

## **THE MAGAZINE OF THE**



President: Bill O'Brien J.P. M.P.

## **ISSUE 2/03 - April 2003**

**New Overstay Rules and debate/...and more!**

## IN THIS ISSUE

<b>3</b>	<b>Chairman's Column</b>	<b>Sue Burchett</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>About BW's 'Consultation on Boats without Permanent Moorings'</b>	
<b>6</b>	<b>The Moorings Overstay Debate</b>	<b>Yourselves</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>A Welcome in Welsh</b>	<b>Stephen Peters</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Disillusionment sets in</b>	<b>Carole Sampson</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>The Overnight Mooring Guide</b>	<b>The Editor</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Worried Woman of the Waterways</b>	<b>Dot</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Editorial</b>	<b>The Editor</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Notices</b>	
<b>18</b>	<b>In Times of Trouble</b>	<b>C. S.</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Check your Standing Orders</b>	
<b>19</b>	<b>BW Licence Changes</b>	<b>Stephen Peters</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>Rivers</b>	<b>Rivers Co-ordinator (south)</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>A Burning Issue</b>	<b>Pyro</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>Fly on the wall</b>	<b>Fly</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>Letters</b>	<b>Yourselves</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>NABO supplies</b>	
<b>31</b>	<b>Council Contacts</b>	

**Pull-out: 'Consultation on Boats without Permanent Moorings'**

### **2003 CALENDAR**

<b>Council meetings</b>	<b>Copy dates</b>
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April 26th	May 3rd
June 7th	June 14th
July 19th	July 26th
Sept 6th	Sept 13th
Oct 4th	<b>Oct 4th</b>
<b>Nov 15th</b>	<b>A.G.M.</b>
Nov 29th	t.b.a.

# CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN



We have worked long and hard on the overstaying on public mooring issue, giving British Waterways the benefit of our working knowledge of boating. We were promised that all continuous cruisers would individually be posted so that they could air their views as part of the consultation process. This we hoped would result in a reasonable compromise between the boater and British Waterways.

We have now received the final revised version ('pull-out' in the middle of this issue) with a copy of the questionnaire to go out, and we are told a "trial" will start in April when these rules will be included in the licence conditions. Hardly time for any response from the people it plans to affect. Also the effects are not limited to those with a continuous cruising licence. These new rules effect everyone who is away from their home mooring for more than 42 days.

The whole aim of the exercise is to get round the '95 Act. This proposal also gets around BW having to go to court. If you are considered to have overstayed, BW will just refuse a licence and tell you to get off the system. There will be an appeal procedure run by BW. I believe they are using a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

In the consultation document, the Act isn't even quoted properly. The Act reads:- *'the applicant for the relevant consent satisfies the Board that the vessel to which the application relates will be used bona fide for navigation throughout the period for which the consent is valid without remaining continuously in any one place*

*for more than 14 days or such longer period as is reasonable in the circumstances'*. BW has changed the 'will' to 'have' and omitted the final words completely. Can waiting for a mooring be "reasonable in the circumstances"?

The final sentence shows how much they care about their customers. People have lived on their boats in one area for years, partly because there are no moorings and partly because they like the freedom to change the view from their boat windows now and again. This will be stopped unless people are prepared to move 10 lock miles every other weekend and are happy to end up 120 lock miles away from where they started. Those receiving benefits will no longer be able to receive them. This effects the more vulnerable in our society and BW are saying it is the boaters' problem not theirs. Joining them are those who can no longer afford moorings after the recent price hikes and are now going to be hit with new movement rules. Is this customer care? It seems more like harrassment.

How the standards effect boaters coming out of marinas at weekends and holidays is unclear as yet, as the rules are still changing although the implementation date is April.

If this affects you, and we believe it will affect most boaters, please write to your MP, copy to Robin Evans and a copy to us. (See the Notices page for more details) and tell them that **'THIS IS WHY WE ARE ASKING FOR A REGULATOR, as BW appear to be bypassing an Act of Parliament.'**

We don't mind working with other waterways groups to lobby navigation authorities, as together we are stronger. However, this requires a bit of trust. Sadly, a recent case has put that trust at risk. We worked with IWA and DBA to get BW to promise it would dredge to the original channel profile and BW agreed that, for each dredging project, the waterways manager would estimate what the original profile was, confirm it with the local User Groups, and then show how much of the waterway could be dredged to this profile within his/her dredging budget.

Unfortunately, IWA has not kept BW to its word. First, it let BW do "notch-down-the-middle" dredging near London by accepting that it was "spot dredging" (although the length concerned was several km long). Then, near Milton Keynes, its representative encouraged those at the User Group meeting to vote for dredging an even longer stretch at a lesser depth, which the waterway manager gleefully accepted despite the BW national policy. IWA has since said it will leave it up to its local representatives to decide whether BW should be held to this agreement, and doesn't seem to want to tell them why original profile dredging is so important, let alone direct them to follow its policy. When we asked for a meeting with IWA's chairman on this, which we consider an urgent matter, they suggested a date at the

end of August. Whose side is IWA on? The boaters, or its "partner" BW?

The Boat Safety office has had complaints about a few examiners and, in order to investigate these complaints, it needs evidence of wrongdoing. The "Office" needs to know if the reported incidents are isolated or not. I have been requested to ask our members to report any complaints. The BSS also want to re-examine some boats that have been given pass certificates by examiners that they are investigating. I would just like to caution our members to think about this before agreeing, as a pass certificate could become a failure, but on the other hand will your boat be safer?

After attending a Parliamentary Waterways Group meeting it seems to me that British Waterways and the Waterways Trust are to remain firmly intertwined. BW is now giving the Trust almost £1.5 million of our money and the plan is to continue. This I found interesting in view of BW's statement that they want to increase our licences in line with British Waterway's costs. In other words the more they spend the more we pay, no incentive for them to be thrifty then.

On that note I will say good-bye till next time, when I hope to have careered madly round the system revelling in being let out for the so-called "Cruising Season".

*Sue Burchett*

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## **MEMBERSHIP ADMINISTRATION HANDED OVER**

The membership database is now in the capable hands of Melanie Darlington, who will be paid to look after day-to-day maintenance of records, renewals etc. This follows months of work updating, rationalising and automating it by Roger Davis, who hopefully might now find some time for boating! He has gone far beyond the call of duty preparing it in order to save NABO effort and money in the future and we all owe him a big thank-you. He will be a hard act to follow.

### **Emails & communications**

Messages sent to [mem.sec@nabo.org.uk](mailto:mem.sec@nabo.org.uk) will now go to Melanie, as will all post sent via the FREEPOST address. Please send your personal views and queries about NABO to the General Secretary, who will do her best to give them the same attention and understanding as Roger did. Emails specifically for Roger will still reach him via [nn\\_ads@nabo.org.uk](mailto:nn_ads@nabo.org.uk).

# BW ‘Supplementary consultation on boats without permanent moorings’

In spite of its name, **this affects us all**.

In the middle of this magazine you will find a pullout copy of the most recent (as we go to press) version of this paper, giving the result of the consultation on this issue, which was still outstanding from BW’s review of licensing. As our Chairman has said in her column, these ‘standards’ (presumably ‘...of behaviour’), which we assume to be somewhere between rules and guidelines, will be built into the Licence and Permit Conditions as from the beginning of April, but the document says that feedback will be welcomed until October. Do make use of the form attached to the pullout.

Communication with its authors indicate that this ‘Mooring Code’ is to be field tested during the coming months in as realistic a way as possible, so BW can see whether it is workable for itself before the standards are finalised. They tried to word it so as to avoid unnecessary worry amongst boaters, and yet tackle an issue that boaters have been complaining about for some time.

To keep up to date if you have internet access, go to the entry page of the BW website and use the site navigation menu at the top right to select ‘Craft Consultation’. Ensure you download the most recent version.

The core of the proposals, applicable to **all boats**, is the ‘14 days in one place principle’ like Adrian Stott’s idea in the last issue. However, BW’s idea of ‘place’ is based on where you tie up at the start of the 14 days, it has no fixed boundaries that are easy to see, you need to measure it. Presumably you need a scaled map.

‘Continuous Cruisers’, and **all boaters away from their home moorings for more than six weeks**, are also obliged to progress along the waterways covering so many lock-miles in a certain time without counting any of them more than once. There are three standards covering different periods and you must comply with them all. For instance, in 30 days you must cover at least 40 ‘new’ lock-miles, about two or three days cruising for most people. To give you an idea, the map below shows very roughly 40 lock-mile measurements radiating from Braunston.

Of course everything gets more complicated if you travel to and fro on dead-end waterways or go round rings.

Please read it all carefully and try to apply it to your normal cruising pattern. Tell BW what you think and give us your feedback too.



