



# NABO News

The Magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners  
Issue 6—October 2011



**STEERING GROUP LATEST**  
Developments? .....or not?

**THE NEW CHARITY**  
A personal view

**COUNCIL NOMINATIONS**  
It's your NABO, get involved!

**PHYSICS FOR STOVIES**  
How to halve your coal bill

ISSN 2047-2110

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# NABO News

The magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners

**Issue 6 October 2011**

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## Contributions

Articles, letters, cartoons and photos are most welcome. Images and photos in JPEG format please.

Contributions to [nabonews@nabo.org.uk](mailto:nabonews@nabo.org.uk)

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## Next NABO News Copy Date

Please email or post your contributions by October 25th

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## Front Cover Photo Competition

Win yourself a year's free membership by sending us an image for the front cover of the new NABO News! In the first instance please send a low resolution JPEG by email. The photo should ideally be portrait format with the main action in the centre so that we can print text at the top and bottom, with a width of at least 1800 pixels. This month's cover photo is Stone Boatyard in late summer sunshine, taken by Val Fletcher.

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## Council Meetings and AGM 2011

### Saturday October 15th

AGM **Saturday November 12th** Venue: Staffordshire Boat Club, Off Maple Wood, Wildwood, Stafford, ST17 4SG. Details can be found on the NABO website [www.nabo.org.uk](http://www.nabo.org.uk). New Council meet **Saturday November 26th** The Council meetings are at the Waggon and Horses, Church St., Oldbury, West Midlands B69 3AD. Remember that members are welcome to attend meetings – just let the Secretary or Chairman know in advance, contact details opposite.

You may have noticed that NABO News now has an ISSN number. This means that a copy of all future issues will be held by the British Library and be available to researchers.

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Whilst every care is taken to ensure that the contents of this 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.

# Help!!

**Peter Fellows** makes an appeal for volunteers and outlines a new style event for NABO

**O**f the approximately 35,000 licence holders on the inland waterways, we all know from our own experience that the vast majority of boat owners only take their boats out for short periods, perhaps the occasional weekend during the summer and an annual holiday afloat. With the other pressures of life, some may not move their boat from one year to the next. If you ask these boaters what are their main concerns, you are likely to receive replies about the costs of fuel and licence fees, lack of visitor moorings and the state of the towpath, among others. As NABO members you may share these, but you have already demonstrated a deeper concern about the waterways by supporting the association.

As you know, there are major changes afoot with the New Waterways Charity being set up, and - whatever happens in the run-up to next April and thereafter - NABO will still have an important role to play. NABO is an association run by volunteers. To continue having such a positive effect for both boaters and the future direction of the waterways, its council needs additional support from the association's members.

This is not only for routine week-to-week work, but also for special projects it would like to do, and to keep the association open to new ideas, ready to respond to and influence the changes that are taking place. For this to happen, NABO needs you!!

There is perhaps a perception that you need to be an 'expert' on the waterways or be heavily involved in 'waterway politics' to make a contribution to NABO. Or if you raise your head above the gunwale and

volunteer for something, you will be required to spend hours each week on association business. Neither is true. The help that NABO needs can range from a short one-off piece of work to an ongoing contribution of however many hours a year you think you can spare.

While it is understandable that NABO's Council tends to examine national policy and political issues, it is also aware that many local issues never get onto the agenda. The Council needs you to let them know what the issues are in your area. You as members offer a huge (and as yet mostly unused) potential to increase NABO's knowledge and influence at this level. Lots of local knowledge is also invaluable as the council tries to get to grips with recommendations for national policies.

NABO also needs people with a wide range of backgrounds, experience and skills. For example do you have any of the following:

- Technical understanding of boat electrics or engines
- Computing or Internet skills.
- Publicity, media or public relations skills
- Experience of setting up an exhibition
- Negotiating skills
- Writing or editing skills

In the box on the right, I have listed, in alphabetical order, some of the jobs that the association currently needs help with. If you are able to spend a few hours (or more if you want to) giving support either at home or aboard your boat in the evening, or going out to meet like-minded people at local meetings, please get in touch with NABO News and I will forward your offer to council members.



### New style AGM

The importance of the upcoming changes to the waterways will also make this year a first for NABO: instead of having a traditional AGM, for the first time we will hold a Members' Roadshow in November to raise issues and concerns that are important to you and to discuss the imminent changes that will affect all boaters. Of course, a small part of the meeting will be set aside to elect the Council (it is a legal requirement apart from anything else), but the aim this year is to give the majority of the meeting over to you the members.

NABO would like this to be a major event - not only to air your views and concerns, but also to meet fellow boaters and get the latest information on what is actually going on and how it will affect you in years to come. Although NABO council can't predict the issues you will

raise at the Members' Roadshow, it is likely that these will inform the broad agenda for NABO's work over the coming year. So come along and have your views listened to.

If you haven't attended NABO's annual get-together before, please make this the first. If you are a regular, we hope you will be pleasantly surprised by the new style of the event. Don't forget to encourage your NABO boating friends to come along and make the NABO AGM an event to remember.

- Advertising income
- Attending and reporting on local user group meetings
- Creating a new membership database
- Editing and updating existing publications
- IT and editorial support for the NABO website
- Local area representatives
- Membership interface - following up members with the NABO administrator
- Minutes secretary
- Publicity and press releases
- Reading and commenting on written information we receive from navigation and other authorities
- Recruitment of new members
- Roadshow support and organisation
- Running events
- Secretarial support
- Support on the NABO stand at rallies, boat shows and festivals
- Technical responses to members' enquiries
- Writing articles for NABO News

## Hilary speaks – The Waterways Ombudsman's annual report

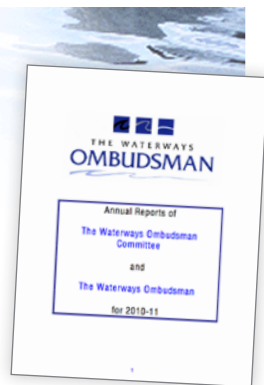
**H**ilary Bainbridge, the Waterways Ombudsman can deal with complaints about BW that are referred by dissatisfied complainants, after completion of British Waterways' own complaints procedure. In the last year the Ombudsman received twenty-two new complaints, compared to twenty-three the previous year.

This is about 10% of complaints that are considered under BW's internal procedure, which is higher than the previous year. Fifteen of the twenty-one completed investigations related to boating, and of those eleven related to moorings in some way. The other six completed investigations related to property matters. As in previous years, BW agreed to act on all of the Ombudsman's formal recommendations, as well as settling

### THE WATERWAYS OMBUDSMAN

some other cases informally following her intervention. Summaries of all the completed cases can be found in the annual report.

The Government wishes to see a full Ombudsman scheme for the new charity and a significant part of the Ombudsman's effort in the last year has been dealing with the implications of plans for changes in the waterways' management in 2012. The aim is to ensure that future arrangements offer similar access to an independent Ombudsman, and that the transition from old to new arrangements is as seamless as possible.



The Annual Reports for 2010-11 are now available at [www.waterways-ombudsman.org](http://www.waterways-ombudsman.org), by e-mail [enquiries@waterways-ombudsman.org](mailto:enquiries@waterways-ombudsman.org), hard copies by telephone 01347 879075 or write to PO Box 35, York, YO60 6WW.

# A call to action

In a fast changing world, **David Fletcher** considers the many issues confronting our members and other users of the waterways.

**V**al and I took ourselves away on a cruise this summer, and very pleasant it was too. We were mainly on the Trent and Mersey and unlike some other areas there appeared to be plenty of water with the levels up to the weirs everywhere. We didn't touch bottom at any time whilst moving, found good moorings whenever we wanted in spite of all the holiday and hire traffic, and had no trouble with debris around the propeller. All the locks worked well, there were only a handful of unlicensed boats, and there was no Defra rash to be seen. Neither were there any grass cutters or BW staff or boat checkers. Maybe they were on holiday too? Only one boater shouted at me, but he was an idiot anyway so it doesn't count. My only grouse from the cruise was amount offside vegetation that threatens to overtake the canal in many places.

