



NABO News

The Magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners
Issue 2—March 2013



MOORING RESTRICTIONS—NABO'S POSITION
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CARBON MONOXIDE—SILENT KILLER
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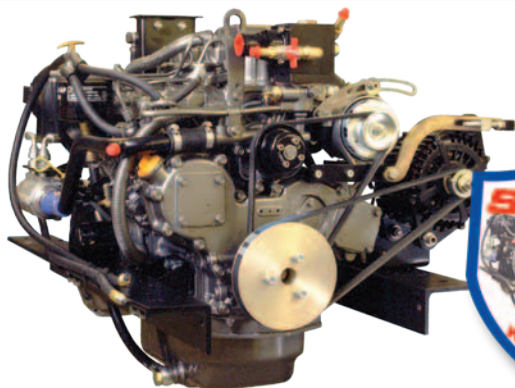
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NABO News

The magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners

Issue 2 March 2013

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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

Next NABO News Copy Date

Please email or post your contributions by 23rd March 2012

Front Cover Photo Competition



Springtime on the Llangollen by the Editor

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 a width of at least 1800 pixels.

NABO Calendar 2013

Council Meetings in 2013:

Saturday 16th March, Saturday 27th April, Saturday 8th June, Saturday 20th July (provisional), Saturday 7th September, Saturday 19th Oct, AGM Saturday 16th November

Council meetings are normally 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 overleaf).

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The rites of Spring

Editor **Peter Fellows** looks forward to the new season

Thank you to everyone who wrote to NABO News following our appeal for support in the last issue. I have included a selection of representative letters from members. Welcome to Mike Rodd and Mark Tizard as new Council members and welcome back to 'Fly on the Wall' after a long absence—its informal look at what happens in Council meetings is in response to a specific request by a member. We are not out of the woods yet though. Council still needs help from people who have administrative or web skills. This issue focuses more than usual on NABO business: there is an article by our Treasurer, Stephen Peters, on the reasoning behind an increase in your subs and a plea from the Webmaster to register your correct contact details on the website to reduce our admin costs. NABO has also issued a press release concerning CRT's proposals on mooring re-

strictions, which is something that should concern all boaters. David Fletcher reports on the first meeting of a Parliamentary Group looking at how CRT's Waterways Partnerships are developing and there are boating articles on changes to the Boat Safety Scheme and the dangers of carbon monoxide. Gary Sutcliffe of Lee Sanitation also gives the low-down on selecting a new toilet for your boat. As Editor, I would welcome some more photos that could be used on the cover of the newsletter (remember the year's free subscription if they are used) and the occasional boating article along the lines of recent reports of boating on the Caledonian and Droitwich canals—preferably not just a trip report, but something (maybe a bit unusual) that would interest the majority of readers. It's time now for many of us to dewinterise and get boating again.

Photo: Ann Hollas



Onward and upwards

Chairman **David Fletcher** in upbeat mood

Last month, I gave a serious message about the future of the Association. I would like to thank all the members who took the time to write and express their views. These were (almost) universally supportive of the work we do and the need to raise subscriptions. It is common sense that we cannot continue to operate unless the basic fees cover the core costs, so an increase is inevitable. Our Hon. Treasurer reports elsewhere in this issue on what the Council has now agreed. We now need your help to follow this through with your correct details and paperwork when your renewal is due. Please do not neglect to do this: chasing up wrong payments costs the Association in administration time and money, which is avoidable if we all do our bit.

New blood for Council

I am delighted to say that two additional members joined Council at the February meeting. I welcome Mark Tizard and Mike Rodd. They are introduced in the coming pages. They bring new energy, ideas and leadership to the table and they are already contributing, with Vice Chair Jane Taylor, to rebrand our membership offering for 2013 and the years to come. Much of what we achieve goes unseen by the waterways community, even our own membership, because it goes on behind the scenes. It is often not about winning or losing but about maintaining a long-term relationship with navigation authorities and refreshing our knowledge of what is going on. It is from

this strength that we can campaign and respond to individual events or wider consultations. We have not been that good at selling ourselves, and we have to make changes to address that. NABO enjoys its independence, free from dogma, history and the Charities Commission, an open national agenda applicable to a broad spectrum of boaters. What is not to like? So welcome again to Mark and Mike, but don't think that the rest of our membership can now sit back and relax; Council is still under strength and we need more help. It is your Association, not mine.