# The Moorings Overstay Debate

To a large extent this has been overtaken by BW's latest move, but readers have responded to the proposals in the last issue and it is only right to let them be heard. No doubt a fresh broadside will arrive when everyone has read the pullout. We cannot print the letters in full, as many were embellished with details of the writers' boating lifestyles, so I will have to summarise them or take extracts. What certainly comes over is the disparity of folks' perceptions of an ideal world on the waterways.

The debate began with Adrian Stott's detailed proposals. Most people agreed with his analysis of the problem, but found his solution a little difficult to grasp. Whether they can understand BW's 'standards' remains to be seen.

## Background

To summarise: BW see the 1995 Act as only allowing boats to stay in one place for more than 14 days if it is the place where that boat is kept. The word 'place' was left to be defined by a Court of Law when a case was put before it.

NABO fought hard during the drafting of the Act to prevent BW requiring every boat to have a permanent mooring, and so the 'Continuous Cruiser' category was created. NABO still supports the concept, but is against those who abuse the right by 'bridge hopping'.

## Adrian Stott's ideas

Adrian's proposals are meant to make the Act's conditions easier to enforce, as there are now so many boats that appear to be flouting them that law-abiding boaters are complaining, and, without incurring legal fees, BW cannot do anything about it.

He is suggesting that within any 6 week period, a boater will be taken to task if his/her boat is sighted moored in one 'place' on more than 14 days. These days do not have to be consecutive.

He then suggests that a 'place' be defined by local consultation with User Groups. From his examples, it would appear that he expects them to cover about 6 miles of waterway, but their boundaries should take into account those of nearby habitations. This prevents arbitrary boundaries being drawn through the middle of towns. Signs would be erected to show where these boundaries were.

## Sue Burchett responded.

Writing in reply without her 'official hat' on, she claimed this would infringe the right to roam, and bear heavily upon existing live-aboard communities. She also feared that BW would start charging for towpath moorings where previously mooring would have been free, in an attempt to find extra places where, in line with the 1995 Act, boats could be reasonably left or kept.

She also deplored the issuing of 'Continuous Cruising' licences to boaters who wanted or needed to stay on a waterway which had no vacant long-term berths, just to satisfy the letter of the law, even though said boaters were in no way able or in some cases, willing, to be 'bona-fide' navigators.

## Carole Sampson's reply

Her proposals involved a licence discount for genuine Continuous Cruisers, who would have to document their presence in three of the seven waterway regions within the connected BW system during a year to be eligible. To provide funds for this discount, there would be a surcharge for those 'live-aboards' who made demands on the facilities in a confined area and yet had no base mooring.

She also felt that you should be able to stay on 'out of the way' moorings longer.

I hope I have summarised the three viewpoints from the February issue of NABO News fairly. Comment was invited and it came.

## John and Marion Pearse

agreed with Adrian's statement of the problem and treatment of special cases. They thought his definition of place: 'complicated, bureaucratic, expensive to publicise and prone to vandalism', and thought the 10 km rule as good, although they felt boaters would understand miles better. They requested, "Avoid tablets of stone".

On Sue's proposals they thought she was advocating that BW ratify freedom of movement (I think they misunderstood her – it was the issuing of Continuous Cruising licences to vessels just because they couldn't find moorings that she wanted rationed)

They did agree with her that no charges should be put on anyone with a definite need to use a transit mooring.

They thought Carole's support of genuine continuous cruisers good, but pointed out: "But what are we to make of other boaters who of their own accord tell us that they ask BW for moorings on the western end of the K&A because they know that BW cannot meet the demand but won't move them on, so mooring costs them nothing?"

Regarding charging live-aboards they asked: "Would a small surcharge find support without splitting NABO?" and went on to doubt the practicality of its administration. "The more significant feature is Carole's suggestion that the boater claims a discount instead of BW staff running around recording boats and trying to distinguish movers from moorers, at our expense and with an impression of hassle", they said, and went on to praise the idea: "Discounts and incentives are second nature to real commercial organisations"

Their next section was a definition of the problem:

"Too many boats for the available moorings, and a growing lack of consideration for others." and they asked if the lack of low cost moorings was, "because BW cream off 30% to 50% of mooring charges for doing nothing apart from allowing a connection to their line? In many areas marina development seems to

have petered out despite long waiting-lists. If BW steps in to create new marinas, they have an unfair advantage."

Like other respondents they wanted boaters divided into more categories:-

"(a) 'Live-aboards' who wish to move within a modest area . . . As Carole says, a charge for local strain and costs is not unfair; the issues are how much and how collected.

(b) Really continuous cruisers...

(c) Long-distance cruisers who have a home mooring...

(d) Short-term cruisers such as hirers, time-sharers, shared-owners, annual holidays, bank-holidays, and local weekend cruisers.

Different groups have their own needs and aspirations, which they can justify on their own terms; the touchstone of acceptability is the effect on other users and on neighbouring communities. If we do not make concessions to mutual benefit, we may find BW imposes solutions that divide and rule.

Their analysis of possible solutions dismissed self regulation and regulation imposed by BW: "Probably the worst outcome, as fewer staff seem to understand boating, and more managers are recruited from the "leisure industry. Although revenue does not go to shareholders (or paid-by-results directors?), the pressure on BW to charge what the user will bear comes from "eminences grises" in Whitehall and the Treasury whom we never meet and who neither understand nor care about waterways. Overcrowding is our problem; BW will simply collect more licence fees, mooring charges, and more VAT for the taxman, but give up on more difficult sources of revenue such as cycling and dog-emptiers. BW behaves like a monopoly."

They suggest: investigating the dearth of low cost moorings "(another role for the Regulator?)", incentives for genuine continuous cruisers, and those with a home mooring; and not letting BW use a cost index for licence increases as it gives them "less incentive to improve productivity".

## Peter and Alison Watkins

They put a 'continuous cruiser' point of view. They thought, "*Adrian Stott almost made BW sound sensible*", and wondered who would keep count.

They like to take their time exploring a particular region or waterway and doubted if they could satisfy Carole's definition, but agreed with her that on some rural moorings the 14 day period could be extended. They stressed where there were stoppages the rules should be relaxed too.

Like John and Marion, they wanted four styles of cruising, defined almost exactly the same way, but they didn't say any more about how these were to be treated.

## Alan & Sarah Padwick

*"We have certainly experienced more difficulty over the years with boaters, who overstay their allotted welcome in a number of areas around the system"*, they said, and then told of their experiences mooring in London.

*"You mention 'Places' on the Grand Union South. I feel that, in London itself, 'Places' should be much shorter and actually only be each separate visitor mooring possibility: eg Delamere Terrace, Little Venice; St Mark's Crescent (our favourite); Islington, Victoria Park etc etc. Maybe it is even, sadly, time to reduce the limit to a week. Less than this would not be a good idea, as, once settled for a particular reason in a particular spot, like we do, it would be disruptive to have to move on in less than a week.*

*Your general suggestions on this subject seem very reasonable."*

## Bob Corfield (from Website forum)

*"I read Adrian Stott's suggestions in the last issue, in fact I read them four times and I still had trouble understanding exactly what he was suggesting, particularly with regard to the totting up of time by BW with regard to an individual boat"*, he said, and then explained that some antisocial boaters are immune to anything except being hit in the wallet

*"I believe it is not a change in the rules that is required, rather a more rigid enforcement by BW of the current ones, perhaps allied to a set of fines like a parking ticket on an increasing scale as the overstay time gets longer. After all BW know who we all, or nearly all, are."*

Then he detailed a steeply increasing system of fines.

*"There would, of course, need to be an appeals system, so that anyone with a legitimate reason for overstaying could present their case. As in the case of speeding and parking fines, the money raised could be ploughed back into BW infrastructure, so, even though the 'overstayer' is extremely annoying at the time, at least we could all benefit in the long run.*

*On the other hand, I fully support Carole Sampson's views on the following page. There are areas where one can moor for a lengthy period without causing any inconvenience to other canal users. . . . Each popular mooring, which could be clearly marked as a 'place', could have the charges, dates and times displayed on a board (big enough to be read from a moving boat) at each end of the restriction so no one would be in any doubt about what the current overstay charge was and when it was effective. . . .*

*Yes, more costs, more bureaucracy, but until we all obey the rules, we must all be subject to this sort of thing."*

## David Daines

David sounds a note of caution for NABO and looks deeper for the root cause of the problems.

First he outlined his history of involvement with waterway organisations, including membership of NABO since its earliest days

*"I am very concerned at the long running debate within NABO over 'Continuous Cruising', 'Long Term Moorings', et al. I am afraid that there is a danger of a schism growing between groups of boaters over this matter, and NABO itself is in danger of being seen to champion one*



side, alienating the other, when in fact we all, together, need NABO as our campaigning organisation.