So not all bad out there and it highlights for me the difficulty in setting priorities when the money is tight. Clearly telling the powers what our priorities are is important. Will you be going to user group meetings in your area this autumn? These issues are not lost on the EA either. They are trying to find a way to maintain services with an element of uncertainty about their budget, and yet to maintain the stance that they can join the NWC in a few years. Obviously if the condition of the structures deteriorates, then the hurdle to jump just gets higher and higher. But who will pay? EA boat registrations fees are set to increase and I welcome the fact that EA are talking about a three year plan, something BW have never done. Given there will be some pain, it is reasonable that users can plan looking forward. There is a politically driven desire to have

boaters pay in full for the services they receive on all waterways. The fact is that there are many arguments about the financial value of the drainage and amenity value of the assets and whether these should be included in the boater's costs. If an aggressive view is taken on boaters needs, the cost is far more than boaters can pay without collapsing the demand. In many areas of costs, this feels to me like a transition from the British Airways full service to a no frills Ryanair where anything extra costs money. It's a sign of the times. NABO's view is that the boating business is discretionary and fragile, and that major licence or registration fee increases will slump the business even more and risk pushing the activity of boating to the better off.

## **The NWC rumbles on**

The development of the NWC continues. The Public Bodies Bill is progressing in Parliament and Defra have launched a short consultation on the second piece of legislation called the Transfer Order which is specific to BW. This has to go to Parliament before Christmas. Defra together with the Interim Trustees have also reported on the Spring consultation for the Charity and this document throws some light on the future.

One clear intention is that private boaters will be predominantly represented on Council though election by the constituency of licence holders. NABO specifically asked for this in our response to the consultation. There are many decisions still to take in the later part of the year, not least on constitution, local boards and the level of funding from Defra. There are some who are concerned over

the degree of haste over all this, and I acknowledge the view. But I think that there is nothing like a good crisis to get things done. A glimpse this month of EA trying to manage their budgets in the current financial climate convinced me that this is no way forward for BW. We have to get BW away from Westminster for ever. I have met with most of the new interim Trustees, and I was impressed. They are fully aware of the funding issues, and can be expected to make a good assessment of the needs of the Charity.

### **The new guidance and NABO**

Following the Bristol Court case and the user groups legal meeting with BW in June, we undertook to make comments on the current mooring guidelines for continuous cruisers. We understand from BW people that they like many of our suggestions, aimed at simplification rather than radical change. Work will continue with them on these issues, and presumably this will lead to a formal consultation in due course. The consultation on licence terms and conditions for 2011–12 has not yet been closed by BW, yet the new conditions apply from August. You should read about the changes on the BW web site. I am still unhappy with some aspects of this, but we need to see the close out before we respond.

### **Local Mooring Strategies Stalled?**

Local mooring strategies remain a conundrum. The K&A team have not met through the summer and the process is stalled at the moment. I would still like to see the discussions reach a local consensus on place and movement for all boats there, without a home mooring. The irony is that there is general agreement that enforcement is needed to get things moving, and break the literal logjam. So why is it not happening? The Lee I think is different. Boaters appear this summer to be responding to a voluntary code of practice, which I am told has eased some of the mooring issues with a good degree of co-

operation. BW have recently closed out the mooring consultation, and concluded not to go ahead with the plan originally proposed. The details of the revised approach are not clear but they do include roving mooring permits. This is old ground for us; being one of the main reasons NABO spent large amounts of money in 2009 on legal advice from our senior legal counsel. Yes of course we use QCs, as well as BW. In a meeting in 2010 BW's Head of Boating, the Legal Director and the Sales and Marketing Director assured us that RMPs were not on the agenda. We did not believe them at the time, and so it has proved to be. Why would the vast majority of boaters who pay their way and bona fide keep moving, agree to BW fudging the 1995 Act licence requirements because it is too much trouble to enforce, and all for a handful of silver? This is back to a Ryanair mentality for selling services.

### **Residential Mooring**

The issue of residential moorings got a boost recently from the Housing minister. He has agreed that local councils will get a tax benefit from new residential moorings. This has many implications, the simplest being that marinas have another argument to use when asking for planning permission. Could this seriously improve matters on the K&A and River Lee where there are new marinas under-utilised? What will be the cost of such a mooring and will those liveaboards currently on the towpath want to take up a marina lifestyle? Will those currently on a leisure mooring welcome the opportunity, benefits and additional costs of a residential mooring?

There will be many views out there so let us not get too carried away. This is good but it will only have a marginal effect and it will take time. For boaters there is also the matter of value for money and what are the alternatives including perhaps RMPs. The cost of these has to be pitched at more than the price of

a leisure mooring, or boaters will abandon marinas and BW's moorings to occupy the towpath. At this level it will hardly be attractive to those who historically have shown no inclination to even buy a winter mooring.

We have some way to go on this one, but my vote is for simple enforcement and see where it gets us. Having a good price structure and new sorts of licences are meaningless if they can be avoided by just mooring on the tow path and nothing is said. EA are going at it hammer and tongs on the Thames with their new powers and quite rightly so. It tackles the problems head on.

### The Future of NABO

We are fast approaching the end of the NABO year and your Council have spent some time thinking about the future. NABO grew over 21 years from a specific need in the 1990's. What is the need for the next 21 years? Will the Charity change all this or is it business as usual? It is far too early to know and we have to plan for succession and the immediate future. There is plenty to do. Please read Peter's editorial and come forward to do what you can to help. It is important that we get new blood, new energy and new ideas into the association's leadership. *Have a good autumn.*

## Notes from Council

**Pseudonym** returns with observations on the latest Council meeting

Council, 3rd September

**W**e started off well.... The Secretary left before the meeting started. He shouldn't have come at all as he was ill, but he felt he had to deliver some important paperwork. We then found we were working from two different sets of minutes. Some of us had last years! Once that was sorted we were able to crack on!

Who would stand for next year's Council didn't take long; Sue and Howard are leaving due to other commitments but will retain an interest. Everyone else plans to stay and new Council members are being sought. Council would love you to volunteer: it's interesting and needn't take up a lot of time.

John has spent a long time working on our response to the moorings consultation and BW has accepted our recommendations.

We had an update on the K&A, which seems to have suffered from a complete lack of progress since Sally Ash passed this on to another BW staff member who has since become ill. The next meeting at Chippenham will have an emphasis on enforce-

ment. Now the mooring problem has been looked at, it seems that a lot of the boaters are not liveaboards, just boaters who don't want or can't get moorings.

The Lee & Stort has gone back to the drawing board, the consensus is that it will be the Olympic Security that will control the area not BW, at least until after the Olympics—so we wait.

Roving mooring permits were described variously as *ultra vires*, blackmail and a way of BW trying to buy itself out of a problem. Simon told of his problems trying to get planning permission for residential boats: eight successes in 20 years.

There has been a meeting with some of the NWC trustees and the user groups. David told us that he came away feeling upbeat as the trustees seemed knowledgeable and aware. They will not accept the deal if the figures don't stack up.

The format for the AGM was discussed and will be different this year, which should have something of interest for all our members.

A swift meeting but everything on the agenda was covered.



# A plea from your treasurer

**Stephen Peters** asks for your help with payment of membership fees

It has been many years since NABO changed its main bank account to Barclays, after banking initially with Girobank, which subsequently became Alliance & Leicester. The service we received became progressively worse, hence our move to Barclays which has proved successful.

However, many of our established members still pay their annual subscriptions by Standing Order to our original bank account, which is now administered by Santander, and the service has deteriorated still further. This latest take-over is causing us considerable grief because they are no longer able (or willing?) to show members' membership references against items on the bank statements. If you have a popular name, this means that Melanie, our paid Administrator, has difficulty in establishing whether or not you have renewed your subs.

It would help her (and reduce our costs) if you could change your Standing Orders so that the funds go into our Barclays account. If we can persuade everyone to migrate their

payments we could close our old account and cut out the time wasted in checking who has paid. If you have email could you contact Melanie on [admin@nabo.org.uk](mailto:admin@nabo.org.uk) and she will arrange to let you have the new standing order details .... and be eternally grateful.

People wishing to join NABO for the first time can now carry out the entire transaction via our website [www.nabo.org.uk](http://www.nabo.org.uk), where payment by credit card, debit card and Pay Pal are available. In time, existing members will be able to renew their subscriptions using the same easy method.

Our membership recruitment bonus scheme is still operating – recommend a new member and we will pay you £5. Recommend 3 new members and you will receive £15 which means your existing membership will be free for the year. Please make sure you tell boaters about NABO and how we work tirelessly for the benefit of everyone afloat on the canals and rivers. We can let you have a stock of membership application forms if you ask. Many thanks

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## BW Annual Meeting

The 2011 meeting will take place on Thursday 13th October and include a review of the year as well as focusing on BW's transition to charitable status. Transition Trustees will share their views and experiences of the transition process, followed by a series of presentations from BW specialists and guest speakers on key aspects important to the success of the new charity. Each presentation will be followed by a question and answer session.