Sustainable Membership

Sustainable membership of course is at the core of all this. Some have written and explained that they are unable to directly help and I accept of course that many of us cannot take an active role. The one thing every member can do for us is find a new member during this year. Member to member recruitment is the most cost effective way to get new members. If every member recruited just one new member who stays with us, we would be in a stable position and able to move on with a solid base. You know there is a need for an independent national organisation. Please tell others too.

Consult please

CRT has just started a quickie formal consultation on moorings in the South East area. This will run during February and by the time you read this, it will be near closing or already closed on the 1st March. We have provided information and

the NABO view on our website and tried to contact members in the SE area to get their views. If you have missed this date and you have good local information, send it anyway or let a Council member know. All boaters should read the consultation because sooner or later one like it will come to a mooring near you. These proposals will affect all boaters whichever way you use your boat. We neglect these consultations at our peril! Watch the website for updates. NABO will make a response, but please send us your personal and detailed views.

Chairman enforced

I got an enforcement notice put on my boat in January in the marina. I had seen a couple of officers on the pontoon as I walked down to the boat. A quick glance at the red notice in its little bag showed the offence was not to display a valid licence. Interesting as the notice was stuck on the window right next to the licence, which is valid to mid

2013. Hmmmm. I went to find the officer and brought him back to see it. 'Why have I got this?' I asked. He pulled it off the boat and looked closer. It was written correctly, but it had been stuck on the wrong boat! Profuse apologies followed. What is a boater to do?

Robin flies the nest

We heard during the month that Robin Evans is to step down as CRT Chief Executive this year. I am not surprised. The last few years, with the launch of CRT, have been a major journey and it would be very difficult to return to the routines of normal life. Setting up is one thing, but consolidation and growing is another. The Trustees have a serious task on their hands to select the replacement and this will be just as important as any decision they have made to date. I wish them success as the Chief Executive puts a personal stamp on any organisation. No doubt they will get plenty of advice from the towpath.

A warm welcome to our two new council members

Mike Rodd

Originally from Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), Mike has been both the General Manager and the Trustee Chairman (until 2012) of The Kennet & Avon Canal Trust. During this time he established the first trial CRT/K&A Waterways Partnership. A professional electrical engineer and previously a professor at Swansea University, Mike, who lives with his vicar-wife, Sue, in Marlborough, is an active boater on the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal. He also skips public trip boats for the K&A Canal Trust, being an MCA Boatmaster.

Mark Tizard

Hello, my name is Mark Tizard. I have recently joined NABO Council because I feel NABO is the only national organisation that solely represents boaters' interests.

I have been boating for some 35 years, the last 25 years on the canals, and I am concerned that now more than ever boaters need to have their voice heard by those entrusted with the management of our canals and rivers.



Mike Rodd
Photo: Alan Whitewick



Mark Tizard

Digging deeper

Subscription rates increased

The honourable treasurer **Stephen Peters** tells it like it is

The last edition of NABO News included a personal appeal from our Chairman setting out the difficult decisions that the Council will need to take to ensure the continued viability of the Association. The accounts for the year ended 30th April 2012, which were presented to last year's AGM, indicate that our expenditure has exceeded income by nearly £7,000 and if that situation were to continue we would deplete our reserves within two years. The Council was therefore charged with consulting the wider membership with a view to increasing the annual membership subscription by either £5 or £10 per annum.

Thank you to those of you who took the trouble to contact us with your views on both the acceptability of a subscription rate increase and your observations and comments on the future of NABO. We have taken these on board and a decision has been made to increase the basic annual subscription rate by £10 making the full membership rate £25 per annum. The rates for the other classes of membership will also increase accordingly and in these uncertain times we have decided to abolish life membership. Existing life memberships will, of course, be honoured. We hope you will consider the new rates to be good value when compared with the fees levied by other similar boating organisations.

The new subscription rates will be effective from 1st April 2013. This is the first increase for very many years and although we do not foresee another increase being necessary for some time, we shall monitor the

situation over the next 12 months with a view to possibly introducing smaller inflation-linked rises in future years to ease the strain on our wallets.