*“The facts as I see them are as follows.*

*BW says it needs to squeeze more money out of us all. It cannot raise licence fees as much as it would wish as there would be all hell to pay. So BW takes an easier option. It compels us all to have a mooring then hikes up the fees for this to make up the shortfall. Now don't be under any illusion that mooring fees are driven by 'market forces', that is BW's argument and it is decidedly disingenuous. What they don't say is that the fees charged by most marinas are pushed up so high by BW's horrendous connection charges, levied upon the marina owners. So BW forces the marina owners to raise their charges, then uses these rates to set its own fees to its own tenants. Then BW goes to the marina owners and says “You see how high our fees to our own tenants are, we are going to raise our charges to you”. It's an upward spiral, wholly to BW's benefit, they in effect 'set the market'. All the while those of us on BW moorings are paying more and more for precious little and observing boats moored opposite us on the towing path paying nothing but the licence.”*

Then he mentions the antisocial behaviour of said boats, running of engines, generators etc that disturbs the peace he is paying for.

*“Now here is a solution, but you won't like it. Are you ready? **Double the licence fee SHOCK HORROR!! But halve the mooring fees, including those charged to marinas and passed on to marina tenants.***

*That way everyone using the system will pay for that 'privilege', whether 'continuous cruising' or 'continuous tied up(!)'. Everyone will pay for the water, the locks, the sani-stations, the dredging (only joking with the last one!)...”*

( A bit about his own modest means but desire for fair play)

*“If all paid for what they got, the burden on all of us would be more fairly spread. An incidental gain would be that we could then perhaps have more 'clout' when we opposed any further increases from BW. We would have called BW's bluff by declaring that we know the underhand way they have been surreptitiously increasing the effective 'Licence' fee by disguising it as 'moorings'.”*

He then doubted we would publish these views as he knew they conflicted with those of various members of Council. (He then continued about anglers - look forward to that in the next issue)

## Finally

On the 8th of March, Council voted against adopting Adrian's criteria as part of official NABO policy. Since the Association is there to put forward those views that are shared by its members, it cannot take sides where boaters disagree, which they clearly do here.

Unless it is given a clear mandate by members to do something more proactive, all NABO can do now is ensure all viewpoints are heard, there is fair play, and no laws or requirements of Human Rights are flouted.

SS

### ENVIRONMENTAL LATEST – Silent Running Zones

On certain isolated waterways, even where a statutory right of navigation exists, there are moves to limit craft to electric and human powered vessels. Where similar environmental sensitivity exists on short lengths of the connected canals, it is proposed to introduce Silent Running Zones through which powered boats must drift or be bow-hauled with engines turned off, especially during the breeding season of certain species in the first half of April,

It is suggested that a forked bow-hauling rope is rigged, with its shorter leg tied to the bow post, and the longer leg taken round a pulley on the top of the rudder stock so turning the rudder varies the tension on the two legs, improving control at low speed.

# CROESO I'R GYMDEITHAS CENEDLAETHOL PERCHENNOG Y CYCHOD YNG NGHYMRU

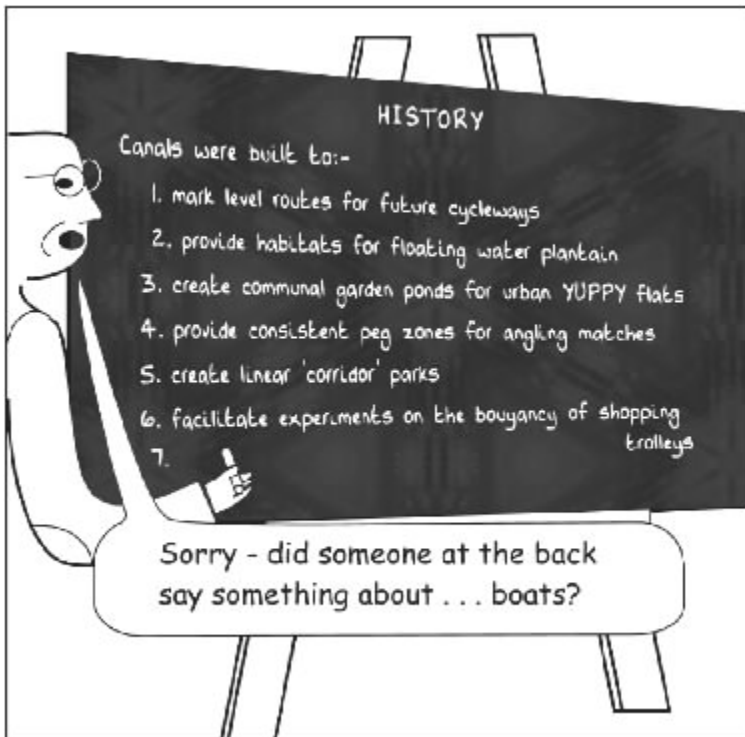
(or Welcome to NABO in Wales)

Just a brief reminder to our members based in Wales that our remit does include the Welsh waterways. Our North West Secretary covers the Llangollen Canal and attends regular User Group meetings. There may well be other similar meetings on Welsh waterways where we are not represented, such as the Montgomery Canal and the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal. If you know of any such meetings on these canals please let your area Secretary know about them and consider whether you would be able to attend them.

Now that the Environment Agency has become the navigation authority for the River Wye (partly in Wales, partly in England) we shall need to keep a close eye on how the projected navigation plan develops. We have indicated that we will wish to be closely involved in order to represent the views and interests of leisure boaters who use or may wish to use the river. Again, if you live or cruise along the river Wye and would be able to attend local user group meetings or simply report on local developments we would be delighted to hear from you. Bi-lingual capability is not a criterion.

You are not forgotten in Wales. HWYL FAWR!

SP



# DISILLUSIONMENT SETS IN

It is disheartening for Council, and more particularly for our editor, when members say they find NABO News depressing. The magazine is the means by which we, the Council, keep you, our members, up to speed about what we are doing and what is happening in the boating world. We are a pressure group, not a social cruising club, so it is fairly inevitable that your Council will be making the greatest noise about matters which would adversely affect boaters. But I'd like to tell you about my own experience.

As a boater with almost thirty years experience, I can't help but notice, and be impressed by, the improvement in the infrastructure of the waterways. In my early days, paddles were not so well greased, there was much more grounding under bridges, and it was more difficult to find depth to moor up. Under-used canals were not maintained and were very hard work. Nowadays, there is less leakage from pounds, so that water levels are better. BW staff on the ground are friendly, cheerful, helpful (generally), and provide a face-to-the-public of which BW management should be justly proud. On the negative side, their numbers have been cut drastically, to the point where all I see of them is a white van disappearing up the towpath. But had I not joined NABO Council, I would have no idea whatsoever what all the moaning regarding BW is about.

I started my NABO career, if I can call it that, by attending User Group Meetings. I soon learned that waterway managers are all from the same breed, smooth-talking, unruffleable, promising all and delivering little, gift-of-the-gab types, easily recognisable as having attended the same management courses. The meetings are absolutely fascinating, for I came to realise that each waterway office is an entity in its own right, largely left to solve its problems by itself. For example, bridge numbering.

One waterway has a numbering problem in that several bridges are numbered '1'. It seemed to be a total revelation that on another waterway, bridges are numbered 1a, 1b, 1c etc.. Lessons learned in one area are not passed on, so the scope for duplication of thought and effort is enormous. Then I attended Council meetings. Over the BSS farce, I heard a senior BW official say: "We got it wrong" (talking about the consultation process). The first time I heard this, I thought it wonderful, assuming that common sense would prevail in future. The next time I heard it was over last year's mooring hikes, I'm sure it will come after this year's licensing proposals.

Then there's the business of throwing major issues at user organisations in late June/early July demanding a response by the middle of August. The fact that they know that such committees are manned by volunteers, most of whom wish to cruise at that time of year, and that this has happened EVERY YEAR since I joined NABO, makes one think that it is done on purpose to ensure that some organisations will not be able to respond. Be reassured, not NABO. Then we are told that under their charter, they have to consult users, while at the same time pointing out that they have no intention of taking any notice of those users unless it suits them. The latest is the angling-from-visitor-moorings issue, which was casually let slip at a Midlands User Group Meeting. Did they think we wouldn't notice? Then there's one waterway office that has conveniently forgotten to invite our representative to its meetings, one manager who can't be bothered to meet that representative: I could go on and on and on.

I haven't reached the point of total disillusionment yet, but I can now understand why there are some who have.

*Carole Sampson*

# Overnight Mooring Guide

I have had some very useful input to this guide from a number of members and organisations, for which I am extremely grateful. Unfortunately, it is a little like fitting out a boat, the question is, “When is it finished enough to use?”

