



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

NEWSLETTER

September 1995

Editor's comment

A bumper issue! But do not despair, you are allowed to skip the 4 pages of Constitution, unless you are proposing a resolution to change it at the AGM!

I do hope all members realise that what I write here are my own personal opinions (isn't it fortunate that the space is so small?), and that I am sometimes a little tongue-in-cheek. Read on to find the facts...

Need advice on single-handed boating? Need a new handy insult? Read all about it in this issue!

Whilst every care is taken to ensure that the contents of the Newsletter are factually correct, we accept no liability for any direct or consequential loss arising from any action taken by anyone as a result of reading anything contained in this publication. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Association. The products and services advertised in this publication are not necessarily endorsed by the Association.

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Published by

**National Association of
Boat Owners**

NEWSLETTER

Chairman's comment

It seems no time at all since we were preparing for the last AGM and wondering whether we would have sufficient numbers of new volunteers.

You will see elsewhere in the Newsletter various pleas for help. I will add to them by asking for anyone who is willing to help NABO to come forward. You don't have to be a Council member, you only have to be willing to help. In particular we will need a Treasurer as from the AGM and a Membership Secretary as from now.

Christine Potter who has been the Membership Secretary has had to relinquish the post owing to other commitments combined

with recent poor health. We wish her a speedy recovery and thank her for all the work she has done over the past three years. Her careful and disciplined approach to her work has been vital to maintaining an accurate membership database.

Because of Christine's resignation there will inevitably be some delay in dealing with membership matters.

If you would like to take on the role of membership secretary as from now, please contact either Melanie or me.

Remember, if you wish to stand for the Council you should send nomination forms to the Secretary before October 14th.

NEWS

View from the Council meeting held on 9th September, 1995

Moley has gone underground!

While we were busy looking in all the likely holes, a fly on the wall of the Northfield Friends Meeting House overheard some of the discussion round the table when the Council last gathered.

There was a 9-point agenda, but the meeting never got beyond point 3! This was a consideration of the finer points of the Boat Safety Certificate requirements, and the first time the Council has had an opportunity to discuss it in great detail.

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View from the Council meeting (continued)

NABO has always held that no standard should be imposed unless there is evidence that not imposing the standard would jeopardise safety in some way. Thus the Council looked at all the paragraphs of the Grey Book with this in mind. Do the standards for diesel installations have to be the same as for petrol installations, for example? Are some of the standards leading to expenses for boaters where no safety risk is involved? And are the

standards expressed clearly and unambiguously for all to understand?

Further complications arise because of the introduction of EC standards, CE marks, and paperwork mountains.

So you can see that it took a long time to get through item 3, but at the end there was plenty of ammunition for Nigel Parkinson to take to his next meeting with BW.

BW Get it Right!

NABO is often criticised for constant carping at BW. It's a pleasure to award a bouquet or three for once! Read on:

Your money back

An unsolicited 3 month licence extension has been granted to a member mooring at Lapworth. This is as compensation for the delayed re-opening of the Lapworth Flight.

Thank you very much BW. Perhaps this sound customer care policy could be taken up as best practice by all other BW managers.

Consultation not Presentation

Delegates to the Birmingham & Black Country User Group meeting on 6th September were asked to design their own meetings. All aspects were covered from content, management, timing & location to exactly what we'd like covered in a regular manager's report to be circulated in advance. All requests were granted in what appears to be a very genuine attempt to work with us all (it was pointed out that we are FREE consultants). The only slight sticking point was recording the

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BW Get it Right (continued)

meeting - "BW don't take minutes" being the comment. There was, however, an offer to take notes. We'll see what happens, but it does seem very encouraging.

Moratorium Victory

Following representations from the Residential Boat Owners' Association, the Moratorium for residential boats is extended by 2 years to January 1998. This should allow enough time for the issues covered by the joint NABO & RBOA Code of Practice to be resolved.

BW Fees & Charges 1996

BW have announced that the increase for 1996 on licence, river registration and mooring charges will be 3.5% over this year's fees, in line with the inflation rate for July 1995.

Those boaters whose moorings have been reassessed by the 'Moorings Matrix' may have larger increases as their mooring category jumps up into the next square (one square per year allowed), but no other price increases should be imposed without proper consultation.

Chester Rally

In sad contrast to last year and indeed the preceding three months, the weather was horrid. That was most stall holders' favourite excuse for a poor performance anyway! Our recruitment was significantly reduced compared to previous events, so it's a particularly warm and grateful welcome to the new members.

As always, it was a pleasure to meet existing members and hear their news and views. Don't feel obliged to be so embarrassingly complimentary - we do welcome constructive criticism!