We know from past experience that changes in membership rates will create a short-term additional administrative burden and we would urge you to make sure that you amend your Standing Orders with your bank when you receive our official notification. We can almost guarantee that some banks will continue to pay the old amount and others will pay the new amount every month!

It is impossible to accurately predict the impact these new rates will have on existing membership numbers but evidence from other organisations suggests that we will lose some members who are unwilling to pay extra. We need to counter this by recruiting more new members. If each of you could enlist just one new member our financial position would improve considerably. Please remember that we continue to pay a New Member Bonus of £5 if you introduce someone and this will help to soften the impact on your own finances too.

The future now looks brighter and we have been gratified by your offers to assist where possible and by the recent influx of new Council members to ease the strain and give a new perspective to our activities. We hope you will see the benefits of continued NABO membership in the months and years ahead. Thank you for your continuing support.

Boaters' Voices DVD

Wiltshire has 40 miles of the Kennet and Avon Canal running through it, almost half its 87 miles. The County Council recognizes the importance and the diversity that the canal offers, from the wildlife to leisure benefits, including boaters who use the canal. They even have a dedicated canal officer.

Over the last year, the Council has been working on a fascinating project about minority communities living in the county. There are twelve groups that are recognised, including army wives, people with Alzheimer's, the Polish community and live-aboard boaters. The Council has not been just listening to their views and stories, but also recording the voices, through film, to enable the groups to be heard beyond their tight-knit groups. The Council invited all boaters to discuss the issues affecting them and to explain the project to them. At the first meeting there was an impressive attendance of around 80 boaters. We were shown a short film from another group that was clear, well considered and well made. There followed round the table discussions in groups of roughly ten on the issues that affected us as live-aboard boaters—from BW/CRT to car parking, bus passes, children in schools and healthcare. I think people like a good moan and it was certainly an easy opportunity for it! I was pleased, however, that moaning was not the only focus of the meeting and positive attitudes were also expressed. Everyone in the room was united by the reasons why we boat rather than the complaints. We were all invited to be part of the new film, and although there was a lot of interest in the project, there was considerably less interest in



Boater's Voices is available to view free at: www.vimeo.com/54380248 and also wiltshirevoices.wordpress.com

being in the film!

After the first meeting, a further series of meetings were held with different groups, such as parents and children, which gave the film-makers a clearer understanding of the issues affecting boaters. Over the next few months the council officer and the film-makers met with the boaters who had agreed to take part and filming commenced. A wide range of boaters decided to get involved: young, old, with or without children, working, retired, continuous cruisers and those on a mooring. In late November, a final meeting was called to show the film (with dinner served—again!). We were asked to comment on the film and also give ideas of who to show the film to. It is a really excellent piece of work. The boaters who were involved should be very proud, and we should also be thankful that Wiltshire County Council has been so embracing of the boating community. Some at CRT have been shown the film and hopefully by now many others will also have seen it.

Crane in canal

The driver of a 90 tonne crane leapt to safety moments before it plunged into the Leeds & Liverpool Canal as a towpath collapsed under its weight near Dobson Locks in Apperley Bridge. He escaped without injury as the crane flipped onto its roof and became submerged. CRT was carrying out work in preparation to replace the lock gates and said an investigation had been launched into why the towpath gave way.



Photo: Anna Postles, Bradford Telegraph & Argus

News

NABO joins CRT's Users' Forum

CRT has invited representatives of national organisations with an interest in its waterways to join a new National Users' Forum. The aim of the Forum will be to keep the principal users of the waterways up to date with strategic developments within the Trust and for national bodies to give feedback on issues of importance to their members. The group replaces the British Waterways Advisory Forum (BAAF) and is likely to meet twice a year. The first meeting will be in February at CRT's office at Fazeley, followed by a second meeting in September. Chairman David Fletcher will attend the first meeting and it is hoped to rotate attendance among other Council members.