I think the answer is now. With day lengths growing and canals re-opening, many boats will be coming out of hibernation and setting off, so I have collated what we have so far and put it onto the NABO website. Look at the ‘Waterway Info’ pages for the areas you hope to cruise and you will find a button in the bottom left of each page which will take you to the moorings table for that bit of waterway. I also hope to provide them on paper, but at this stage all I can say is that an S.A.E will be needed, along with a list of which waterways you want to know about. It is very difficult to know when to commit something like this to print.

Ref No	Waterway	Name	Location	Type	Tie to	Depth	#Boats	Fees
Pros				Cons				
V1	Bevingstoke	Miscellaneous Bridge			Ring	2'	2	7
Short walk into Woking				Road noise. Slight risk of vandalism				
V2	Bevingstoke	Canalway Bridge	Wokingbooth PH		Ring	2'	3	5
Close to Woking Town Centre, Supermarkets.				Early noisy. Some risk of vandalism to unattended boats				

On the tables each mooring take up two lines, with information under the following headings:-

Along the top line:-

- **Ref No** - Our reference number - please quote in any feedback
- **Waterway** - name thereof
- **Name** - of mooring, or nearest habitation
- **Location** - this may be in terms of bridge numbers, locks or in some cases, failing that, an OS Grid reference
- **Type** - Maximum stay in DAYS. Only shown for ‘Visitor’ type moorings
- **Tie to** - Rings, bollards, (sheet) piling etc. If blank, prepare the stakes and hammer!
- **Depth** - in inches at, or less than, a foot from the bank
- **# boats** - A ‘guesstimate ‘ of the number of 50 foot boats that can moor there
- **Pets** - a subjective rating out of ten on behalf of cats and dogs.

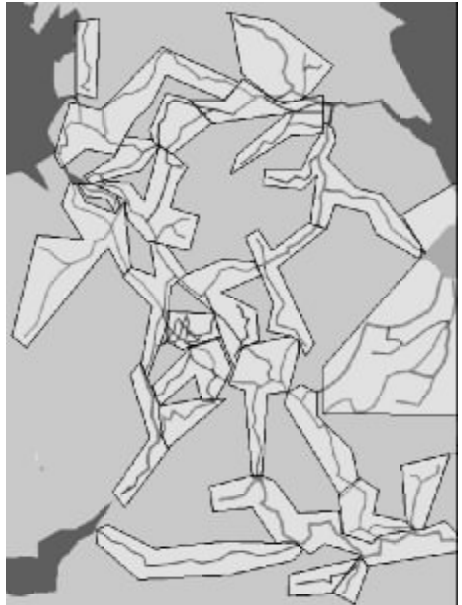
Along the bottom line

- **Pros** - (against green) what else attracted the contributor to that mooring. Not everybody wants the same thing though.
- **Cons** - (against pale red) what would deter the contributor from using that mooring.

What I must stress is that the information is compiled from a number of different sources, so at this stage don't expect the content to be consistent. I have tried to sort it all according to the above headings. mesh the entries into some sort of order and divide them into zones corresponding roughly to the areas covered by the various navigation agency offices. I then had to format the tables for the website. Bearing in mind there are 26 tables, together containing well over 1000 entries, this has been no mean task and there are bound to be some in the wrong order, or doubled up because I didn't realise that information from different sources referred to the same mooring.

I started with the navigation agencies offices, most of whom gave me lists of 'Visitor' or other recognised public short stay moorings, usually just showing where they were and how long you could stay, but some listed nearby facilities too. I have not had time to go through them all standardising the abbreviations, so you may have to guess what they mean.

The Boaters Christian Fellowship has very kindly given me the use of their Church Directory, a magnificent database which, amongst a wealth of practical information about finding the churches themselves, lists places where they have been able to physically moor a boat and, presumably, leave it unattended long enough to attend worship. This may or may not mean the mooring is adequate for an overnight stay, you will have to judge for yourself. Most of their entries are in capitals so can be recognised.



A rough guide to how the system is split up

Several individual members have now contributed information, although I would always welcome more. Some, e.g. Tony Haynes on the Basingstoke, have provided so much detail that it overflows the tables! I can make this available in its unabridged form to anyone who specifically asks. A big thank-you to all those.

Any feedback would be very welcome. For those with access to the Internet there is a form on our website – look for the request for help near the top of our 'News & Info' page and follow the link provided. If you have anything to add or correct about a mooring already on the list, please quote its reference number. Put it in the first column instead of 'waterway' if you are using the website form.

This sort of guide can never be definitive or totally accurate, so we cannot be liable for any adversities that may befall you through putting too much faith in it. However we sincerely hope it can reduce the hassle of planning your journey and finding somewhere to tie up each night.

## WORRIED WOMAN of the WATERWAYS

Are you thinking 'What the L does this woman find to worry about all the time?' Let me assure you I have an L of a lot of worries so I will tell you briefly about as many as I can.

**Lengthsmen.** Where are they these days? It was good to know that someone was keeping an eye on each length of canal, including locks, towpath, canal walls.....all aspects. Now I think that with BW they are all 'Waterways Operatives' whatever that means. Now some areas are recruiting volunteer 'Canal Keepers'. They are issued with clothing and equipment for litter picking and cleaning off graffiti, and are instructed to report (to BW?) anything that they think it is important. I worry that this is just a good way to keep BW staff from having to actually leave their offices and go near those horrid straight(ish) edged ditches filled with water that people will keep trying get them involved with.

When the Environment Agency said that they were employing 'Inspectors' to look after specific stretches of their rivers, I thought, 'Oh good - lengthsmen!' but no! The idea that they should actually carry oil cans or grease for the locks filled the powers-that-be with horror. No, an inspector's job is to inspect. They look at things. Well hopefully they also report what they have found, so that EA can make **lists** of things. These lists are then circulated and discussed and prioritised, and any other jolly time consuming thing. I was horrified to learn that they have a detailed graph showing the relative difficulties experienced working all the locks! How long did all that take to compile and not a hand's turn done to rectify any of the causes of the difficulties. Well I suppose that would muck up their carefully prepared graph.

Is efficient **lockwinding** a thing of the past? Do people know that when going down hill you should start to fill the lock ahead before emptying the one you are in? That on a flight there is no point in going out of a lock till there is somewhere to go. Queuing in the pound means that some pounds get very low while water is rushing away wasted in others. There is no point in working more than one lock ahead, but it is a very good idea to do just that. How many times have you been stuck in a flight with a group working locks 'by committee' and despite all the discussions not one is getting the next lock ready.

**Life jackets**, these do worry me. I remember I had to wear one when taking my boat through Dudley tunnel. I was towed, not legging it. There is no space round the boat at all as it goes through the bit near Park Head. I was so worried that one false move and the life jacket would jam me solid

somewhere or it would snag on something and hold me fast while I got squashed. On this occasion I could see no reason for the rule saying I must wear it. I can see the need for small children to wear life jackets near canals but for adult size people that worries me. Should you fall in the canal it is usually so shallow that you can walk out. There are very few places where you can't. Should you fall in a lock that is running a life jacket will get you well stuck beside the boat. On rivers non swimmers should always consider wearing a life jacket. On busy commercial rivers all boaters should consider it, especially on tidal bits.

Do you **look** ahead when boating? Can you see ahead at bends or bridge 'oles? if not, do you slow down? So many people don't. You come round a blind bit and face a speeding monster, (well it seems like that!). Don't forget that full length and loaded boats won't necessarily be on 'their' side of the canal. Always approach blind bends slowly.

Last but not least - is BW's attempt at **legislation to limit** our freedom and make us keep **log** books **legal**?

Try not to worry about it, that is what I do for you!

Your friend WWW DOT

*Advertisement*

*Advertisement*

Guilty again! This time of obesity – NABO News is going to have to watch its weight now Lent is upon us. The last issue’s four extra pages, along with the leaflet for ‘Boats on Show’, put us over the 60 gm limit and cost NABO over £200 in extra postage. Awfully sorry, chaps.

The problem is that I always try to put in everything I am given, as nobody is going to spend time writing me articles if they don’t get printed. But then again, if items are of interest to only a handful of members, should I be spending NABO money having them printed and sent to everybody? It is the dilemma facing editors of voluntary organisation newsletters everywhere.

On top of that I still have to face complaints about moaning articles, negativity and the like. Those readers must be skimming over all the things I try to include to keep the balance, many of which I have to write or compile myself. In particular they completely ignore my exhortations for **them** to provide me with the ‘positive’ items they claim NABO News is so short of.

So – Moaners about Moans – what do you want? Will you help, or are you just going to complain about complaining? If you want us to be positive, you be positive and send something positive.

Next question, “Is NABO about to crumble under the weight of the Continuous Cruising/Mooring Overstay/Continous Mooring issue?” I don’t think so, but it is certainly providing me with plenty to print, and will probably go on doing so until BW sees sense, levels the playing field and includes the basic right to moor with the licence – after all, everybody has to moor their boat somewhere each night. Fair game then for BW, or a private provider, to charge a bit extra for security and vigilance if you want your boat safe when unattended, but not to the tune of twice the licence fee or more. Still, mustn’t complain, it’s all good stuff for the editor.