For the first time, we carried a couple of items (high quality and about navigation - so very appropriate to NABO) to attract interest in the stand - the famous Dunton windlass (all sold) and historic maps of the canal system (past, present and fantasized).

Changes at the top in BW

Brian Dice, the Chief Executive of British Waterways, will be retiring in September 1996 after 10 years in the job. We await news of his successor.

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BW Consultation Update from Jon Darlington

If you read your August newsletter you may remember that we made two requests for amendments to the BW draft consultation principles and procedures. We are pleased to report that our requests have both been accepted and the consultation document amended accordingly. These important changes have been made following quite a long struggle since NABO first suggested two year ago that BW should have a consultation procedure - and drafted one for them. The final version reproduced here is more sophisticated than our original draft and meets our requirements. I am pleased that BW have responded positively to our suggestions, and I am sure that if the procedure is adhered to, many of the difficulties in communication with BW which we have experienced over the last few years will not be repeated. No doubt time will tell.

The final version of the procedures and principles are as follows:

Consultation Procedure

1. Waterway Manager's meetings dealing mainly with local matters

will be held at least twice yearly. Attendees to represent all relevant users of the waterways.

2. Regional Manager's meetings, dealing mainly with Regional or cross-regional strategic matters, will be held at least yearly. Attendees to represent, if possible on a regional basis, all relevant users of the waterways.

3. Chairman's meeting, at least once a year, held with national representatives of user groups. These will deal mainly with national issues.

4. For those regular meetings covered in 1, 2 and 3 above:

a. Attendees may submit items for inclusion on the Agenda. Suggestions should be received by BW at least 10 days before the meeting.

b. Agenda will be sent to attendees at least 7 days before the meeting.

c. Brief notes will be kept by BW and circulated within 14 days of the meeting. The notes will record:

- i. decision taken
- ii. reasons for decision
- iii. actions by whom and when

NEWS

BW Consultation Update (continued)

d. Written comments on Agenda items received before the meeting will be made known and considered at the meeting.

e. When appropriate, provision will be made for written comments to be submitted within a specified time after the meeting.

f. Venue and time of meeting (Monday to Saturday, excluding Sunday) will be arranged to suit the majority of attendees.

g. Notice of meetings, particularly at a local level, should be ample and well publicised.

5. When appropriate and separate from regular meetings there will be specific issues and policies upon which consultation will be necessary. Such matters will be covered in line with our published consultation principles and procedures.

Consultation Principles

1. Our business is to manage the inland waterways system efficiently for the increasing benefit of the nation. Our managers carry the responsibility for doing this. To help us make good decisions we need to know what our users want.

2. We consult to seek information or advice and exchange views which we then consider when making policy or management decisions.

3. We recognise that the views of the users need to be heard and taken into account at all levels within our organisation. We are committed to effective consultation and want to give users full confidence that we give their opinions and interest full and proper consideration.

4. We believe that consultation regarding local issues is particularly effective when carried out informally at a local level, whether in writing, on the telephone or through ad hoc meetings requested by users or BW, but where proposed changes to policy or practise have national implications we will consult at a national level.

5. We are committed to:

- openly discussing plans and choices for the future
- consulting to obtain customer feedback
- consulting with interested groups about specific policy review

NEWS

BW Consultation Update (continued)

- consulting with representatives of users who would be affected on policy changes
- giving user representatives adequate advance information of items for consultation
- allowing ample time for users to consider the views, specific issues and policies put forward by BW
- allowing ample time for BW to consider views expressed by users
- discussing with users how best we should present and communicate our decisions after consultation
- dealing with enquiries (expeditiously) upon the principle of full disclosure of relevant non-commercially sensitive information.

Boatmark Scheme

The boating trade organisation, BMIF, has announced the introduction of a boat identification scheme which is intended to provide boat owners with the opportunity to protect their boats and equipment by recording their keeper details on a central database.

The scheme will offer a significant deterrent against boat and equipment theft as the information will be linked into the Police National Computer.

All new craft will have a unique Hull Identification Number (HIN) as a requirement of the EU

Recreational Craft directive which will be optional from June 1996 and mandatory by June 1988. Existing vessels will be voluntarily marked with a similar identification number. The location of the number will be known only by Boatmark for obvious reasons. Details of the boat will be recorded centrally for a small fee and a certificate will give details of the service and updating procedure.

The new boat aspect of the scheme will commence in September 1995, followed by a public launch (BMIF wording, not ours) in January 1996.

NEWS

Standards News

BW and NRA are in the process of revising the 'Grey Book', the manual of Boat Safety Standards.

An extended introduction has been included, outlining the scope of the Boat Safety Scheme, relevant dates, how to go about obtaining a Certificate, how to complain about any aspect of the scheme, and how it fits in with the EC Directive on Recreational Craft.