NABO assists Kennet and Avon Partnership Board

Since the MSSG (Mooring Strategy Steering Group) abruptly ended, Andrew Colyer and Geoffrey Rogerson have been working on behalf of NABO with Andy Harry, one of the K&A Partnership Board members. Andy heads up the Moorings Sub-group for the Board, which has been tasked with looking into mooring issues at the west end of the canal. The sub-group's work is to respond to CRT's document on moorings, which it produced following the demise of the

MSSG. It is a large task for a small group, especially as there was contention over the ending of the MSSG and the CRT proposals. NABO Council is happy to assist Andy with the on-going work.

K&A Waterways Partnership
Chair stands down...

Partnership Chair, Fleur de Rhe-Philipe, said: "It is with some regret that I am stepping down but unfortunately my professional commitments have made it difficult to give the role the level of attention I feel it deserves. I am very proud of the work the Partnership has done, not least helping the Trust in its transition to the third sector. I know my colleagues on the Partnership have the passion and commitment to drive it forwards and establish a strong vision for how the local waterways will develop." Recruitment for a replacement Chair will begin shortly, with the position advertised on <http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/>

... and CRT CE to go

Robin Evans will step down as Chief Executive of BW and CRT at the end of May after ten years in the job. The Trustees have begun to search for a new chief executive and more details will be announced shortly. Tony Hales will stay on as Chair to help ensure a smooth transition.

Breach Repairs Begin
on the Trent & Mersey

Work on site to repair the breach at Dutton on the Trent & Mersey Canal has begun. A hole, equivalent in size to 12 double-decker buses, was left in the 18th century canal embankment following heavy rain last September. CRT is investing nearly £2.1 million to fix it. Due to its remote location, the Trust has liaised with local landowners to gain access. Around 12,000 tonnes of material will be needed to reconstruct the embankment. New drainage will be installed at the base to help disperse excess ground water and a specialist 'bentonite geomembrane' flexible waterproof liner will be used to re-line and seal the canal. The current estimate is that, subject to the weather, the canal will re-open in May.



Photo: CRT

Fly on the Wall

Due to popular demand, but in a different guise, our Fly returns to observe proceedings at Council meetings

Our Oldbury watering hole was temporarily closed over winter but happily reopened in time for the February Council meeting, although unfortunately not serving food—but more of that later...

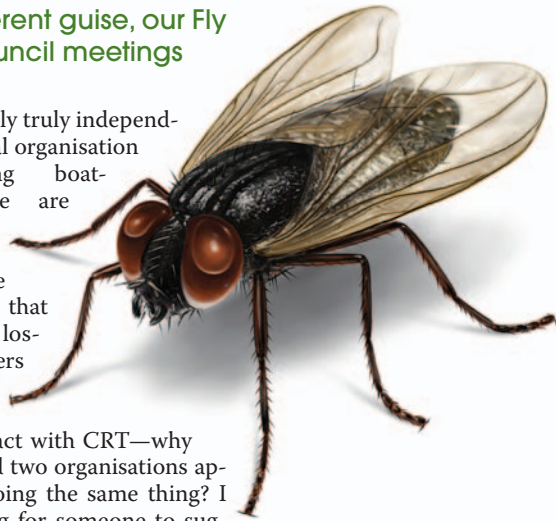
Down to business and welcome to two new Council members, who hit the ground running with their contributions to a lively discussion on CRT's proposals for roving mooring permits and £25—or is it £10?—charges for overstaying on some moorings—nobody seemed quite sure as different regions seem to be picking their own figures out of the air. Many Councillors were sure, however, that CRT did not have the power to impose these charges (or are they fines?) and everyone agreed that NABO should put out a policy statement so people know where we stand.

Then the thorny question of NABO's finances—the AGM in November gave Council the go-ahead to investigate options for an increase in members' annual subs. Much toing and froing about whether an increase will mean we lose members. Letters received say we won't and people are prepared to pay more to see NABO continue, but are these from a self-selecting group that is not representative? The upshot is no-one knows what will happen and it was reluctantly agreed to increase membership fees. The other side of this coin is the number of members we have and how can we get more: someone suggested that our problems would be solved if every member recruited one other.

Everyone agreed that NABO is

now the only truly independent national organisation representing boat-ers. There are rumours f l y i n g around the Interweb that IWA is losing members because it has signed a pact with CRT—why do we need two organisations apparently doing the same thing? I was waiting for someone to suggest putting an advert for NABO in the IWA Bulletin to welcome discontents as new members, but no-one did.