Shame I am a boater too, in my case one paying all that money for a mooring where one can’t even be guaranteed water under one’s boat, but I’ll spare you that, I would be accused of more moaning! Assuming the floating editorial office can free itself of the mud lining the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in May, and hasn’t suffered as a result, we will be roaming the northwest waterways this summer, including the Lancaster, and taking advantage of free passage of all these wondrous new or restored navigation works. Now there’s a positive thought!

Enjoy your cruising, or at least the prospect of it.

*Stuart Sampson*

*Editor– NABO News, 48 Old Lane. Bramhope, Leeds LS16 9AZ*



## NOTICES

### POST FOR NABO NEWS

The Editor is on dry land for issue 3/03 so please send contributions to  
48 Old Lane, Bramhope,  
Leeds LS16 9AZ

E-mail-  
[news.editor@nabo.org.uk](mailto:news.editor@nabo.org.uk)

## FREE BOOKLET

'Exploring the  
Thames  
Ring'



Send us  
an S.A.E.  
please to

48 Old Lane, Bramhope,  
Leeds LS16 9AZ

## CAN YOU HELP US IMPROVE THE B.S.S.?

NABO is looking for anyone with experience of implementing the BSS, fitters, examiners etc. who would like to see the scheme made more workable for boat owners. Please contact our Vice Chairman (Contact details on back page)



## Writing to your MP

If you feel strongly enough about something that you want to tell your MP, but don't know who that is, ask at your local library.

Alternatively, if you can access the internet, go to the page called "*Find your MP*" on the website [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk). Enter your post code into the search box provided and the name and details for your local MP will come up.

The site also has a "Contact your MP" facility, including an e-mail form, if your MP has e-mail.

The address for letters to your MP is:-  
*c/o The House of Commons,  
London, SW1A 0AA.*



A message of thanks to member Micheal Harting, who has found us a venue for the 2003 A.G.M., this time near Nottingham.

## PASSWORDS

Any guidance papers tables still protected will open with password '**Branch**' (Capital B)

The members-only website section has a **new password**, which has been sent out to on-line members via the members' bulletin list. This is because many copies of NABO News have been given out at events with the old password in them.

If you have not been given the new word please e-mail: [webmaster@nabo.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@nabo.org.uk) with your name and membership number to be given the password, and, if you want, to be put onto the bulletin list.

## MORE HELP NEEDED -

*Would someone please consider taking over the Midlands area for NABO?*

**New Adult Folding Cycle.** Red in carry case. Cost £190 - sell for £90.

Tel: Don on  
0118 959 0241  
(Reading)

## **In times of trouble ...**

We are all concerned about crime and vandalism on the cut. What should we do when we are victims of this? **INFORM BRITISH WATERWAYS.**

It is no use moaning or complaining about things afterwards - it is too late then. If you tell them at the time, it may be possible to do something about it. So, if you can't make progress because of weed, **INFORM BRITISH WATERWAYS.**

If someone tries to steal from your boat, inform the police and **INFORM BRITISH WATERWAYS**

If stones are thrown at you, inform the police and **INFORM BRITISH WATERWAYS**

If you see ANY anti-social behaviour on the towpath, **INFORM BRITISH WATERWAYS !**

The freephone canals number is: **0800 479947**

When you use this service, the appropriate British Waterways office will receive a full written report containing details of everything you have said, everything they have said, and what action was taken at the time. This is then filed for records, to enable BW to detect trouble spots and as evidence to show the police.

### **PLEASE CHECK YOUR STANDING ORDERS**

From time to time we come across instances where members' banks or building societies have been over-zealous with their customers' money and have mistakenly paid the NABO subscription monthly instead of annually. This helps our cashflow admirably but is not what you or we really want.

With most members paying by standing order you will appreciate that it is a mammoth task for us to check individual bank payments throughout the year. Once we have ascertained that a member has renewed and paid up for the coming year we may not spot subsequent overpayments. The onus must rest on YOU, the members, to check your bank statements and make sure your bank is doing what you have instructed it to do.

If your bank has mistakenly paid NABO too much you should complain to the BANK not to us. It is their responsibility under the Banking Code to comply with your instructions and to rectify any financial loss that you suffer. If they ask us to repay them we will, of course, but always subject to a deduction for administration costs incurred by the Association.

We know some members feel that NABO should refund them directly for these errors but since the mistake is not of our making, we assert that the banks should rectify the situation. After all, they have more money than us.

Finally, please ensure that you have amended your standing order for 2003: the annual subscription is now £15 p.a. for individual members. And always check that your bank is not being too generous with your money!

## BRITISH WATERWAYS LICENCE CHANGES

BW has announced the outcome of the protracted consultations that took place last year as part of its craft licensing review. NABO was well represented and submitted its views to BW together with our aspirations for improvements to the licensing regime.

The conclusion of the review has resulted in a 3% rise in licence fees for 2003/4 with the new charges being introduced with effect from 1 April 2003. Earlier proposals to apply a complex index-linking formula to calculate annual licence fee increases have been put on hold pending further consultation with user groups. We did not support the idea of linking fees to the costs incurred by BW and we thought that a simple cost-of-living index would be more easily understood and appropriate for customers.

Use of the Scottish waterways is now included in the national licensing structure and the BW 12 month licence will be valid on Scottish canals. The "Gold Licence" joint licensing arrangement with the Environment Agency will apply to all BW and EA waterways in Great Britain.

Despite this extension to the scope of the licence not reaching fruition, there are other new concessions that will be of benefit to boat owners using canals and rivers south of the border. For

instance, passage through Standedge Tunnel and use of Anderton Boat Lift and the new Ribble Link will no longer be subject to a separate charge. There is also good news for river boaters - we urged BW to permit boats on the river Severn to enter Gloucester Docks for a safe haven and we thank them for responding positively. River users will now be able to stay in safe havens such as Gloucester, West Stockwith and Keadby by using their river registration and not having to pay extra for a licence. In a similar vein, BW has withdrawn the additional transit charge previously levied for use of the Selby Canal.

River users will also gain from a 50% reduction on the purchase of a canal & river licence (previously river-only certificate holders were allowed only a 10% reduction). The price of 3 month and 6 month licences has also been reduced and a flexible 30-day Waterway Explorer licence will be available to all craft irrespective of length for the first time. These are all very welcome developments for owners of craft based on rivers who stand to gain most from the new regime.

BW has also improved the licence refund structure and removed the surcharge for payment by direct debit.

*Stephen Peters*

## EMAIL BULLETIN

I can now get error messages back from the email-shot. We have the wrong address for **106** members. Please see if your old address is on our website 'hitlist'. If it is please update us.



# RIVERS



## RIVER SEVERN LOCK STOPPAGE ADVANCE NOTICE

Members may recall that BW decided to carry out works at Lincomb Lock at the end of 2002 which caused considerable grief to boaters wanting to navigate into Stourport.

This year, to their credit, BW has given us 8 months' notice of a planned stoppage involving UPPER LODGE LOCK, near Tewkesbury. Inspection by divers has revealed that this is the river lock most in need of repairs and final details and dates are still subject to confirmation but it is anticipated that the lock will close for repairs during the period 5 - 25 October 2003.

Upper Lodge Lock is situated downstream from Tewkesbury, below the confluence with the River Avon, so the closure will not affect boats cruising the 'Avon Ring'. However, anyone wishing to travel down to Gloucester and the G&S Canal will be hindered by these planned works. It is not known at this stage whether any partial re-opening will be possible or if the lock will be totally impassable for the 3-week period.

This lock is the largest one on the river, 265ft long x 30ft wide and was constructed in 1858 when the river was still fully tidal, hence the large tidal basin. The original builders were a firm of contractors Grissel & Peto who were also responsible for many famous London landmarks including theatres, clubs and Nelson's Column.

## G & S CANAL AND RIVER SEVERN OPENING TIMES FOR 2003

BW advise us that they have changed the opening hours for the G&S Canal and River Severn Navigation for 2003 with immediate effect. This comes after many comments and suggestions from users last year.

Dates	Opening Times
1 January - Thursday 27 March 2003	0800 - 1600 hrs
Friday 28 March 2003 - Thursday 22 May 2003	0800 - 1800 hrs
Friday 23 May 2003- Thursday 2 October 2003	0800 - 1900 hrs
Friday 3 October 2003 - Thursday 23 October 2003	0800 - 1800 hrs
Friday 24 October 2003 - 31 December 2003	0800 - 1600 hrs

Boat owners with craft registered on the waterways will have received notification direct from BW at Gloucester.