Information about BW's activities in the last year is documented in the 2010/11 Annual Report & Accounts.

The annual meeting is open to all members of the general public and it is a great opportunity to ask questions directly of the board. Last year a number of boaters tabled hard questions of the board. If you wish to attend you should email BW now as places will be limited. The meeting is in Birmingham and a number of moorings are available at the venue.

To download last year's report [www.britishwaterways.co.uk/annualreport](http://www.britishwaterways.co.uk/annualreport) To request a hard copy email [enquiries.hq@britishwaterways.co.uk](mailto:enquiries.hq@britishwaterways.co.uk)

# Guidance for boaters without a permanent home mooring

**John Slee** explains how NABO has helped to formulate the new guidelines.

The new guidance is published here;

[www.britishwaterways.co.uk/  
license-it/boating-essentials/  
mooring-information](http://www.britishwaterways.co.uk/license-it/boating-essentials/mooring-information)

**B**ritish Waterways responded to the Bristol court decision in their favour by amending the 'Mooring Guidance for Continuous Cruisers'. Stakeholder organisations, including NABO, were invited to a meeting to discuss the changes on 23rd June 2011. Geoffrey Rogerson and I attended on NABO's behalf. At the end of the meeting we asked for the opportunity to submit written comments and BW's Head of Boating, Sally Ash, agreed - setting a deadline of 31st July. It would appear that NABO was the only group to take up the opportunity. BW subsequently had an internal meeting at which, gratifyingly, they accepted most of our suggestions for modifications.

Many of our suggested amendments were aimed at making the notes more easily understood, by simplification and confining the use of legal terminology to the footnotes. Because of the different connotations of the term 'Continuous

Cruisers' and the fact that the emphasis is not exclusively about moorings, we suggested that the title should be 'Guidance for boaters without a permanent home mooring'. We pointed out that the 'stretch of canal' referred to in the Bristol county court judgement was 'the 10 mile stretch between Bath and Bradford Upon Avon', not any 10 mile stretch. We suggested that when referring to moving after 14 days, A, B, C should replace X, Y, Z on the basis that it implies continuation. We also included changes to indicate that the requirement for bona fide navigation should be not only proven by the boater but also intended. We added 'impassable ice' as a reason for not moving on.

We thank BW for the opportunity to be part of this process and believe that the revised guidelines should be published for consultation; we have suggested that this should be done when the 2012 licence fees consultation takes place.

**Moored boats**

Photo: Val Fletcher



# A Volunteer's Life

Louis Jankel enjoys the summer at Thames locks

**D**efra has taken up the government's mantra of the Big Society in the guise of volunteers and the EA asked for volunteers to undertake a number of jobs. Having put my name forward for lock keeping I was given a couple of very worthwhile days of training, of which part was jumping into a swimming pool with an automatically inflating life belt!

My first day as a volunteer was at Godstow Lock at which I was soon informed that I had passed the hygiene test—certainly three did not—too much time between the swimming pool test obviously! The aim is to be 'signed off' by the lock keeper to establish that you are competent to run the lock on your own, if only for the lunch hour. I have not been back to Godstow and that is the only lock I have worked where I am NOT

signed off. Sarah, the lock keeper is no fool!

I have worked at eleven other locks where the desperate EA navigation has deemed me safe to be signed off. Although having seen better days, I managed to work a number of days at three beam locks. If you see a flabby old tatty lockie puffing while struggling with a beam it might well be me - take pity and help please!

I can say it has been immense fun. I have enjoyed every single hour I have worked. The lock staff have been helpful and kindness itself. The boaters, with one disgraceful exception, have been fun and delightful. I estimate I have helped over 2,000 boats through locks so far this year and thank you to you all save the 'pig' (a gin palace). I feel a book coming on!



You never know what you will share a Thames lock with

# Don't hold your breath!

**Andrew Colyer** reports on the (lack of) developments at the K&A Steering Group.

**A**s I sit and write this, I must admit I am feeling rather despondent! I do not normally feel like this, but the K&A Steering Group, and in particular BW's attitude, has left me feeling rather glum!

Looking back in my diary as the summer is nearing a close, it was a shock when I realised that so many months have passed since the steering group last met in May! We knew that there was going to be a reasonable delay as BW's lead officer was, and still is, unwell. What has amazed me is that there did not seem to be a review date - when after 2 months or so, they looked at the situation and reviewed it. Instead it has taken until a few weeks ago for some of the members of the group to contact BW and ask what is happening. For me, it reflects their attitude to what was once a flagship pilot project, and now has slipped down the list of priorities dramatically. Sadly, a vast amount of time has been spent by a

variety of organisations, largely voluntarily and unpaid.

So what can I report? Well, there is now a date in October for the next meeting. That is the good news. The other news is that some of the prompting to push BW into revitalizing the meetings has re-ignited some old embers in the fire that has burned intensely in the room, which I hoped had been put out. The fire I refer to is the attitudes towards liveaboard boaters. The IWA spoke openly of their intent on reducing the number of liveaboard boats over 5 years. For NABO, this is not the issue and focusing on liveaboard boaters is missing the point. The issue is about boats and how they are moored; not if they are lived on or not. As part of the Steering Group's remit I have looked over a few popular areas where boats moor and have noted that 60-80% of over-staying boats are not lived in. There is also only 20% with patrol notices.

Again, BW's response was unhelpful and only managed to fuel the fire. Another of the group, representing unaffiliated boaters, asked BW if it supported the IWA view, and received an abrupt, defensive response. Why can BW not simply say that it has initiated the Steering Group to look at moorings and boat movements, and not the use of the boats? They could have calmed the responses and quietly let IWA know that their email was unhelpful, and give them a slap on the wrist. I do despair!

So now I look openly to the next meeting. Hopefully some careful words and good chairing will let us move on. The next topic is enforcement: a big topic, but there are some common feelings - it should be consistent, fair and clear. These are the building blocks, so let's get building!

## FOREWORD

The so-called 'Canalsmania' at the turn of the 18th century created an extensive network of over 3,600 miles of inland navigations. However, the railways and then motor transport led to their gradual decline and abandonment. Canals became unusable, unpleasant and more often than not, a local dumping ground.

Fortunately, a small group of enthusiasts in the 1940s campaigned to arrest the neglect of the remaining network. Their progress was slow at first, but in recent years, with

substantial investment, canals have undergone a remarkable renaissance. No longer unsafe and unattractive, they are now sought after as a national recreational resource, free for all to explore and enjoy.

The Huddersfield Narrow exemplifies this transformation. With a wealth of natural beauty and architectural heritage, not to mention colourful narrowboats navigating the waterway, there can be no better way of enjoying the Narrow on foot and this Guide is the perfect companion.

Robbie Evans  
British Waterways  
Chief Executive

**Boaters! Claim your licence refund**



Copy of opening page Huddersfield Narrow Canal Hand Book



# Restored working boat, Mendip, out and about

**R**estoration of historic narrow-boat, Mendip, at the Heritage Boatyard of the National Waterways Museum has now finished and in September the boat will recreate the old working route made by 'Chocolate Charlie' Atkins, from Knighton on the Shropshire Union to Cadbury's Bournville factory in

Birmingham before staying a few days at the Black Country Living Museum (BCLM). Much of the work has been undertaken by young people learning basic boat building skills as part of a Future Jobs Fund scheme, assisted by Heritage Boatyard staff and skilled volunteers from the Boat Museum Society.

From August Waterscape



## Timetable

subject to change due to local water conditions

- Sept 17, Ellesmere Port to Bunbury;
- Sept 18, Bunbury to Audlem;
- Sept 19, Audlem to Knighton;
- Sept 20, Audlem to Brewwood or Autherley;
- Sept 21, To Gas Street Basin;
- Sept 22, Bournville and return to Gas Street;
- Sept 23, Gas Street to BCLM;
- Sept 24-25, at BCLM;
- Sept 26, to Norbury;
- Sept 27, Norbury to Barbridge;
- Sept 28, Barbridge to Ellesmere Port

The old Knighton dairy on the Shropshire Union, which will be revisited by restored working boat 'Mendip' this month



# Strategic Planning in the Regions

**Howard Anguish** reports on a lively and interesting meeting organised by BW in the north-east.

**A**lthough Inland Waterways users have yet to experience the dramatic move to the New Waterway Charity (NWC) it is good to see that a lot of time and effort is going into looking forward to next year and beyond so that there is a basic framework in place when the move takes place. Undoubtedly this must occupy much time for all regions, but I speak specifically about my local area because this is where I have my greatest involvement.