Lunchtime arrived. We opted for the local chippy and tucked into amazingly good value cod and chips for £2.10 a portion—although for one longstanding Council member, this was his usual meal anyway. In the afternoon, the discussion turned to what is NABO's USP (unique selling point for those who've not been around marketing people). There was general agreement on what it was, but how could this be put into some snappy phrases that would grab peoples' attention? The new blood on Council took up the challenge and will 're-brand' NABO over the coming weeks. The old hands looked on appreciatively and agreed to support their endeavours. After signing a get-well card for Secretary Richard Carpenter, who is recovering from a recent illness, the meeting finished early (for the first time Fly can ever remember).



NABO clarifies its position

Mooring regulations on CRT waterways

Richard Carpenter on NABO's response to the recent consultation

More Information

To view the consultation document see www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/consultations/current-consultations

It can be directly downloaded here; www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/library/2565.pdf

The consultation runs until 1st March 2013

CRT has issued a consultation document that outlines its plans to change the maximum stay times at 22 of the most popular visitor moorings in the South East Waterway region and many of its proposals have enraged parts of the boat-owning community. NABO issued a press release to clarify its views and its ongoing dialogue with CRT on this and other issues.

NABO has raised the following questions:

- What is the problem?
- Does the evidence support the definition of the problem?
- How will the proposed solution solve it?
- Is the implementation of the solution practical?
- Is the solution fair and reasonable, and who might be disadvantaged?
- Has the solution been discussed with representative groups?
- Is the solution consistent with other areas/regions?
- What is the legal basis for the proposed solution?
- What is the penalty for not conforming to the rules?

First define your problem

There has been little detailed information on defining the extent of the mooring problems. NABO does not deny there are problems; we agree there are hot-spots, but we do not wish to see widespread rules that are not required. We already hear evidence of enforcement officials picking on soft targets, rather than tackling the worst cases. This practice will cause enormous resentment

and lack of support. We would like to see rigorous enforcement of existing regulations in the hot-spots. There should be a range of mooring durations in towns and popular areas. CRT picking one blanket time period in a place because it is economical to manage is not a sound justification. There should always be some moorings which are free for 48 hours and some of longer duration—7 or 14 days.

NABO would like to see general enforcement of the visitor mooring durations and the 14-day rule in hot-spots. We will get nowhere until boaters can expect to be asked to conform with this basic requirement; at the moment to a significant extent, they know they will not. We do not agree with community mooring/roving mooring permits and we do not think they will work. We have said so consistently for many years.

Unfair on local leisure boaters

CRT wants to have 'no return' rules and we do not agree with this. NABO knows of no specific power for this and we know that BW was refused these powers in the build-up to the 1995 Act. NABO has not seen a satisfactory explanation of the need for this. CRT can expect to be challenged. Share-boaters and those who cruise locally from their home mooring will be disadvantaged by no return rules. However boaters who return to the same moorings with the intent of avoiding a home mooring are in NABO's view not 'bona fide navigating' and CRT should use this as evidence in a prosecution. Are hire boats to get preference?

Why is this fair? There is the suspicion that the hire trade is exerting influence.

NABO understands that CRT is empowered to charge for services and facilities and this could include visitor moorings. The overstay charge is suggested to be £10 per day in some areas, but £25 per day in the South East. Are we to have different solutions in different regions? This is confusing and inconsistent. £10 per day may well be perceived by a court as 'reasonable' to stay on a visitor mooring for an extra day. £25 however is at the moment shown as a 'penalty' on the old BW noticeboards on the K&A. NABO have pressed CRT to sort this out in the courts and get a ruling. We believe that, as in all contracts and rules, the consequences of not conforming need to be spelled out and demonstrated to be within the legal powers. NABO questions whether CRT has the powers to remove a licence for non-payment for services such as mooring. Boaters are urged to respond to the CRT consultation process.



Register your organisation on CRT's website

CRT is offering a free listing on the canalrivertrust.org.uk website for waterways organisations and businesses.

If you are involved with a cruising club, canal trust or society (or have a waterside business such as a café, trip boat etc.) you can now register and upload your details. Once the account is set up, you can update the listing whenever you like. Odette Myall, the website editor, commented: "The new service

is completely free and the listings will be displayed on our maps and appear in the site's search results.