The changes reflect the request for a longer summer period which now runs through to early October. However, the previous 8 p.m. late closing time at the height of the summer has been abandoned due to low take-up from users. The structures remain open throughout the day, with no closures for lunch or tea and will continue to open at 8.00 a.m. throughout the year.

Comments to BW and our Rivers Secretary please.

# A BURNING ISSUE

The majority of the measures of the dreaded Boat Safety Scheme are to do with protecting ourselves from the harmful effects of combustion, either when it happens at the wrong time, in the wrong place, or in the wrong way. Recently two lives were lost due to the latter on board a boat.

A little understanding of what happens when things burn may take some of the fear out of both the safety measures and the consequences of ignoring them.

For those to whom 'Chemistry' = 'turn off' I have described what happens in terms of almost human relationships, after all we do talk of human relationships in terms of 'chemistry, so why shouldn't I get my own back? Apologies to those who regard this as insulting to their intelligence. please bear with me.

There are usually four chemical elements present when something is burning:-

- Nitrogen - this is all around, it makes up most of the air we breathe, but it plays the part of a 'wallflower' in the Element's party that we call fire.
- Oxygen - has an essential role, no burning can happen without it.
- Carbon - part of anything that may burn on board a boat.
- Hydrogen - also in all combustibles except perhaps coke.

The number of different 'relationships' these elements can enjoy would gladden the heart of any soap script writer – imagine Coronation Street if there were four sexes!

You can think of the site where burning is about to happen, intentionally or otherwise, as a clubbing venue where the elements are still arriving. Carbons and Hydrogens are already there, together in a social group (the fuel), maybe with a few oxygens. Nitrogens arrive in pairs, along with oxygens, also in pairs, as air.

Then someone starts the music, (the match or spark). Elements start moving around, leaving their groups or pairs. Carbons and hydrogens suddenly discover the attraction of oxygens and start dancing with them, the heat builds up. More and more leave the close confines of the tables for the open floor. If the doors are open the dancing spills out onto the streets. If there are more of the right elements out there the party goes on spreading.

Elements don't like to leave the party in couples, they prefer groups of three. One oxygen can satisfy two hydrogens, but it takes two oxygens to satisfy one carbon, and this is where trouble can start. Leaving that and returning to real chemistry for a moment, the two hydrogens with one oxygen are written as  $H_2O$ , familiar to most as water, or, in this case, water vapour. The satisfied carbon threesome is  $CO_2$ , carbon dioxide.

However, what happens if there isn't enough oxygen about? Hydrogen's sex drive is stronger, so carbons may have to put up with one oxygen each and leave the party hoping to pick up another loose oxygen outside. This is carbon monoxide,  $CO$ . There is one other place where the unhappy couple can find solace however, that is in oxygen-carrying part of blood, haemoglobin, which it takes over, effectively suffocating the blood's owner.

Another problem for the owners of blood comes when there are nitrogens in the fuel (e.g. polyurethane foam). Nitrogens in air like to stay in pairs, but in burning fuel they can start up some unhealthy relationships with carbons and leave the party in groups called cyanides (CN).



So, what about burning on board a boat. It can be good. Put the fuel and air into a cylinder, push the carbons, hydrogens and oxygens together so hard so they are bound to discover each other and then let the party-goers throw themselves against a piston. The heat of a well run elements' party can also cook or warm the boat.

However if there are insufficient oxygens invited, carbon monoxide can escape, which must either be burnt, i.e. take on another oxygen and form CO<sub>2</sub>, or sent up the flue. If you look at an open coke fire, you will see a dim lilac coloured flame flickering over it. Within the coals there isn't enough oxygen so carbon monoxide rises and this flame is where it is taking the extra oxygen, in fact burning in the air above the fire. Rob the fire of air from above, or bank a load of fuel on top to rob the CO of both the heat and air it needs to burn, and you will be relying totally on the effectiveness of your flue to take away this invisible and odourless killer.

It is not only solid fuel that can produce carbon monoxide. If your gas or paraffin is burning with a yellow flame, the yellow glow is microscopic 'coals' of glowing carbon trying to make the best of what's left of the oxygen after the insatiable hydrogen in the fuel has taken what it desires. If the flame is left alone, like a candle, you will see a dim corona of burning carbon monoxide around it. However if it is cooled by a pan, boiler element or fridge heat exchanger before the CO can burn, it will escape into the air you breathe.

Treat fire with respect and it will serve you well.

*Pyro*

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# FLY ON THE WALL



## at Council

I flew into another Council meeting to listen for things which may interest you.

Something which pricked up my wings was to do with those nice drinks some take while boating. It has been pointed out that the Railway and Safety Bill has clauses which affect the consumption of alcohol by boaters! Apparently you're okay while moored, but not when moving or moving after drinking. Does this mean the end of lunch time drinks at the pub for steerers? It's obviously a good ruling for professional steerers but a definite wet blanket for leisure boaters! Council thinks it unenforcable, as well as removing one of the joys for many boaters, but promise to keep their eyes on it.

Another seemingly unenforcable and impracticable proposal, by BW, is that marinas make provision to store grey water. To those that don't speak jargon, this is water with soap in it, such as washing and washing-up water. Would this mean boats needing an extra tank? BW

would probably turn grey themselves at French boats with their sea loos! (an upmarket version of bucket and chuck it)

Your Council is also against the increasing number of 'business barges' These are static office extensions on water and take up valuable waterspace, although they do of course, increase BW revenue.

Still on the subject of BW, as from 1st April, all calls to and from BW will be recorded and logged. And this is NOT an April fools joke!

Have you heard that Waterways Trust volunteer rangers could be helping at a lock blackspot somewhere near you? An idea to try to reduce problems for boaters in iffy areas. But on the subject of the Trust, rumour has it that it could be part-funded from increased licence and mooring fees. This appears not in accordance with one of the Waterways Acts. Council will raise the matter at the next meeting of the Parliamentary Waterways Group.

The old BSS chestnut was roasted again. It seems that gas fridges are not after all a health and safety issue, so there should be no panic to renew them. The structure of the BSS objectives is being revised but it appears that the fridge issue has

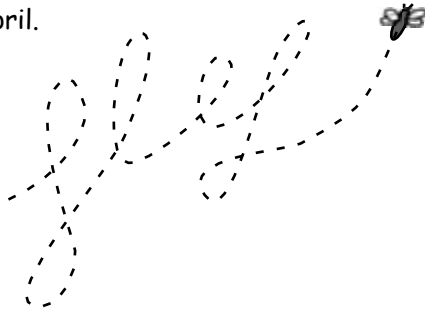
delayed the relaunch, originally scheduled for January 2004.

There was much discussion on NABO's policy on overstaying on public moorings. As it seemed that 'public moorings' could be defined as widely as anywhere on the system where there was no charge, it was finally decided to concentrate on visitor moorings. Watch this space!

On a lighter note Council are looking at the summer rally schedule. If you're in the South there's lots going on this year, especially, it seems in May. Don't forget the 'Boats on Show' event at Penton Hook and NABO's special mooring and entry offer.

Time to buzz off until the next Council meeting at the end of April.

Byeeee!



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**Only £25 for 2 nights at the prestigious Penton Hook Marina.**  
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Date: 16th/18th May  
Contact: Adrian Stott  
Tel: 07956 299966  
Email: london.sec@nabo.org.uk

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# LETTERS



## BSS v RCD v MOT

I suppose that I, like many others, have other interests outside of the waterways. Just very occasionally, there are similarities between the two hobbies etc, that are worthy of comparison.

One such example is the BSS and to my thinking, is the comparison to the MOT test, that vehicles over three years old, have to be inspected for Roadworthiness.

My interest is in Classic cars - fifties Austins, in my case.

My Austins, when it is MOT time, should be inspected to the build standards of the time, the Vehicle was built. Currently there are some variations on this; I can think of two straight away. Fixed windscreens (i.e. non-opening) for example, have to have windscreen washers fitted, even though there were never any fitted originally. The other example is that **if** seat belts are fitted, (even prior to 1967, when all manufacturers had to fit them) they have to be inspected as part of the test.

Although, I've taken great delight, in advising MOT testers, that semaphore indicators, **are** still perfectly legal, on cars that were originally fitted with them. Younger Testers have got caught many times on that one !

My point is; that by and large there should be nothing in the MOT test, that should be failed, if the original design, is not meeting contemporary MOT standards (even though in my experience, Austins, far exceed their modern counterparts in that respect, like the Handbrake !)

Our Hallmark 'Millennium' narrowboat, was built to a price, it has to be said, but we are (now) pleased with it. Hallmarks were built to the RCD, but having read through the BSS folder, I am aware of a few problems, like the Diesel return to the pump pipe on the Engine. The Sole Mitsubishi based engine on Hallmarks - and no doubt others, was a Spanish marinisation, so consequently had a CE mark on it. I deduced that as this Engine is effectively an EU product, that it should be worthy enough for an CE mark(?)