In preparation for the transition to the NWC, BW's NE management recently held a Strategic Direction Meeting at the BW offices in Leeds. Those attending represented a broad spectrum of companies, organisations and individuals including a diverse range of potential involvement with the inland waterways and the opportunities that they offer.

This mix of delegates was interesting in itself: NABO and IWA were of course there in force, together with a variety of local canal societies and similar users of the canals and rivers in the NE region. These interests also extended to anglers, rambles and community boat ventures. The waterway press was also represented and the tourism aspects of local waters were represented by tourism executives and managers of local waterside hotels. Less obvious delegates also included local politicians, housing associations, town planners and architects.

The meeting started with a number of brief presentations that set the scene and outlined the current state of the NE waterways. Dimensions, risks and challenges were identified, together with current regeneration strategies. Other presentations touched on commercial strategies, volunteering, heritage and environment/conservation aspects of BW's

work in the region.

This final section included a description of the sensitive regeneration of the Pocklington Canal which is ongoing and which was held up as a great example of what can be achieved by voluntary local involvement to bring back to life a superb local amenity.

The main part of the proceedings consisted of two workshop sessions where the delegates split up into a number of smaller groups that looked at two main questions: 'The Strategic Vision for the North East Waterways' and 'Engaging Participation to achieve the Vision.' Don't be put off by the management-speak: the ideas that flowed from these sessions were encouraged by the chairman in his introduction, where he encouraged 'Blue Sky Thinking'. No holds barred discussions took place after which each group was invited to present its thoughts to the meeting.

Some of the responses were well meaning but totally unrealistic, although it would be interesting to see one of them put into place - "There should be a BW employee at each lock on the system, who could also generate income by selling teas, coffees and other refreshments in addition to looking after the lock!" Because of the number of responses, BW North East are currently engaged in analysing the suggestions and will include them in a strategy document published soon.

Once this is published I will review it in the next issue of NABO News and I am sure it will give food for thought. It is good to see that with the work that the change to the Charity will bring about nationally, the local managers are also giving thought to their obligations for the coming years.

# Localism and liveaboards

## More powers for communities to allow residential moorings

**D**epartment of Communities and Local Government Minister, Grant Shapps, said that more people than ever are choosing to make a boat their home and that boats with residential moorings could allow people to live in areas of the country where perhaps they couldn't otherwise afford to.

As new moorings could be eligible for the New Homes Bonus, the Minister said that there was a strong incentive for councils and communities to grant planning permission for more residential moorings. The income could be invested in new marina facilities, waterside recreational activities that benefit everyone, and to attract further private investment to regenerate often brownfield land around waterways. Mr Shapps said that the Government's commitment to Localism could allow people to secure a residential mooring that would allow them to live closer to their jobs, family, or children's school.

New powers in the Localism Bill restore local control over housing, and allow communities to find innovative ways to meet local hous-

ing need and regenerate their area, coupled with the Government's commitment to a new, simpler planning system better tailored to the needs of communities. Emphasising the need to find a mooring with residential consent before choosing to live afloat, Mr Shapps said that creating more residential long-term moorings could also help reduce the numbers resorting to overstaying on the towpath.

Sally Ash, Head of Boating at British Waterways said: "We welcome the Minister's encouragement to local authorities to support the creation of purpose built residential mooring sites, which we hope will help to alleviate localised congestion along the towpaths. We are also pleased to note the reassurance from Mr Shapps' department that people can qualify for housing benefit for help with mooring fees." Alan Wildman, Chairman of the Residential Boat Owners' Association said: "Living afloat is arguably the most sustainable, lowest impact way to live, whilst still being able to enjoy 100% of the modern amenities that are available to those who live in conventional housing."

BW has recently published guidance for development of new residential moorings sites as an aid to local authorities and private investors, which is available at [www.britishwaterways.co.uk/resimoorguidance](http://www.britishwaterways.co.uk/resimoorguidance)

Department for Communities and Local Government  
Newsroom



NABO AGM 2011



# Annual General Meeting

The 20th Annual General Meeting of the National Association of Boat Owners will take place on Saturday 12th November 2011 at Staffordshire Boat Club, Staffs.

Formal notice and directions to the AGM will be in the next NABO News

## Send the completed nomination forms to:

RICHARD CARPENTER,  
Mill House End Farm,  
Grape Lane, Croston, Leyland,  
Lancashire, PR26 9HB  
to arrive by 10th October.

## Joining Council

Now is the time for you to stand for Council 2011-2012 and have even more say in what NABO does. The Council meets approximately seven times per year. The work is enjoyable, not overly onerous, occasionally frustrating, but nonetheless rewarding, and interesting, and you'll learn what goes on behind the scenes and make new friends into the bargain. If you feel out of your depth, worry not; someone will act as your mentor to help you discover the few formalities.

If you are interested in joining the dedicated souls that make up NABO Council, don't be shy! Please complete the nomination form and return it to Richard Carpenter, General Secretary, by 10th October. If you don't have anyone to propose and second you, don't worry, just have a word with someone on Council and we can sort that for you.

## Nominations

Please note: In relation to nominations, the NABO Constitution states:-

- Only full members are eligible to be nominated for election to, or to be members of, the Council.
- Any member seeking election or re-election to the Council who is, or has at any time in the previous 12 months, held any position of influence or authority in any organization which is involved with the inland waterways, or has any personal interest which is likely to affect their dealings with outside bodies on behalf of the Association, shall declare their interest at the time of being nominated for the Council.
- Any member seeking election or re-election to the Council who is, or has been at any time in the previous six years, convicted of any criminal offence, or involved in or threatened with litigation, or involved in or threatened with formal insolvency proceedings, or the subject of a formal inquiry, shall declare the full circumstances and current status at the time of being nominated for the Council.

Please use the second space on the back of the nomination form for such declarations, or include an attached sheet.

Please use the second space on the back of the nomination form for such declarations, or include an attached sheet.

## Resolutions

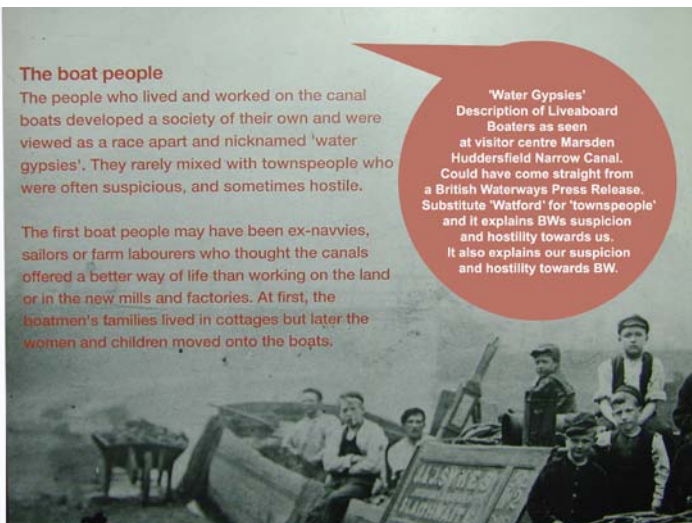
In addition, by the 10th October, please send the General Secretary any resolutions you wish put before the meeting, also with names of proposer and seconder.

## The boat people

The people who lived and worked on the canal boats developed a society of their own and were viewed as a race apart and nicknamed 'water gypsies'. They rarely mixed with townspeople who were often suspicious, and sometimes hostile.

The first boat people may have been ex-navvies, sailors or farm labourers who thought the canals offered a better way of life than working on the land or in the new mills and factories. At first, the boatmen's families lived in cottages but later the women and children moved onto the boats.

"Water Gypsies"  
Description of Liveboard  
Boaters as seen  
at visitor centre Marsden  
Huddersfield Narrow Canal.  
Could have come straight from  
a British Waterways Press Release.  
Substitute "Watford" for "townspeople"  
and it explains BWs suspicion  
and hostility towards us.  
It also explains our suspicion  
and hostility towards BW.



# Nomination form for NABO Council Nominee

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Proposer

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Seconder

Boat name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature & Date

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel \_\_\_\_\_

**Please, in 80 words or less, tell members why they should elect you on to NABO Council**

**Any declarations required by the Constitution**

# Planned Winter Stoppages

During the winter months, BW and EA create a schedule of closures for repairs and improvements, 2011/12 is no exception, writes **John Slee**

**E**A published their £2.9 million investment programme on 12th August (seemingly without consultation). Twelve lock sites are set to benefit from capital investment work. Of these, nine will be affected by temporary closures, with work scheduled to take place during various periods between November 2011 and March 2012. Their 2011/12 waterway investment programme will be updated as changes occur throughout the winter. For the latest version see [www.visitthames.co.uk/works](http://www.visitthames.co.uk/works), or call the EA Floodline number 0845 988 1188, select option 1 followed by quickdial number 011132. Alternatively you can register for electronic updates by emailing [visitthames@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:visitthames@environment-agency.gov.uk).