Most of the proposed changes to the standards themselves are fairly minor, with the exception of the withdrawal of the exemption for open flue spillage tests. NABO (and other user groups) are fighting this one: appliances such as Paloma water heaters have 'open flues', and the test requires that smoke introduced next to the appliance must all be drawn up through the flue. In boats, where chimneys are necessarily short, this is generally impracticable, and up until now, as long as the ventilation has been adequate, the test has not been necessary. However, there is now a legal requirement, from the 1994 LPG legislation, for hire boats to

comply with the open flue spillage test, which is leading to a conflict of 'rules'.

Further complications arise from the introduction of the EC Directive for Recreational Craft on 16 June 1996, which become mandatory for boats sold after 16 June 1988. Boats will have to be CE marked, and these standards will be enforced by Trading Standards officers. Then we will be able to sell our narrowboats anywhere in Europe! However, in general, the requirements of the directive itself are no more onerous than the BW/NRA standards, and they will not be applied retrospectively.

More of all this in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Apologies to APCO

In the August newsletter reference was made to the APCO policy on water restrictions, but we have since been informed that the view we reported was most definitely not APCO policy.

We are very sorry to have erroneously represented APCO in this matter.

THE ADVERTS PAGE (1)

Michael Stimpson & Associates

In conjunction with

Navigators and General

part of the Eagle Star Group

are pleased to offer members of the

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of BOAT OWNERS

a

10 % DISCOUNT

on normal terms

on craft insured through this special scheme

All you have to do to obtain a special quotation with no obligation is to fill in the quotation request form on the back of this leaflet and send it to

Michael Stimpson & Associates
6 Norfolk Road, Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 1QE
or Fax the form to 01923 721559
or phone the details through on
01923 770425

Your new policy will include:
£1,000,000 Third Party Liability
Cover for PERSONAL EFFECTS at no increase in premium
Monthly premium option
Transfer of existing No Claims Bonus
No survey required on craft up to 20 years of age
Optional LEGAL PROTECTION cover

For the right protection for your boat
PERHAPS WE SHOULD BE TALKING

THE ADVERTS PAGE (2)

N.A.B.O. Members Insurance Quotation Request Form

PLEASE NOTE This form is not a proposal and does not commit you or the Insurers to a contract of insurance. A quotation will be submitted to you for your consideration together with a proposal. A specimen policy can be provided on request.

NAME

--

ADDRESS

POST CODE

CRAFT DETAILS

NAME

TYPE

--	--

AGE

VALUE

LENGTH

BEAM

	£		
--	---	--	--

BULL CONSTRUCTION	Steel	[]	USE OF CRAFT	Private Pleasure	[]
	G.R.P.	[]		Residential	[]
	Wood	[]		Commercial	[]

ENGINE	Diesel	[]	Inboard	[]
	Petrol	[]	Outboard	[]
	Steam	[]		
	L.P.G.	[]	H.P.

MAXIMUM SPEED OF CRAFT IN M.P.H.

NORMAL MOORING

CRUISING RANGE REQUIRED	Inland Non Tidal	[]
	Inland with coastal use	[]
	U.K. Coastal	[]
	Brest / Elbe	[]

NO CLAIMS DISCOUNT
What percentage No Claims Discount are you able to transfer ?%

IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, HAVE YOU SUSTAINED ANY LOSSES OR
HAD A PROPOSAL OR RENEWAL FOR MARINE INSURANCE REJECTED YES / NO
OR SUBJECTED TO SPECIAL TERMS.

Please return this form to MICHAEL STIMPSON and ASSOCIATES at
6 NORFOLK ROAD, RICKMANSWORTH HERTS. WD3 1QE and your quotation will
forwarded to you for your consideration.

THE ADVERTS PAGE (3)

FOR SALE

*FORD 4-cylinder D-series
engine, in good running
order, ready for marinisation*

*Suitable for a larger
narrowboat*

£400 ono

*Call Colin Holland on
for details*

VIRGINIA CURRER MARINE INLAND WATERWAY SPECIALISTS

NARROWBOATS ALWAYS REQUIRED

We offer a selection of narrowboats for sale, mainly in Southern England. Please telephone for an up-to-date list or to discuss your requirements. All narrowboats offered have been inspected by us and full details are available. Assistance can also be given with finance (subject to status), insurance, etc.

We are always seeking quality narrowboats for brokerage, if you have a narrowboat to sell, give us a ring (free moorings are offered on the Southern Grand Union for suitable craft). We also purchase outright, quick decisions made.

Dutch barges and residential craft also available.

Tel: (01753) 832312. Mobile: (0860) 480079.

Fax: (01753) 830130.



NABO BUSINESS

Wanted - a Marketing Expert

The more members NABO recruits the more influence it will have. We are therefore actively seeking to boost our membership. We have 1,500 members - we would like to double this.