The boat itself has been built to an RCD specification and I have had no real problems to date.

This year, however is her first BSS inspection. Apart from the engine, the other problem I might have is, that there is no gas pressure test point, right at the end of the supply pipe (in our case the cooker) Although somewhere in the Boat Manual (also RCD compliant) is says that the oven

jet in the cooker, can be removed and a tester put in there (Can anyone advise if that **is** the case ?)

Personally, I take the view, the fewer fittings on the Gas supply pipe, the better, after all, every compression joint could potentially leak ! Yet it is not mandatory to have LPG alarms fitted. To be honest, I have not fitted one. Although I have fitted those orange CO detectors, only to find that they went dark with **everything** turned off, and no one aboard ! This turned out to be a neighbouring boat running its engine, for three hours in a marina, whilst I was earning the mooring fees ! I did however, have the gas appliances checked over just in case.

You can probably tell, that I am a little anxious about the BSS, but I will feel mighty miffed if the boat fails on something that was built to RCD specification.

The BSS will be due in August, so I will let you know what happens; That's assuming I'm not trying to sort out any points of failure !

I will be getting it inspected early, as this is my first experience with BSS. We're also going to the National Waterways Festival at Beale Park, Pangbourne on the Thames. I do not want to have any more hassle than is necessary !

I thought that boating was supposed to be relaxing !!!

Simon G Angel  
nb CLARA

## More on BSS

It was interesting to read Stephen Peters's article on page 6 of the current NABO NEWS especially if the heading "The beginning of the end" should turn out to be true. It occurs to me however that we owners of older boats could find the value of our boats depressed and the fees for the BSC inspections increased if newer boats were exempt! If council's opinion is that the BSS authorities cannot insist on CE marked boats being brought up to the more stringent BSC requirements, then should we not press for the BSS to be identical to the RCD, as presumably all boats with a current BSC more than meet the rules of the RCD and would not need to be altered to meet them? In fact failure of the BSS authorities to bring their requirements into line with the RCD could surely be seen as an infringement of our human rights!

Stephen Peters replies:

We couldn't have expressed it better ourselves. NABO has for a very long time expressed its view that the BSS must be brought in line with the RCD to avoid the very problems that Mr Colquhoun has identified. Maybe in time common sense will prevail and the BSS authorities will realise that they are "swimming against the current". If the essential requirements of the RCD are acceptable for new CE-marked boats, then the same criteria should apply to all boats.

Incidentally, we have news from a member with a four year old CE marked steel motor cruiser which has

successfully obtained its BSC without any problems.

We would like to hear from any other members with CE craft requiring a BSC.

Have you had any problems or been faced with having to modify your boat before a certificate could be issued? Any such work should not be necessary providing the boat has been maintained correctly.

### 'BW 4 Alls'

I assume that all NABO members have, like us, received BWs publication detailing new licence costs. One assumes that BW's plan to increase licences to reflect their increased spending means that licence increases can (if costs go down) be decreases in future — but I won't hold my breath for that!

Joking apart, this idea that we boaters must pay towards BWs increased spending does worry me. Most people using BWs facilities are not asked to pay anything towards them and certainly no other group using BWs facilities gets to pay towards them using a BW costs index as we do. Yet the BW cost index is based on all their expenses — which includes a good proportion of bits which benefit boaters not one jot (and in the case of eco—improvements actually make our boating more difficult and dangerous). This said BW have decided that we boaters must pay more for our licenses if they decide to spend more money on

**Note** – Views expressed in readers' letters are not to be taken as those of NABO as a whole

eco—bits demanded by that lobby, on new toilets and other facilities for fishermen, and on towpath and other improvements which really benefit walkers and cyclists — not to mention any increased cost incurred from all BWs other business interests in marinas, pubs and all the rest — many of which offer no benefit to most boaters. So the majority of users of BW pay nothing for their bits - but under the new rules us boaters must pay a proportion of any extra spending for them!

With this in mind maybe some canalside pub should be renamed The BW 4 Alls as in... The eco—lobby **pays novt but demands All. Fisherman pay hardly anything at All. Walkers and cyclists pay bugger—All. Only Boaters must pay toverds BWs excessive spending for All.**

David Cragg

### Written down in black and white

Re: The question from "Puzzled" (issue 1/03) re grey water

The Technical Committee advises that "grey water" is the term applied to all waste water (except bilge water) arising on board a boat which has not passed through the human body before disposal. e.g. sink waste.

However, if water that has passed through the body is grey, you should consult a Doctor!

The reason why NABO is always listening out for any proposals that might require grey water to be contained on board in holding tanks is because this would require expensive

modifications and plumbing; and, unlike toilet waste, the quantity of sink and washbasin waste can be considerable and would be difficult or inconvenient to retain on board without frequent (expensive) pump-outs.

*Stephen Peters*

I think 'Puzzled' might have heard rumours about grey water limitations being imposed on certain stretches of water, e.g. certain rivers or enclosed bodies of water, perhaps even marinas. Any truth in these? Ed.

### **Diesel Engine Lubrication**

I thought the article by Tony Brooks concerning the lubrication requirements of boat diesel engines (7/02) was most enlightening - and in line with my own views.

My boat has a 1970s Perkins 4.236 diesel engine for which the manufacturers originally recommended engine oil conforming to API-CC specification.

I searched far and wide to locate a suitable engine oil. Most modern oils exceed the specification and are simply "too good" for my old engine.

Eventually, I found a small car spares shop selling "Motaquip" engine oil in cans identifying the required performance standard. I bought 3 cans and as I left the shop the assistant questioned me with "You are not intending to use this oil in your car, are you?". He had seen my Volvo

turbo diesel parked outside. I assured him I had no intention of putting it in my car engine!

### **Mooring on the K&A**

Page 14 of the magazine (Feb 02) covered a bone of contention with me - the extreme lack of mooring facilities along the K&A and the difficulty which boaters face when trying to leap impossible lengths to reach the towpath! We carry an extra long gangplank for the K&A, but it does not help my husband, now in his 60s, initially to reach the bank safely, without risk of breaking a leg or falling down the bank. Many visitors cruising the K&A are very put off by this feature of sloping banks and much need. I have asked and asked BW, during the renovations, to help in this respect. Here on the K&A, we have an extremely good relationship with BW, but their hands have been tied on this subject, I believe, by outside influences. As is mentioned also in the magazine, the majority of regular boaters are on the wrong side of 60, which is bad for extreme physical prowess (and also for the rising costs of boating for pensioners). Sadly, it seems that boaters are expected all to crowd together on a short length of designated mooring. One of the joys of boating is the ability, normally, to moor up out of sight and sound of the nearest boat to enjoy the peace and tranquility of the countryside.

Alan Padwick

## **Bother on the Basingstoke**

Our first visiting boat to the Basingstoke this year was stoned as it waited for admission to Lock One at Woodham. The owner chased after the culprits, who called the police and claimed a man was threatening them. Luckily a witness had seen the whole incident, and the police acted within reason.

CCTV is now to be installed at Lock One. Contact with Surrey Police has been made, and the question asked, 'What do we do if kids throw stones at our boats?' The answer; "such attacks are attempted criminal damage. Dial 999. Don't mess about with any other numbers. State that a crime is in progress, and give the OS map reference, and police will immediately attend and log the incident".

To this end we have prepared a list of OS references for every access point to the Basingstoke for use of visitors. This can be requested by email.

We are NOT going to let these jobs get the better of us, nor are we going to allow them to put off visiting boats. Such incidences are rare, but they must NEVER be ignored.

On another theme, jobs repeatedly throw rubbish and items such as wheelie bins, pallets and cones into the canal at Ash Wharf, despite the presence of CCTV.

The canal management is delivering letters to canalside commercial properties reminding them of their responsibility to make such items

secure if left where they can be easily accessed by the public. They are also told to remove their property from our canal. If they fail to do so, and the BCA have to do it for them, they will be charged for the service at normal dredger crew rates.

That should get some attention!

We will report progress.

Tony and JaX Haynes  
nb Dreamcatcher

## **Renting out your house**

Are there any readers who might be prepared to share their experiences of renting their house out as furnished accommodation while they are afloat? It must be a good money spinner and give peace of mind that your property is seen to be occupied, but what are the pitfalls and how do you go about it?

With boating getting ever more expensive, an article on this in NABO News might be just the sort of constructive and positive contribution the Editor keeps asking for.

## **Tailpiece**

‘Newtwork Northeast’

It has been reported that safety work on the railway bridge over the Aire and Calder Navigation in Goole has been postponed a year for environmental reasons.

The work, due to close this commercial waterway this March, apparently could not be done without disturbing the habitat of a colony of a species of newt.

One hopes this has not prejudiced the safety of the species *homo sapiens*.