BW's more extensive winter stoppages programme, beginning on November 7th and ending on March 9th, has been subject to consultation based on a timetable agreed by WUSIG (the Waterway User & Special Interest Group). By the beginning of March 2011, the area managers had submitted their proposals to form a cohesive plan for the forthcoming winter. By 6th

May, a spreadsheet had been published on the Waterscape website, allowing users four to submit comments. A set of maps was also posted on the web (this is created for BW by a GIS mapping company at a cost – as it is not yet automatic).

By 12th July the amended spreadsheet was reposted on Waterscape for a second 3-week round of consultation.

In total, BW are planning work on over 200 distinct waterway assets, including replacing or refitting gates at 75 locks, other lock gate refurbishment and lock wall repairs, regular inspections, repairing and building bridges and third-party new marina waterings. These latter seem particularly susceptible to re-programming or cancellation.

I was surprised by the number of errors at both stages and, as NABO's continuous cruising rep, I submitted several comments pointing these out. Many of the errors related to the promised Christmas open season from 22nd December 2011 to 3rd January 2012 inclusive. However, a final mid-August 'wash-up' video-conference, to which stakeholders representatives were invited, gave us the opportunity to discuss loose ends. The result of that meeting will produce a final programme together with a revised set of maps. These should be published on 14th September as part of BW's waterways stoppages pages (see [www.waterscape.com/things-to-do/boating/stoppages](http://www.waterscape.com/things-to-do/boating/stoppages)). For those who wish to cruise during the winter, but do not have access to the Internet, the closures programme can be mailed to you by BW by specific request.

I asked if local stoppage lists would be posted on noticeboards, as we found last year around the West Midlands, but disappointingly it seems it will be down to the area managers. If you feel that BW is inconveniencing you by not doing enough to publicise the stoppages, please let me know.

I was surprised and disappointed

Photo: John Slee





that the final package is only available as a firm programme (subject obviously to weather-induced changes) in mid-September. Previously the programme was available by August Bank Holiday, but with 'reduced resources' this now seems beyond BW's capabilities. Let me know if you find this a problem. If you find that there are incorrect or out-of-date stoppages listed on Waterscape, do send an email to [corrections@waterscape.com](mailto:corrections@waterscape.com).

Partly as a result of the last two hard winters, BW is considering a limited number of exceptional lock closures during the rest of the year (what they call the cruising season – a term I reject!). This will take advantage of longer days and better weather to complete work in a shorter timescale, including overnight

working. The practicalities and ramifications of this will be discussed at the upcoming WUSIG meeting.

#### Winter moorings

Private marinas offering winter moorings can be found via [www.waterscape.com/moorings](http://www.waterscape.com/moorings), [www.berthsearch.com](http://www.berthsearch.com) and other websites. BW's winter moorings will be at broadly the same locations as in previous years and will go on sale in early October on [www.bwmoooring-vacancies.co.uk](http://www.bwmoooring-vacancies.co.uk), where you can also view a list of the mooring sites. BW winter moorings are generally located along about half the length of visitor moorings, so that space is left for cruising boats. Boaters are asked not to stay for extended periods on visitor moorings without a winter mooring permit.

## How much? For what?

### Bonus Payments to BW Management

Union members working at BW, who received a pay award of between £100-200 pounds in 2011 instead of a pay rise, are feeling let down after receiving the news that BW directors have awarded themselves thousands of pounds in bonuses. BW's Chief Executive, Robin Evans will receive a £15,000 bonus payment on top of his £222,000 annual salary, while other directors will all receive a £12,500 lump sum payment.

Julia Long, Unite national officer, said:

"The announcement that British Waterways is to award directors bonuses worth more than the annual salary of some of our members shows nothing but contempt for the workforce.

We call on British Waterways management to urgently reconsider its decision which has alienated the workers and to use this money much more productively. The government has reduced the amount of money

provided to British Waterways over the next five years, which we believe is not enough to sustain any growth. To use this money to award massive bonuses payments to management simply beggars belief."

In a statement, BW said its finances last year had ended £9.6m up on the amount planned, due to 'better commercial performance and significant savings in cost'.

It said: "As a result, BW was able to maintain expenditure on maintenance and repair at similar levels to previous years despite the government's cut in grant. The board was delighted with these results and wished to recognise the exceptional contribution made by certain staff, including executive directors.

Accordingly, and in strict adherence to government guidelines, they decided that capped performance-related payments should be made. In total some 215 people (12% of the workforce) will receive a PRP payment."

From Waterway Watcher  
August 16th and 18th

Crossword

Untold wealth and riches could be yours!

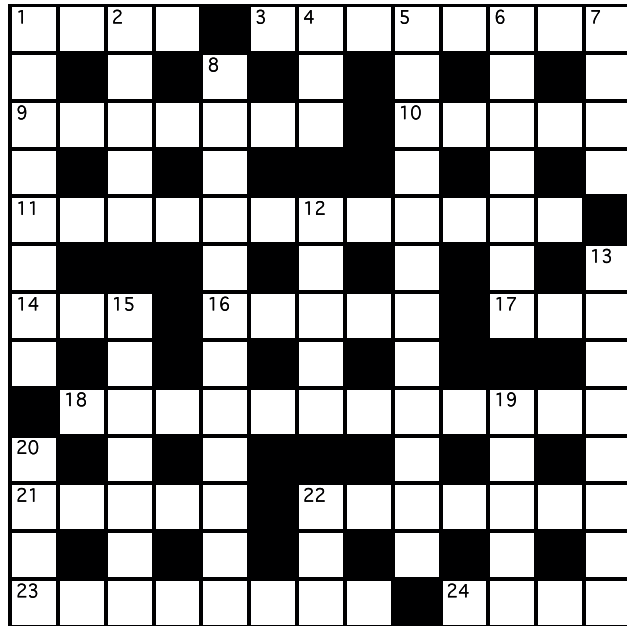
NABO News Crossword No:2

by **Canaldriffer**

(no, really, really this time)

As we promised in the last issue, 'Untold wealth and riches could be yours!' and for this issue only, I am very grateful to an anonymous NABO member for offering a £25 prize for the first correctly completed crossword to arrive by e-mail at nabonews@nabo.org.uk or by post to 19 High St., Bonsall, Derbys. DE4 2AS. If you would like to sponsor a prize of any amount for future crosswords, please get in touch.

Also, I haven't forgotten the photo captions, so please let me have your humorous photos to use in future issues. *Editor.*



**Answers to Crossword No 1**

Across: 1 Market Bosworth, 10 Pluto, 11 Congleton, 12 Caisson, 13 Deep-sea, 14 Sails, 16 Questions, 19 Commuters, 20 Nylon, 22 Octuple, 25 Weather, 27 Generator, 28 Genoa, 29 Standing stones. Down: 2 Aluminium, 3 Knots, 4 Technique, 5 Owned, 6 Wolverton, 7 Rates, 8 Hangars, 9 Spaces, 15 Scuppered, 17 Eastwards, 18 Oil change, 19 Cloughs, 21 Norway, 23 Tinea, 24 Eat in, 26 Anglo.

**Across**

- 1 Boaters reversing through a Scottish town? (4)
- 3 Chairman engrossed in leaflet cherry-picking! (8)
- 9 Guardian finds corrosion in a tee piece! (7)
- 10 Search and soak (5)
- 11 Council member could be chief flooder (6-6)
- 14 Fool with a merchantman (3)
- 16 Clear off from brewery? (3,2)
- 17 Total problem (3)
- 18 What rowers do to win a female's favour! (4,8)
- 21 Propose tide-times? (5)
- 22 Mad liar reforms and joins navy (7)
- 23 Bees dart around secured pair of boats (8)
- 24 Sent out from Near East territory (4)

**Down**

- 1 Guide Alan into major waterways festival (8)
- 2 High bowed... or is it? (5)
- 4 Side the fish climbs? (3)
- 5 Admirals test about coastal flows (5,7)
- 6 Mixed washers for securing ships? (7)
- 7 Take in sail and go free about (4)
- 8 Shockers told about those who look after NABO's assets! (12)
- 12 See off animal caught in coiled hosepipe (5)
- 13 Lure lamb to shelter? (8)
- 15 Boat paint effect with slime? (7)
- 19 Boater, but not an owner (5)
- 20 Cut to animals hanging about in a tunnel? (4)
- 22 Beer from 21? (3)

## Black oil everywhere? Engine on the blink?

Nationwide breakdown and recovery on all UK inland waterways.

