend to start, when the weather was extremely windy making the boat difficult to control.

However, regrettably it has to be said that our greatest difficulty was the boat owners, who only saw a hire boat and not the family on the boat. Almost without exception, we found the owners a collection of xenophobic, unhelpful, unsociable, scowling people it has ever been our misfortune to meet.

It may be worth your members

LETTERS

Llangollen canal (continued)

remembering that the growth in the canal leisure industry has brought an income which keeps canals open and maintained, and today's hirers may be tomorrow's owners. As an Association you may wish to advise your members that the canals are not exclusively theirs and their attitude does neither them nor

your Association any credit.

As far as we are concerned it will be an experience never to be repeated or recommended, so the canals in the future as far as we as a family are concerned can be exclusively yours.

Name and address supplied

Feel good factors

A year or so ago, our journey took us through Manchester. Having negotiated the Rochdale 9 (where all the paddles fall shut as there is or was no fixing device, and the bowels of the office building on a sunny day are the darkest and most evil on the system; and then they charge £25 for the pleasure) we moored for the night by the floating restaurant near Ducie Street. We had telephoned the BW office at the foot of the Clayton flight to check on the perils of the cut, pointing out that we were an elderly couple and not good with pirates. We were at once welcomed with an offer to accompany us next day through the next two flights, and so we

were; one half by a BW man from the bottom lock and the other half by his colleague from the top lock. I paid my following year's licence fee with much less displeasure.

Norman Nash, Banbury

**This space is
awaiting your
letter!**

**Next Council meeting:
24th June 1995
Northfield, Birmingham**

NABO REPRESENTATIVES

Council members contact addresses

Penny Barber
(Rally organiser)

Phil Bland

Chris Boxall
(Midlands rep)

Jon Darlington
(Chairman)

Melanie Darlington
(Treasurer)

Roger Hancock
(Secretary)

Neil Hutchinson
(Navigation Officer/NW Rep)

Mij Lambert
(Marketing Officer)

Peter Lea
(Vice Chairman/SE Rep)

Nigel Parkinson
(Engineering Officer)

Stephen Peters
(River Users Co-ordinator)

Christine Potter
(Membership Secretary)

Peter Sterry
(NERep/Publicity)

Nikki Timbrell
(Newsletter Editor)