Note – Views expressed in readers' letters are not to be taken as those of NABO as a whole

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# **BW Supplementary consultation on boats without permanent moorings**

This paper results from analysis of feedback from the public during the licence review period between May and November 2002. It was informed by helpful meetings with user groups and follows careful consideration of all relevant issues by a team of BW managers including local operational managers.

The problems that give rise to the need for the consultation are:

boats staying for extended periods at locations designated as visitor or temporary moorings or as unsuitable for mooring

a sense of injustice amongst many boaters who perceive that, through their compliance with the legal requirement to have a permanent, home mooring, they are 'subsidising' some who 'find ways around' this requirement.

We have concluded that a set of clear guidelines – a Moorings Code – which will have authority through our licence contract terms, offers the best prospect of overcoming these problems. The case outlined in the paper hinges on Section 17.3 (c) of the British Waterways Act 1995, which contains three 'limbs':

1. The boat is being used bona fide for navigation throughout the period of the licence
2. The boat must not stay in the same place for more than 14 days
3. That it is the responsibility of the licence holder to satisfy British Waterways regarding compliance with these conditions.

Ultimately it will be for the courts to interpret the relevant words in the 1995 Act, but in the meantime, clear benchmark guidance is necessary for waterway management. We have therefore drafted a Moorings Code that we propose should define the standards that our staff will apply and that boaters should follow.

We hope we have risen to the challenge of defining rules which are simple and clear, and which describe the combination of cruising frequency and distance which are consistent with what the parliamentary draughtsmen had in mind when writing the statute. We believe that they intended 'bona fide for navigation' to imply some sense of progressive travel around the network. This does not rule out 'meandering' slowly, and does not carry a requirement to cover all 2000 miles over any period. It does however rule out repetitive 'to-ing' and 'fro-ing' within the same geographic area.

We have drafted the Code for continuous cruising to apply to any boat which is cruising away from its home mooring for any period of more than 42 days. Without this, an obvious loophole exists for people to rent a home mooring in an area of the country where moorings are less expensive, but to spend most of their time in an area where moorings are more expensive.

## **Consultation process and timetable**

It has taken us longer than we hoped to prepare this report. We need to publish the licence terms and conditions that reflect the other changes resulting from the licence review, so for the sake of completeness and to be clear about our intentions, we propose publishing the proposed Moorings Code as part of the conditions. It will however have 'trial' status, pending both final feedback from users who wish to comment and practical experience from implementation on the waterways. We will review the feedback and experience during autumn 2003, and confirm or amend the Code with effect from April 2004. We will distribute the attached feedback questionnaire through the same channels that we used for the main licence review, and send it to each licence holder who is recorded on the licensing system as having no home mooring.

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the previous discussions on this subject.

## **DRAFT MOORINGS CODE**

Just as highways need parking regulations to ensure orderly use of scarce road space, some rules about mooring on the waterways are necessary. Problems of congestion, undue strain on local facilities and fairness to other boaters can result when individual boats stay for long periods on temporary moorings without our consent.

We aim to avoid unnecessarily bureaucratic regulations, and given the much slower pace of life on the waterways, restrictions are usually measured in days rather than hours.

Our powers to regulate moorings lie in the British Waterways Act, 1995 which requires that a boat must have a permanent, home mooring unless it is being used for navigation throughout the period of its licence.

The guidelines do not apply when your boat is on its home mooring.

### **Standards for all boats**

Reference to “moor” and “mooring” refers to the place where you moor overnight.

You may moor at the same place for no more than 14 days in any 42 day period. You will be deemed to have moved to a different place if you have travelled at least ten lock miles in any direction. (A lock mile is the number of miles cruised plus the number of locks negotiated over a given stretch.). In other words, you must always be 10 lock miles away from where you were 15 days ago.

You must obey local signs and regulations restricting mooring at particular locations. These take precedence over the entitlement mentioned in 1(a) above.

You should advise our licensing department if you change your home mooring. A winter mooring is also a home mooring for the period you occupy it.

### **Additional standards for boats without a home mooring or cruising for extended periods away from a home mooring**

You must follow these standards if you leave your home mooring for any continuous period of 42 days or more

You may moor at the same place for up to 14 days in any 42 day period. You will be deemed to have moved to a different place if you have travelled at least ten lock miles in any direction. (A lock mile is the number of miles cruised plus the number of locks negotiated over a given stretch.), **and**

You must also travel:

- at least 20 (different) lock miles every 15 days (ie you can't count the same stretch more than once), **and**
- at least 40 (different) lock miles every 30 days, **and**
- at least 120 (different) lock miles every 3 months

### **Evidence of cruising**

It is the boat licence holder's responsibility to satisfy British Waterways that the boat has moved in line with these rules. To help you do this, we can supply a cruising diary free of charge. Alternatively you may like to keep your own diary. For added confidence, our local staff will endorse diary entries on request. We will only ask you for evidence if we have reason to believe that your boat may not be moving in accordance with the Code.

### **Non-compliance and dispute procedure**

This Code sets out the standards that we believe need to be followed to comply with s.17 of the British Waterways Act 1995 and the Licence Conditions. We will apply the Code in a pragmatic way and recongise that sometimes special circumstances can occur when it is reasonable to moor for longer periods. These may include illness, mechanical breakdown or waterway stoppages. If any of these circumstances arise, please ensure local BW staff are aware of your difficulties.

It will nevertheless be necessary to take steps where there is unreasonable and persistent failure to comply with the Code. Even then it will be our preference to resolve problems without recourse to legal action.



As a first step we will contact you to establish the relevant facts and check that you understand this Mooring Code. We may ask you for evidence of your recent cruising patterns. Our aim at this stage is to do all we can to help you to comply with the rules. This might include helping you to arrange an available home mooring.

If, after a period of at least 28 days, we continue to have reason to believe that the boat is not moving in accordance with the Code, we will, as a second step, issue a formal warning. This will specify a period during which you must demonstrate to us that you are complying with the Code. This will be between 30 days and 3 months depending on the circumstances. The main method of demonstrating compliance is the maintenance of a cruising diary.

If you believe we have issued the warning unfairly, you will be able to appeal. To help with this, we intend to establish a special appeal panel that will include experts drawn from waterway user groups

and other interested parties. In the meantime, you should follow our normal complaints procedure. This Code will be updated with the details as soon as they are confirmed.

As a final step, if failure to comply continues we may exercise our powers under s.17(5) of the British Waterways Act 1995 to revoke your licence.

### Finding a home mooring

You may find it difficult to follow the rules because you are unable to secure a home mooring in the area where you wish to base your boat. While we are working hard to increase long term mooring provision, this is often beyond our control. Neither we nor private sector mooring operators can guarantee to meet demand for moorings everywhere, and you may need to consider altering your cruising patterns or accept a permanent mooring in a different region in order to comply with the rules. Our duties do not include those of a housing authority.

The area shaded grey is one place in relation to the point marked A. A new place is created each time you move to a different mooring

**Example 1** Boat moors at Point A for days 1 – 14. It then moors at Point B for days 15 – 28 and at point D for days 29 – 42. On day 43 the boat returns to Point A. This is allowed, because it has only moored at point A for a total of 14 days in the preceding 42 day period (day 1 is 43 days ago).

**Example 2** Boat moors at Point A for days 1 – 14, at Point B for days 15 – 28 and at point A again for days 29 – 42. This is **not** allowed, as the boat has now moored for a total of 28 days at Point A in a 42 day period

**Example 3.** The boater has a mooring in the Marina. The licence holder likes to spend the week-end at point B, travelling to it on Saturday morning, and returning to the marina on Sunday evening. The boat makes this return trip every weekend for 6 weeks. This is allowed because this will add up to only 12 days in the 42 day period.

**Example 4** The Boater likes to visit point B for long week-ends, cruising up on a Friday and returning on the following Sunday. Over a 6 week period the boat does this trip 4 times. This is allowed as this will add up to 12 days over a 42 day period.

# CONSULTATION ON MOORINGS GUIDELINES

## FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please tick boxes to summarise your view

	Agree strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree strongly	No view
I understand the need for mooring guidelines					
The proposed general rule for all boaters is reasonable					
The proposed general rule for all boaters is easy to understand					
The proposed additional rules for boats without a home mooring or cruising for extended periods away from the home mooring are reasonable					
These proposed additional rules are easy to understand					
The suggested method for compiling evidence of cruising is reasonable					
The proposed non-compliance and dispute procedure is reasonable					
I would support the proposed introduction of a panel of experts to assist in resolving disputes					

2. Any other views or comments?

3. I am responding in the following capacity:

- As a private boater with a home mooring
- As a private boater with no home mooring
- As a representative of a boating user group
- Other (please indicate)

Thank you for your help. Please return this form to Helen Webb, British Waterways, Willow Grange, Church Road, Watford, WD17 4QA by 31/10/ 03