Do you have professional experience of membership campaigns and marketing? Could you spare some time to advise or assist NABO's busy marketing

and membership officers? If you think you could help, please contact Mij Lambert on
or Peter Lea on

The next Council meeting
will be on Saturday 21st October
at the Friend Meeting House,
Northfield, starting at 10am.

Members are welcome to attend.

NABO BUSINESS

BW Land Grab?

We have now heard of five instances where BW Estates Department have told buyers of canal-side land that BW owns a strip of land running along the canal edge. The width of the strip claimed varies between 4 feet and 15 feet.

BW are apparently notified by Land Registry, under the 1962 Transport Act, of any transaction affecting land adjoining a canal. They are then stepping in and making their claim of ownership.

NABO members will realise that if BW owns the canal bank, they can charge more for boat moorings. They can also try to charge if boats are slipped or craned across their land.

We know of two cases where buyers have challenged BW's

claim through their solicitors, and BW has so far not been able to provide legal proof to back up the claims.

NABO is sure that BW's Estates Department would not make claims for land, to try to get more income for BW, without first ensuring they really do have a good title.

However, if any reader does receive such a claim from BW, our advice is to get a solicitor to check it out very carefully, before agreeing anything.

We would like to hear from any member who has had this sort of claim from the Estates Department, how you've dealt with it, and what the outcome was - please write to Peter Lea with your experiences.

The 1995 Annual General Meeting

The 1995 Annual General Meeting will be held at the Friends Meeting House, Northfield, Birmingham on Saturday 25th November, starting at 2pm.

We hope that you will be able to join us there, so that we can

hear your concerns. If you have a resolution which you would like considered at the meeting, please let us know. And of course, you could always fill in the nomination form opposite!

Instructions for finding the venue will be in the next issue.

NABO BUSINESS

The 1995 Annual General Meeting (continued)

Nominations for Council

Nominations must be received by the Secretary by 14th October. Nomination form below. If you don't know any other NABO members to nominate/second you, members of Council will do this for you. Just complete the details about yourself and send it

off as soon as possible please.

Resolutions and alterations to the Constitution

Resolutions must also be received by the Secretary no later than 14th October. In case you are in any doubt about the contents of the Constitution, please turn to page 17.

Nomination form

Proposed candidate _____

Address _____

.. _____

Telephone _____

I am willing to stand for election to the NABO Council

Signed _____

Proposer _____

Address _____

.. _____

Proposer's signature _____

Seconder _____

Address _____

.. _____

Seconder's signature _____

P.T.O.

NABO BUSINESS

Membership renewals

If you have renewed your membership since August, you will not have received a receipt for your subscription. We have decided that in order to reduce the workload on the membership secretary, we will not be issuing receipts for renewals unless specifically requested to do so.

NABO for Navigation!

NABO log books are available from Penny Barber. Please send A5 sized S.A.E. (29p stamp 2nd class, 38p stamp 1st class) plus cheque for just £1.00 payable to "NABO". Penny's address is on the back page.

Nomination form: brief details of candidate

Please include a few words about yourself, your experience and why you would like to stand for the NABO Council:

NABO BUSINESS

Membership Secretary Required - immediately!

We need a volunteer to take on the job of membership Secretary as from now. Sadly Christine Potter who has done the job so well for the past 3 years has been forced to resign the post through illness.

The job requires about 2 to 3 hours per week and a day's work every 6 weeks or so. The duties consist of updating the computer records, dealing with new members, membership renewals, membership queries and printing the newsletter labels. A lap-top computer and printer are made available for the post.

Computer skills are not necessary though basic familiarity with computers would be helpful. What is much more important is accuracy, a methodical and careful manner of working and a commitment to do

the work. If you are the super fast whizz-kid type this is probably not the job for you!

The post of Membership Secretary is one which carries a fairly large level of responsibility so is a Council post. Council meetings are held at approximately 6 weekly intervals in Birmingham. Whilst it is not necessary to attend every Council meeting, some attendances will be necessary.

The job can also be a satisfying one in itself, with the additional benefit of knowing you are doing something positive for boaters.

If you think you would like to have a go, or would like to discuss the job in more detail, please phone Jon or Melanie Darlington.

Previous Ownership of your boat

NABO River Users' Co-ordinator Stephen Peters would like to draw members' attention to a method of researching the past history and owners of your boat.

He has recently bought a new motor cruiser and careful

cleaning of the hull revealed the outline of a previous licence number. It was known that the vessel was originally based on the Broads, so he wrote to the Broads Authority who were most helpful and able to provide

NABO BUSINESS

Previous Ownership of your boat (continued)

information from their registration records giving dates and names of previous owners. He is now able to complete a full ownership and technical manual for his boat which will be of interest to future owners.