### Retainer Cover

Registers the boat as the Member and therefore all users of the vessel are covered. Entitles you to same level of service and priority but pay on use. Breakdown and assistance charged at a flat rate of £40 per callout. No Replacement Parts Cover. Recovery is charged at £35 per hour. We will attend location of breakdown, assess and clarify the problem, rectify and repair the cause if possible. If the breakdown is terminal or requires extensive repair, the owners will be offered the opportunity to be towed to the nearest recommended marina or one of their own choice within two hours cruising time.

**Cost £55**

### Bronze Cover

Breakdown assistance and recovery for registered boat and member only — member must be onboard during a breakdown. If the repair of an outboard motor is not possible, RCR provide a pick up and drop off service to take the outboard to a specialist for repairs. Maximum of 4 call-outs in any 1 year. No crew conveyance. Replacement Parts Cover. **Cost £130**

### Silver Cover

As Bronze, plus breakdown assistance and recovery including home-start for registered Vessel plus one other user. If your craft is diagnosed as having a terminal breakdown, RCR will convey you and up to five other passengers to your home address or marina. Maximum of two relays in one year. Seven call-outs in any one year. Member can register one other user. The member or the registered user must be onboard the vessel during a breakdown. **Cost £155**

### Gold Cover

As Silver plus Annual inspection of registered vessel, engine and electrical system. Boat covered for any user or Member covered on any vessel. Unlimited call-outs for member or vessel. **Cost £210.**

Full details and terms and conditions of this offer visit the RCR website or phone on 0870 2008021 (geographic number 01785 785680).

**[www.rivercanalrescue.co.uk](http://www.rivercanalrescue.co.uk)**

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# Physics for stovies

Glyn Hughes explains what's really happening inside your stove

I've got a solid fuel stove in my house. It's a perfectly ordinary one, and it works like this: I put one shovelful of anthracite on it in the morning, and it burns, untouched, all day and all night, and all the next morning, when I put another shovelful of fuel on. That's it. The room stays nice and warm, but never gets too hot and it never smokes out into the room. If the weather's really cold, I might have to top it up in the afternoon, but, generally, I only touch it once a day, and never re-light it all winter long. I understand that stoves in boats don't quite manage to do all this.

I'm the information officer of The Solid Fuel Technology Institute at [www.soliftec.com](http://www.soliftec.com), and I'm going to have a go at explaining what's going on, and how you might well halve your fuel consumption, make your craft safer, cosier and generally make the whole world a brighter and cheerier place.

It is easy to assume that a chimney, or rather the hole up the inside of a chimney (the flue) is a sort of duct to let waste gas and smoke out of a stove. But it doesn't work like that: stoves only work because they lose a certain amount of heat into the chimney. Although a chimney appears to 'suck' and smoke appears to naturally rise, it is more accurate to think of the weight of dense air outside a stove pushing down to force the hotter, lighter, waste gases out up the flue. This 'Chimney Effect' generates the draught, the very tiny difference in pressure inside and outside the flue.

That's why you can't burn a log out of doors. Go on try it! A single log or lump of coal just won't burn in still air. But if you have a pile of logs then there is a little chimney effect between the logs, so bonfires will

burn fine.

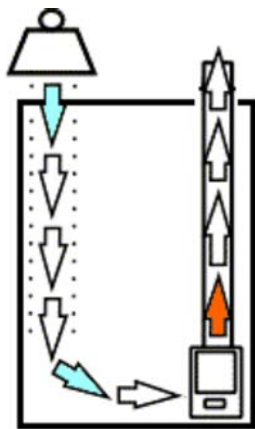
The hotter the inside of the chimney (and the taller it is) the more vigorously the smoke and gases inside rise, and the more vigorously fresh air is pulled in over the fuel, making it burn. Stove chimneys on boats are commonly very short and aren't insulated at all, which means that they develop very poor draught indeed. Flue draught is measured in Pascals (Pa). A good house chimney will get hot enough, around 250°C inside, to develop about 12 Pa. A really well-made insulated boat chimney might manage 6 Pa. An uninsulated boat chimney will only get to about 90°C and so suck at only around 1 Pa. Stoves are pretty much all designed to operate at 12 Pa. If the inside of the chimney isn't hot enough, and doesn't generate enough draught, three big problems start to happen.

## First - fumes.

The fumes from burning wood or coal-type products are extremely poisonous. They contain carbon monoxide at around 100 times the concentration found in a gas fire. Poor draught means that these dangerous gases aren't likely to be properly pulled out of the cabin.

## Second - damp.

Wood and coal, even when they seem very dry, contain an astonishing amount of water locked up inside their structure. As they burn, this is given up as steam, which, if the chimney doesn't get up above around 160°C, will condense on the insides of the flue. This, along with acids from the fuel, forms a tar that causes rapid rusting, even of ordinary stainless steels, and can even build up to block the flue, leading to the risk of carbon monoxide leaking out into the cabin.



The chimney effect,

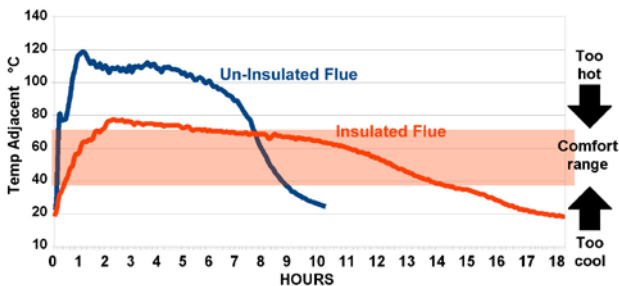
### Third - lack of combustion.

Without adequate draught, fuel just won't burn properly. It will be slow to light and you won't be able to burn the usual stove fuels like anthracite. I'm more than a bit worried that, because of poor chimney draught, many boatyards are reduced to selling petroleum coke. This is manufactured from oil and intended for use in the cement-making industry. 'Petcoke' will burn on almost anything, but it is dangerously high in poisonous and corrosive sulphur (you can smell it!), as well as being horrendously expensive.

So, insulate your chimney and all will be well. But, surely, putting insulation around the flue pipe inside the cabin means you'll get less heat from the pipe and have to use more fuel? Strange to tell, the opposite is the case. If you have an uninsulated chimney, you'll have poor draught. That will mean that if you turn the stove down below a certain level, the chimney will cool even more, all draught will be lost and the fire will go out. You won't be able to keep a low steady glow, but will have to have the fire burning far too hot just to keep it alight. You might just be familiar with the baking hot cabin, which smells of sulphur? Furthermore, with poor flue draught, the stove won't pull air in forcefully enough for the fire to burn efficiently. It will actually give out less heat per lump.

In laboratory tests, we used a Portway boat stove with 1½ metres of 4-inch diameter flue. The graph below shows heat output using one single filling of fuel, untouched and unadjusted and left to burn for as long as I could get it to. The area under each line indicates the total heat given out. We found that the stove with the insulated pipe could burn for roughly twice as long as the uninsulated one. The total amount of heat given out by stove + pipe was roughly the same – adding insulation hadn't reduced the net heat volume at all. But, because it couldn't be controlled as efficiently, the unin-

insulated stove spent most of its time giving out far more heat than was needed.



### The end result

insulate the chimney and you might well halve your fuel consumption. Oh, and you should have a stove which lights quicker, burns better, doesn't smell, smoke or make tar, will burn logs cleanly and be able to use a full range of fuels, including the inexpensive and the clean ones. It might even have a window which stays a lot cleaner.

Of course it's all very well quoting bits of physics and doing tests under careful lab conditions, but that isn't always what happens in the real world. Where I could really

do with some help is by real people out there letting me know what happens in practice. I would also offer a word of caution: it is not simply a matter of insulating an existing chimney. If this is done, the flue and the top collar will both get hotter than before. Lengthways expansion of the flue must also be taken into account, together with any increased danger of setting fire to the cabin lining.

**Editor's note:** Please let me have your experiences of solid fuel stoves - both positive and negative - as well as your tips and advice to share with Glyn and NABO News readers





# Wee tim'rous beastie

## What is lurking at the bottom of your fuel tank?

David Fletcher has some further advice on bio-fuels as winter approach

Last time in NN, I wrote about the uncertainties of the red diesel fuel market and the impact on we users of the bio content. As always on the towpath, the discussion continues, and I have put together some ideas on how to manage this difficult situation. Remember that whenever you buy fuel it is possible, and indeed very likely, that it contains at least a small percentage of bio-fuel and maybe as much as 7%. If the fuel is carefully stored ashore and in the boat, and it is kept free of water and turned over (used) regularly, then there is no problem. But real life is different, and that is when the diesel bug strikes. RCR are seeing regular engine failures because of this.