It is worth remembering that

boat registration particulars are public records and the registers can be inspected by anyone. Such provisions, for instance, are contained in the British Waterways and NRA Acts. This can be useful when wishing to identify the name and address of a present or previous boat owner.

Help wanted

Very often NABO Council members have to decline accepting responsibility for certain tasks because they have run out of spare time. These tasks are very varied, ranging from attendance at consultation meetings to posting mail shots and arranging surveys. The consequence of this is that important jobs are being delayed, or worse still, not being done at all. Council is therefore setting up a list of members who would be prepared to do some individual tasks for NABO from time to time but without the responsibility of commitment of Council membership. We feel sure that many members would like to assist if they knew what was needed. The usual qualification is just time although specialist skills would

be useful for some projects.

If you are able to help please contact Chris Boxall (Midlands Rep) to explore possibilities. Some of the current items currently identified where help is required are:

- attendance at some User Group meetings (especially those at the far corners of a Reps region)
- assistance with surveys & information gathering
- computer database construction and maintenance
- manning NABO stall at shows and rallies
- compilation of a NABO Handbook

Don't worry if you don't know what would be involved. Council will give you every assistance.

NABO CONSTITUTION & RULES

September 1995

1. The Association shall be known as the National Association of Boat Owners.

2. The objects of the Association shall be as follows:

a) to provide effective representation for owners of vessels on Britain's Inland waterways on any subject or matter which is relevant to the owners of such vessels.

b) to organise events, demonstrations, rallies or other activities which in the opinion of the Council will further the object in clause a) above, but not to organise or actively engage in any event which would in the opinion of the Council bring the Association into disrepute.

3. In furtherance of the above objects, the Association shall have the following powers:

a) to assist financially or otherwise any appropriate bodies whether official or otherwise;

b) to promote by visits, meetings, publications, exhibitions or lectures, any of the above objects;

c) to secure publicity for the promotion of the objects of the Association;

d) to purchase or take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire in any manner any real or other property;

e) to do all other such things as will further the attainment of the above objects.

4. All persons supporting the above objects of the Association as defined in clause 2, and owning a vessel capable of use on the Inland Waterways shall be eligible for membership subject to:

a) the persons not being corporate bodies or being representatives of such businesses or organisations whose aims may be, in the opinion of the Council, incompatible with the objects of the Association.

b) being admitted by the Council as members. The Council shall have power to refuse any membership application, and no reason need necessarily be given, unless a formal request for a reason is made.

c) agreeing to be bound by this constitution.

d) paying the subscription fee.

5. The Council shall have power to elect to membership any other person they consider suitable for membership, subject to s4 (c), or to co-opt to membership of the Council such additional members as are considered necessary. Such co-opted members shall be eligible to vote.

NABO CONSTITUTION & RULES

6. The Association shall:

- a) provide membership application forms,
- b) provide a copy of this constitution on request to any new member or anyone seeking membership.
- c) levy and collect membership subscriptions as they fall due.

7. Membership of the Association shall lapse two months after failure of a member to renew his or her subscription.

8. The management of the association shall be carried out by a Council herein after referred to as "the Council".

a) The Council shall consist of not less than four and not more than sixteen Association members.

b) The Council shall elect the Association's Officers who shall comprise a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. An Officer's title, e.g. "Chairman", describes the job, not the sex of the holder.

c) Members of the Council shall be elected at the AGM and shall retire every year, but may offer themselves for re-election.

d) Those seeking election or re-election to the Council shall be nominated by a proposer and seconder who shall be fully paid up members. The person nominated shall endorse their willingness to

stand for election. Nomination forms must be received by the Secretary not less than forty two days before the AGM.

e) In the event of a contested election a ballot of those present shall be held and two tellers appointed to collect and count the votes.

f) Any member seeking election to the Council who is, or has been in the last 12 months prior to appointment to the Council, a member of any management committee, or board of directors or has held any position of influence during that time in any organisation which represents any user group connected with the inland waterways, or any organisation which obtains income from the inland waterways or from activities connected with the inland waterways, shall declare their interest at the time of being nominated for the Council. In the event that no such declaration of interest has been made and such an interest is subsequently found to exist, then that person will be debarred from continuing to serve on the Council.

9. The Annual General Meeting shall be held each year to:

- a) Receive the Chairman's report,
- b) Receive audited financial statements for the previous financial year ending on 31st March.
- c) Determine the annual subscription

NABO CONSTITUTION & RULES

rates.

d) Elect the Council members.

e) Appoint an auditor. The auditor shall be a member of a professional body recognised by the Companies Act 1985 as Auditors, but need not be currently registered as an Auditor. The auditor must not be an Officer of the Association or a member of the Council.

f) Consider any proposed alterations to the Constitution

g) Deal with business brought forward by the Council or members' resolutions. Such resolutions duly proposed and seconded must be received by the Secretary not less than forty two days beforehand, and shall be circulated to all members before the meeting.

9A. Members joining the Association less than 42 days before the AGM shall not be entitled to vote at that AGM.

10. A notice convening the AGM shall be sent to all members, together with an agenda no less than twenty one days before the date of the meeting.

11. A Special General Meeting may be called by sending to the Council a resolution or resolutions signed by at least twenty five members to be held within eight weeks of receiving such a resolution or resolutions.

a) Notice convening this meeting shall be circulated to all members not less than fourteen days before the

date of the meeting.

b) The meeting shall consider the resolution or resolutions referred to above but shall conduct no other business.

12. Only fully paid up members over the age of eighteen years may vote at any General Meeting.

13. The Chairman shall call a meeting of the Council as required but not less than once every three months.

a) A special meeting of the Council may be called on the written application of at least three of the Council members.

b) Any member of the Council absenting himself or herself for three consecutive meetings without reason acceptable to the Council shall be deemed to have resigned from the Council.

c) The quorum at a meeting of the Council shall be one third of the number of the Council members holding office at that time, but shall never be less than three, and shall include one of the Association's Officers.

d) Vacancies on the Council may be filled by the Council and any Association member thus co-opted holds office until the next AGM.

e) The Council may make rules of procedure not at variance with this Constitution.

f) The Council is authorised to

NABO CONSTITUTION & RULES

prepare a news sheet and other matter for members' benefit.

g) The Council may exclude from membership any member if there is evidence that the actions of the member are in opposition to the objects of the Association, or are likely to bring the Association into disrepute, providing that a resolution is passed by a two thirds majority of the Council. Prior to exclusion the member shall be informed of the intention to exclude, and shall be given the opportunity to state his or her case at the next meeting of the Council.

h) Minutes of all the Council meetings shall be taken and shall be endorsed as a true representation at the following meeting of the Council. All minutes shall be available for inspection by any member of the Council and by any member of the Association except for minutes involving personal matters relating to individual members which shall remain confidential.

i) Notice shall be given to every member of the Council, and should be at least 14 days in advance of all meetings of the Council. In special circumstances shorter notice may be necessary but shall never be less than 48 hours. Where less than 14 days notice has been given, the reasons for the short notice shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

14. Alterations to this Constitution

can only be made at the AGM or at a Special General Meeting, notice of which must specify any proposed changes. Any alteration to the Constitution must have a two thirds majority of those present voting in favour of the resolution, provided that no alteration is made to this clause, clause 2 or clause 18.

15. The Treasurer shall have charge of the funds of the Association. Accounts shall be paid on the signature of any two of the Officers of the Association.

16. The Association shall not accept donations or any other forms of benefit where such donations or benefits are given subject to conditions which would restrict the activities of the Association or where the donor may obtain influence over the Association in consequence of giving the donations or benefits.

17. The Association may have a President who shall be invited by the Council to hold office for the following year.

18. If on the winding up or dissolution of the Association there remains after the settling of all liabilities any property whatsoever, this shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Association, but shall be given to such a registered charity or charities established for similar charitable purposes as the Association shall decide.

REPORTS

Responses to consultation on BW craft licencing system

BW have published an overview of the responses they received to their consultation on craft licencing. They received a total of 84 responses, 33 from user groups, clubs or societies, 47 from individuals, and 4 from commercial interests.

Changes to the way fees and charges are collected

You will be glad to hear that most respondents were against charging by use of the system, possibly using 'smart cards'. Most felt that the present system is reasonably fair, and that moving boats should be encouraged. A few felt that there should be a basic registration fee, with extra for pay-as-you-go.

Respondents were generally against the idea of charging differently for different waterways, and in favour of introducing a common licence for all waterways - providing there was no overall increase in charges as a result. However, most thought it unlikely that this would be achieved in the short term, and therefore suggested improvements to reciprocal licencing arrangements.

Most thought that licence and mooring fees should be kept separate, but some modifications were suggested. River registration was also supported, with some suggested extensions.

Modifications to existing charge categories

The respondents were split on whether charging for length x beam would be a good idea, but there was a clear majority against charging by a single length category. Several other charging methods were suggested, including by value of boat, length x draught (deeper boats pay less as they keep the channel clear), power to length ratio (to discourage overpowered boats) and by number of people accommodated on board.

The retention of short term licences was favoured, but views were mixed on the introduction of a continuous cruising licence. The main argument against this category (and this is NABO's view) is that the current cruising licence already allows for continuous cruising.