Fuel additives are going to be one of the main methods of managing this situation. There are many on the market, and I am keen to gather good experiences and learn from the bad. So please tell us what happens to you! Some additives are designed to mop up small amounts of water by holding it in the fuel and so preventing the bugs from feeding on it until it is burnt in the engine or stove. You will never know it was there. One tip is not to overdose: apparently the engine can only tolerate so much water in the fuel/additive mix. Perhaps if there is too much, the water comes out of solution under pressure. So stick to the instructions and don't add more than needed. I have used Fortran and Fuel Set in the past, but that proves nothing as I have no idea whether I am using fuel with added bio! I have no trouble with elephants either.

Other types of additives work like bleach to kill the bugs or stop them breeding and these are very useful if

you have a case of bio sludge build up, as it can break it down and leave the fuel usable again. Some boaters use them all the time as a preventative measure. You should identify which problem you have and buy a product to suit. Marine 16 and Racor Parker have products for clean up if you are in trouble, but I have no personal experience.

So if you are to avoid a breakdown, I suggest that a good starting point is to know what you have in the bottom of your tank. Is there sludge or dirt or water, or is it all clean and dry? Any free water that has got in from whatever source will lie in the bottom of the tank under the diesel, and the bacteria will use the bio part



of the fuel to grow and form sludge. And sludge will sooner or later move to the fuel system and block filters. So knowing what is there and doing something about it is a very good start.

I experimented with two ways to find out. I bought a tube of something called 'water finding paste' on ebay for about £12. This comes in a tube like toothpaste and is orange in colour. I smeared some of this on the end of the dipstick and put it in the fuel tank (to the bottom), and then pulled it out again. The paste turns from orange to red on contact with water. So very easily I can tell if there is free water there, and I can also check before and after each re-fuel. There is enough in the tube for many uses, so buy one and share it with others. In my case, and the boat next door, there was no water and no evidence of sludge or debris.

Also I bought a 1 meter length of aluminium tube 3 mm diameter from B&Q for about £3. Copper gas or central heating pipe would do too.

I found a squeeze fuel priming bulb in my garage and connected it to the tube and used this to suck from the bottom of the fuel tank to get a sample. The bulbs are in chandlers for a few pounds. This worked well and easily lifted the fuel, and water had there been any there. If the water-finding paste found a lot of water and you have no drain cock, this would be a method to get most of it out. The tube would be too small for sludge but hopefully there would be traces on the dipstick or tube if it had been there.

And what if you find water? Well get as much out as you can by sucking, or draining if you have a low point drain, and then dose the remaining fuel with an additive that will mop up the remaining water. Then use the fuel up as soon as you can, and only then refill with new fuel. You should also think about how the water got in there. Leaking filler plugs and condensation are the most likely causes, but it is also just possible that it arrived with a fuel fill up.

And what if you find sludge? Assuming that it is not just dirt but diesel bugs then there are three options, getting progressively more expensive. First you can dose with a bug killer as already mentioned and hope it clears in a few days. You can expect to flush pipes to the engine filter and change the filter elements several times before the system cleans up.

If you can limp on, then go to one of the few boatyards who have the equipment to flush the tank and clean up the fuel with an external pump unit. This involves use of the additives and pumping the fuel through filters to remove solids. And if you have a very bad case, you could expect to have the top of the tank cut open so that the sludge and waste can be removed manually. Not a happy thought.

Please let us know about your experiences so we can pass them on to other members.

### So heading for winter layup, what are the best things to do?

- Check to make sure that there is no water or sludge in the tank, and do something about it if there is.
- Check to make sure that rain cannot get into the tank via the filler.
- Use up as much of the summer fuel as you can.
- Refill to full with winter grade fuel, bio free if you can get it, and check for free water after filling.
- Dose with an additive.
- Use the fuel as soon as you can in the Spring.



# After Davies

## More implications of the Bristol case

A further update from **Geoffrey Rogerson** following NABO's formal complaint in October 2009.

**A**s you may recall from previous articles in NABO News, we were prevailed upon by BW to hang fire on our complaint pending a judgement that BW was pursuing in the courts. This judgement having now been made, BW has presented draft revised 'mooring guidance' for continuous cruisers. Following a meeting with BW and the user groups, we agreed to present our comments and any recommendations by the end of July.

### User group consensus

The object would seem to be to obtain a consensus from the user groups, which while having no legal status, would help a court to its judgement in any future cases. Whilst the Bristol case may not be binding on other courts, relating as it does to the particular circumstances pertaining, it will undoubtedly be 'persuasive' in future cases. Once the new mooring guidelines have been finalised by BW, we will comment accordingly.

A significant change from the earlier guidance is the removal of 'progressive' and 'significant part of the system'. These are two points that we have been pressing BW to remove for some time. Not surprisingly the judgement in the Bristol case established the particular circumstances of what 'was not bona fide navigating' but not what is. To quote from the judgement: "the phrase 'used bona fide for navigation' involves consideration of the purpose of the use rather than the extent of the movement." In addition, we were satisfied that the judge stated: "I think it right to say however that my decision is not to be taken as fully endorsing the Board's guidance".

NABO have consistently said that only a court can decide the issue of interpretation and to some extent that has now happened.

### Reassurance for liveboards

Another important statement by the judge is as follows. "It seems to me that the use of a boat as a home does not necessarily exclude a co-existent use for navigation. Indeed a person who continuously cruises the waterways in a manner envisaged by the Board might well be living full time on his boat and have no other home". I trust this will reassure liveboards who have been anxious about their status.

Reverting to our initial complaint, in particular point 3 regarding the general authority to remove boats under section 8(5): at the time BW assured us that this was only to make sure water points, pump out facilities etc. were not obstructed and we accepted this, nevertheless requesting that the wording should be either amended or removed. The words 'a boat is causing an obstruction by stopping another boat mooring' is to say the least arrant nonsense.

The licence terms and conditions have been reissued in June and unfortunately they still retain the same words. We will be taking this up with BW. In addition they have added that should BW move a boat, they are entitled to charge for so doing. This is not the case as was evidenced by a judgement against BW some two years ago. Again we will take this up with BW. In accepting the licence terms and conditions to obtain your licence one is not bound by any illegality in that contract.

# Broken record?

**Whatever next? Can we guess? I don't think I need a crystal ball yet.**

Expressing his frustration with BW, **Andrew Colyer** on roving mooring permits.

**T**he Lee and Stort consultation conclusions have just been thrown out and Roving Mooring Permits (RMPs) are back on the agenda (for BW anyway). I despair for the second time in NABO News. This is not like me, honest!

At Council we once again spent valuable time discussing RMPs. The conclusion was simple: nothing has changed since we last discussed the issue. Time for us is a limited resource, and as volunteers even more so. We have much to discuss, including the concern that we seem to spend such a large amount of time on matters that affect the minority. RMPs are one of these issues. We looked over a document written by Stuart Sampson when he held the helm for NABO, and all the points are well made and still valid. Simply put, RMPs are illegal, unenforceable, create a new licence type, and no one will take them up. BW will look

stupid as they are now basically saying the 'problem' of congestion, that they have been saying exists, is not a problem if money passes hands. Smells a bit dodgy to me! There are more reasons to object, but most strongly RMPs do not resolve the problem they think they will...unless there is an elephant in the room, which is about money! If so, please be honest and stop wasting our time.

I would hope that people at BW could have a discussion and review their ideas internally; they will notice that all the objections still stand and not bother to involve anyone else. Assuming this is not possible, I will seriously consider printing out Stuart's document and forwarding it to Sally Ash for inclusion in the 2013/14 and 2016/17 consultations on licences that will inevitably happen. It could at least save NABO volunteers some of their valuable time and effort.

Shropshire Union idyll  
photo by Andy Tidy



# Poor sweet charity

## The Charity—a personal view

Can the NWC be financially viable asks **Geoffrey Rogerson** and might this prevent it taking over the waterways?

**T**his time next year the waterways will be run by the proposed National Waterways Charity. It would seem at the moment that most people and organisations are generally in favour of this move. As it is very vague as to the benefits or otherwise of the proposed charity, perhaps the popularity of the idea is because it won't be British Waterways!! A rather negative view probably as the only change I can see will be the new headed notepaper!

At last there has been a memorandum issued by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Waterways which has grasped the nettle, understood the problems and come up with recommendations to Defra/government – I must say that a friend of mine who has had great experience of charities commented that various vice-chairmen and evidence givers have come up with recommendations that we made in twenty minutes over a glass of beer!

Nevertheless the three main factors involved in setting up the charity are governance, membership and finance.

### Governance

At the moment the proposed organisation would leave BW as the commercial operation running the canals; a Council of some 50 members who only meet twice a year; and the trustees who are accountable to the Council who meet six times a year. With regard to the membership of Council, this should take into account the fact that boaters provide 20% of BW's income and so by definition should make up the same percentage on the Council – he who pays the piper calls the tune. In addi-

tion there is to be established Local Boards who will have no power other than to recommend, acquire volunteers and raise funds. As the K&A trust, IWA, NABO etc are already volunteers, not forgetting the waterways recovery group, one wonders where the new volunteers will come from.

### Membership of the charity

At the moment membership is very restricted and I feel that it should be open to all. There should be no automatic membership for existing boaters. However should they wish to join for a membership fee of £20, £30, £40 this would give them voting rights and a stake in the future of the canals. I quote from the Parliamentary Waterways Group (PWG): “we accept the practicality that the new waterways charity should begin life with fair representation of stakeholders, but we believe that a membership model of democratic stakeholder representation to council should be developed with representatives elected by their organisations rather than appointed by the new waterways charity. We believe that membership has so much to offer the new organisation in terms of engaging the public and developing a sense of ownership that there should be a clear timetable for moving to a full membership model”.

### Financing

To quote the PWG again: “the level of funding proposed by government is insufficient to meet the needs of the new waterways charity. Estimates of the funding gap range from £15 million to £45 million. The BW estimated gap of £39 million is



based on receipt of the current £47 million compared to the £39 million proposed by government it will have with the new waterways charity. The trustees are legally responsible for the good governance of the charity and are required by law to ensure that the charity is financially sustainable on foundation and that the trustees do not expose the charity to financial risk."

Sir Stuart Etherington, Chief Executive of The National Council for Voluntary Organisations said: "It is important that the trustees of any new charity are given sufficient resources through which to achieve the stated objectives of the charity and properly discharge their duties as trustees". And to quote from PWG: "in addition to these figures BW is now running a £70 million deficit on its pension fund, a large and unaccounted dredging deficit of some 291 km that is estimated to represent a further liability of between £23 and £24 million. Charity Commission guidance states: "trustees must ensure the charity is and will remain solvent, avoiding undertaking activities that might place

the charity's endowments, funds, assets, or reputation at undue risk. We stress that each of the trustees are required by law to satisfy themselves of the viability of the trust"

In view of the above and of the rather rigid attitude at our recent meeting with Defra, I really cannot see how the charity can be brought into being. The amount of money needed from government would need to be double that envisaged and as BW jobs, salaries, pensions transfer en bloc to the new charity under the government TUPE requirements it would seem the financial requirements are insuperable. Under Defra's projections the cost of setting up and running the charity would mean that it did not break even for the first 5 years. It has always been obvious that the waterways could never be privatised because it is a loss-making government responsibility and for the life of me I cannot see how the trustees can ever be in a position to take it on. The next few months will see what the government's response is to the PWG's recommendations. Unless they listen the whole thing is a dead duck!



Have Your Say

# Letters to the Editor

Opinions expressed here are independent of NABO policy and statements made have not been verified as true.

## **Continuous cruisers or continuous moorers?**

I would be pleased to know what steps are taken to monitor and regulate moorings, especially on the Peak Forest and Macclesfield Canals by so called continuous cruisers. This is a perennial problem, highlighted when I chatted recently to the owner of a 60' boat that has been moored to my knowledge for at least six weeks on the Peak Forest canal by Wood End Lift Bridge - a very nice spot. The owner lives aboard and talks quite openly about the fact that he has identified some of the better moorings on the Macclesfield and Peak Forest canals and stays for at least a month or two before moving on. It sounded as if he has been doing this for some years and has never been bothered by BW who he says 'just turn a blind eye'. A classic case of a continuous moorer claiming to be a continuous cruiser, taking up 60' of scarce good visitor mooring space on a longish term basis but paying no mooring fee. Not of course that he is alone. There must be many dozens of continuous moorers on these two canals alone, who are doing just this with apparently little or no enforcement action. I ply these canals regularly and see the same boats moored for long periods at or about the same place, usually at the better visitor moorings of which there are precious few. The number nationwide must run into many thousands.

A popular and arguably one of the best visitor moorings on the Macc is by the playing fields at Higher Poynton, but the chances of visiting boats finding a space are slim. Why? - because most are taken up by CC's for weeks on end. I was hoping to moor there but as I didn't arrive until late afternoon I was not surprised to find no spaces available. Next morning I went to check on availability but no movement at all: of the 11 moored boats, all but two or three were locked and shuttered and the remainder were obviously live-aboards already running their engines to charge batteries/heat water and clearly going nowhere. The situation was the same the following morning. This is getting beyond a joke. Why not have a 48-hour limit on popular visiting moorings such as Higher Poynton with penalties for over staying?

The fact is that CC's pay no mooring fees but still moor somewhere every night, often at the better moorings, so denying space for genuine visiting boats. This is a contentious issue and causes frustration and resentment to most boaters who are paying ever increasing mooring fees but finding it increasingly difficult to find good visitor moorings. In addition, CC's are simply not paying their way in terms of mooring costs which inevitably means the remainder of us pay more, at a time when boating is becoming ever more expensive. My simple suggestions, as a starting point for discussion, would be:

1. All boaters without a permanent mooring should pay the equivalent of, say, the offside mooring fee to entitle them to moor every night on BW waters. This would still be a fraction of what most boaters are paying but something towards mooring costs. Of course, CC's would protest, as would the organisations representing them such as NABO and RBOA who have many CC's as members (NABO even has a member of Council with responsibilities for CC's). I am a member of NABO and support much of the excellent work it does for boat owners but know for a fact it does not speak for all its members on the subject of CC's. It has been argued by NABO for example, that offside moorers pay BW for the right to moor permanently on that particular length of water, which CC's do not have, but I disagree. Offside moorers pay the landowner for that privilege and pay BW simply for being on their water. The same water as anywhere else on the canal used by CC's to moor. I think NABO has also mentioned legal rights of CC's to moor without charge but if this is so, the law is an ass and unjust, and needs to be changed.

2. Any - yes, any - towpath moorings which are not permanent moorings should have a maximum of, say, 5 days' stay with the more popular mooring sites, whether 'official' visitor moorings with bollards/rings or not, a maximum of 48 hrs with penalties for overstaying. Limited exceptions could be made during the winter stoppage season. Boaters should also be encouraged to report cases of overstaying with a hotline number, with the expectation that BW will respond promptly. As well as dealing with these present

frustrations and concerns, I think BW should get a grip on this problem for the longer term. Realistic and practical proposals need to be put forward with some urgency to make boating fairer for all, as well as providing very considerable additional income to help keep boating costs at a more reasonable level for the majority.

**David Peck**  
**NB Daisy**

**Threatening behaviour on the Leeds and Liverpool canal**

NABO News has received a letter from Alan Holden on his boat Anna, who describes problems with a canalside resident at Greenberfield Locks on the Leeds and Liverpool. He reports that boaters wanting to stay on the visitor moorings above the locks are being chased off by this resident, who comes out and confronts them with abusive language and threats. Some weeks ago he

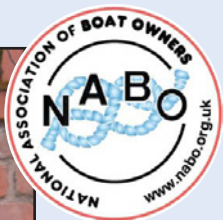
stayed overnight on these moorings and in the middle of the evening meal the householder came banging on the side of his boat, shouting for him to come out. The man was asked to go away and warned that if he continued with the abuse and threats, the police would be called—which they were. The householder has been reported in writing to the Canal Manager at Wigan with the police reference number and also via a BW incident report form. It seems from local boaters that this is a regular occurrence and that this person has also contacted local hire companies, telling them to stop hire boats staying on the visitor moorings. Alan says he is deeply offended when someone who pays nothing towards the upkeep of the waterways comes along with abusive language and threats, and he will continue to use these moorings and if the situation continues, continue to call the police.

**NABO News would like to know if other readers have had similar experiences. Editor**

**Achtung all overstayers!**

Seen recently by Howard Anguish in Clarence Dock, Leeds: Is this the latest addition to BW's fleet of patrol craft?





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