Haven licences, rowing eights and day boat hire licences were

REPORTS

Consultation on BW craft licencing system (continued)

discussed by some, and various suggestions made for trading and commercial boats. There was a split on whether 'no use of locks' should be extended to cover swing bridges as well, but what about lift bridges? Sound support for special discounts for historic boats, but problems were recognised in deciding what constitutes a historic boat!

Many improvements were suggested in the terms of

licencing trail boats, unpowered boats and butties, electric boats and charity boats. Most wanted to spread payment for licences, perhaps over 12 months at no increased cost.

Some interesting rebates were suggested too - for retired people, for cruising time lost during long term stoppages and for 'loyalty' - those boaters with over 30 years use of the system. Keep on cruising!

Grand Union South User Group meeting

Chris Mitchell, the Waterway Manager for Grand Union South, admirably fulfills his duty for consultation by holding User Group meetings three times a year, and the latest was held on Monday 25th September.

The main topic of discussion was fishing. And we boaters learned a thing or two about fish that we never knew before! Did you know that canal fishing provides good sport for dedicated fishermen (hence the matches), but that it is not easy fishing (hence the specialist, expensive equipment)? Have you heard of zanda (predatory fish)? Did you

know that fish prefer turbulent water and/or the protection of overhanging trees (which explains why the fishermen are in the lock mouth or using those very long poles)? Did you know that settled silt was bad news for fish, and I think this makes fishermen in favour of dredging!

The main presentation was given by the southern region Fisheries Manager, John Ellis, talking facts and figures on fishing rights, water quality, and income. Variations in factors such as access, water quality and zanda lead to wide variations in the income per mile available

REPORTS

Grand Union South meeting (continued)

from canal fishing - somewhere between £42/mile and £1500/mile. Income had increased by a factor of 2.75 in the last 6 years, but there is a high turnover of clubs, and not all stretches are leased.

More interestingly, BW own 90 reservoirs, and fishing rights on about one third of them. An experiment has been carried out at Drayton reservoir recently, whereby it was turned in a managed fishery, stocked with carp. The income last year, from about a mile of bank, was

£30,000, and is predicted to reach £50,000 for this year. Obviously a successful investment. So options for the future include the possibility of developing other suitable reservoirs along the same lines and (contentiously) turning canals into managed fisheries too surprisingly there was not much comment on this proposal at the meeting - perhaps the implications were too difficult to contemplate.

But it was a good-humoured meeting, and no blood was shed!

LETTERS

Advice and comments on single-handed boating (1)

You will probably get a number of letters in reply to Ms Maureen Hunt's letter regarding single-handed boating - I am also trying to learn the art with a 55' narrow boat. I think that it is a very important skill whether you have a regular partner or not; the occasion may arise when the other person is incapacitated and you have to get to a road bridge perhaps to get help. For what it is

worth I am putting forward my comments.

First - lift and swing bridges are NOT on the wrong side of the canal; they were designed that way in the days of horse drawn boats. Putting the pivot on the towpath side would have impeded the horse whereas this way it has a clear run.

As far as single-handed

LETTERS

Advice and comments on single-handed boating (1) (cont)

boating is concerned there are two points which must always be borne in mind:

Single handed is slower so do not try and rush.

Think ahead and plan exactly what you are going to do.

The technique I was told about for swing bridges (we do not have any lift bridges on the K & A so have not tried with them) is to use the boat as a bridge. Put the bows on the offside near the bridge and steer the stern to the towpath side. The boat then blocks the canal which does not matter as there is no one about (if there was you would not need to use this technique!). Fasten the stern so that it won't drift and then take the bow rope (you may have to tie a second rope to it) to the bridge. Open the bridge and step back on the boat via the bow. Ensure both ends are untied and manoeuvre the boat under the bridge using the engine. Repeat the procedure to close the bridge, step back on board and off we go.

I suggest that you try this technique on a day when you have a competent boater with you

to sit on board and do nothing unless you have a problem when they can recover the situation using the engine.

Tools and devices you may wish to consider carrying are:

A windlass with a long throw or a 'Ladies Windlass'. I have seen the latter advertised but have never seen one. They are about £20 and incorporate a ratchet which will allow more purchase.

A crowbar.

A scaffold pole to give that extra leverage.

Extra rope with, possibly, a pulley. If you have to pull a boat to manoeuvre it near a bollard pass the rope around the bollard which will then act as a pulley and halve the effort.

As a final point, I believe that a mobile phone is an essential item for the boater, particularly single-handed. It need not be switched on until it is needed but can be used to call the emergency services if required, or to call BW when there is a problem.

J B Weller

Devizes, Wilts

NEWS

Advice and comments on single-handed boating (2)

In the August Newsletter Ms Hunt bemoans the siting of moorings for lift bridges on the opposite side to that from which they are operated.

Having just spent a week exploring the Sheffield & South Yorkshire Navigation, where the massive mechanised bridges have recently been adapted for user operation, I was delighted to see that in every case the moorings provided were on the

same side as the operation mechanism. What's more with the use of a BW Watermate key the bridges operate at the push of a button. I think British Waterways are to be congratulated on this particular aspect and perhaps Managers from other waterways should be encouraged to visit the S&SYN to discover how user-friendly they have become.

Hugh Potter

Editor, Waterways World

Advice and comments on single-handed boating (3)

My technique is to approach the obstacle slowly, tie to the bridge itself at the hinge side, lift/swing bridge, pass slowly through, re-tie to bridge and close. This is just fine in calm, dry weather but I DID get blown by the wind during Easter '94 gales crashing into a Macclesfield bridge and losing my T-stud! The clambering about is not so easy in full waterproofs either.

The Oxford bridges present a particular challenge. I'm told it is possible to leap off, leaving the boat in gear, lift the bridge from the towpath side, then lower and leap on your back deck. An

alternative approach is offered by the employment of a Banbury stick - a 7ft lever with rope at one end used to prop open the bridge, snatched back using the rope as you steer away. I'm afraid I just did it the simple way and took the precaution of having crew about.

I've yet to find a paddle or gate that didn't surrender eventually when leaned on or sworn at, but it is very important to consume sufficient chocolate to maintain my naturally sturdy physique!

Penny Barber, Hockley Port

LETTERS

Advice and comments on single-handed boating (4)

Like Maureen Hunt, when I did a lot of single handing I cursed about the positioning of swing and lift bridges. Then it dawned on me - if the bridge operated from the towing path side, how would you get a horse past without unhitching? Thus the arrangement is much more efficient for the purpose for which canals were built!

I have to say I have found very few situations where a little

ingenuity did not solve the problem. The secret has be to moor on the off side - then use the engine rather than having to bow haul against the wind! There is often a fence or even part of the bridge structure to which one can tie, or take a stake with you. A degree of agility and persistence is sometimes required, but don't you need that to cruise anyway!

Geoff Ashton, Bingham, Notts

Advice and comments on single-handed boating (5)

In reply to Maureen Hunt's letter on single-handed boating I would agree that swing and lift bridges can be a pain, but so are locks without moorings above or below especially when they have fierce by-washes.

I travel all over the system single-handed and I am a 5'2" not particularly strong person. I deal with swing and lift bridges like this: Put bow to working side (which is not usually towpath side). Get off with rope. Keep boat clear while opening bridge. Pull boat in to get back on. Drive through bridge. Stop with stern by working end of bridge. Get off with stern rope. Keep boat clear

while closing bridge. Get back on boat, drive off. Keep bottle of lacto-calamine in ticket box for nettle stings and scratches. Write to BW explaining problem.

Over the years things have improved. There are now ladders in all locks, which is a great help for us single-handed folk (especially the short ones).

If we don't tell BW of problems and shortcomings they have good excuses for not tending to them. I always get a reply, even though one said 'We don't encourage single handed boating'. I don't NEED encouraging, I love it!

Sadie Dean, nb Straw Bear

LETTERS

More bad manners on the cut

I feel I must continue the debate about the manners and general behaviour of boat skippers during the present summer. My wife and I travelled in our boat Victoria Eugenie from our base at Fenny Compton to Gloucester and back during the first 3 weeks in August; the sunny weather providing an added bonus to our annual holiday.

One thing however spoilt the trip, and that was the excessive passing speed of other boaters when we and others were moored up. Normally here you would expect a tirade against hirers but no, on over 95% of these occasions the boat concerned

was a private/shared owner type. Additionally many of the private boats were displaying NABO/IWA stickers!

In windy conditions it is to be expected that boats may find it difficult to reduce to tickover to pass, but in the weather conditions of August that was not the case. There is no justification for the excessive speed except a general lack of manners and respect of other people/boaters. If we are not careful as boat owners we risk being considered in the same light as vandals, stone throwers and fishermen. Has 'road rage' reached the cut!

J D & J Oakley, Fareham, Hants

Dear NABO ...

It has been on my mind for some months to send you a snippet for your correspondence column. It involves a visit to England by a Portuguese couple who became our close friends when I helped shut down and mend his refinery in the Alantejo region. He saw my "NABO" sticker and burst into uncontrollable laughter, mostly because he knows I'm an idiot. On regaining his self-control, he explained that

nabo is the Portuguese word for turnip. It is used by Portuguese car-drivers, when they are suffering from a fit of road-rage, to hurl abuse at those who have caused in them this "unusual" condition. They yell "NABO" without realising that they have named an august British institution and have therefore delivered a compliment.

Roddo and Penny West, Warwick

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