Each day thousands of people visit canalrivertrust.org.uk looking for information and the listings facility will connect them with the people they're trying to reach"



More Information

www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/get-listed

Please read this!

Members' details on the website

We are slowly moving towards a web-based membership system, which is an essential move for the administration of a national organisation like ours. We spend a significant sum on day-to-day administration and chasing out-of-date contact details. It is particularly important now we are entering a period of changing membership fees. The fact is that as soon



Members need to register in order to be able to login.

The **Register** link is on the **Login** panel. You will need your NABO membership number for this, which is on the address label for NABO News.

When this has been completed, an email will be sent to you once your registration has been approved and you will be able to login.

To do this, click on the **Members** link, which then brings up a **Login** menu. If the email address we have for you is not longer valid, it will not work. You must then send an email to the Webmaster who will reset the records. When the username and password are in place, you can log in by clicking on the **Members** menu choice.

Usernames and passwords are case sensitive.

Forgotten your password?

If you have forgotten your password, click on the **Members** link, which then brings up a **Login** menu. There you will see a link **Forgot Login?** Click on it and you will be taken to the **Forgotten your Username or your Password?** page. Follow the instructions. If the email address we have for you is no longer valid, again you must send an email to the Webmaster who will reset the records and give access.

as a database is created it is out of date. New members and sadly those who do not renew, changes of address and changes of boats happen all the time. One of the things that members can do to save administration costs is to keep their own data up-to-date online.

We know that only a quarter of members have ever signed in as members and somewhat fewer have made an update. To do this it is necessary to 'sign in' on the website.

Anyone, member or not, can access the majority of the website but there are a few parts that can only be accessed by members. This includes the 'place to view' and 'update personal data' and the latest version

of the NABO News. (Some members have suggested that we can save postage by sending out NABO News electronically. This service is already available from the website, and you can usually get it sooner than by post). The system is secure, and you can only see your own data. Only our admin staff and Council members can see the members' data as this is needed to operate the Association.

Please make sure that we have an up-to-date email address for you

There is a FAQ in the Visitors section with more detail.

New member registration takes place as part of the process for those who sign up via the web-based system

Gobbledegook?

If all this is really too much, please send an email to the Webmaster or post a letter to the Administrator and we will sort it out. Whatever you do is better than doing nothing, because at some time, that will take a lot of effort by our administrator or you the members to sort it all out. You know it makes sense!

0800 numbers and your mobile phone

Call an 0800, 0808, or 0500 number from a landline and it's free. If you use a mobile you could pay, and calls to these numbers are rarely included in packages. There are various web services offering a way around this. Numbers that start 0808 80 (not just 0808) issued by The Helpline Association for non-profit helplines are always free to call from your mobile. The six big mobile network providers have agreed to make calls to these numbers free, though you may need credit on PAYG phones. Ofcom had a rush of consumer-supporting enthusiasm in 2012 and announced that they wanted to ban mobile phone networks charging for 0800 numbers, with a final decision to be taken this year. There is no recent news and mobile operators continue to charge.

Mobile provider current charges to make 0800 calls

Virgin	.....	41p
T Mobile	.....	40p
Orange	.....	25p
Tesco	.....	20p
O2	.....	15p
ASDA	.....	10p
Vodafone	.....	Free
3	.....	Free

As they say on 'Strictly', charges from your operator could be considerably higher. Fees for 0870 are similar. These charges are in many cases comparable with regular call costs, but are very rarely included in common inclusive minutes packages, so you pay extra. To avoid a surprise, check your

contract and see what you will be charged.

CRT and EA emergency phone lines are currently 0800 numbers. This is unfortunate, and there should be an alternative 0300 series like the general enquiries lines.

Weather site and smartphone app

yr.no is a Norwegian-based weather site that works well in the UK and includes lots of detail including temperature, wind speed and direction, rain and barometric pressure. It can be downloaded for smartphones and so, if you have one, this app may help keep you dry at the tiller this year. Further information at www.yr.no/place/United_Kingdom/

EmergencySMS for mobile phones

An emergencySMS service has been developed by the RNID, the government, OFCOM, the UK emergency services, BT and all mobile network operators. If you cannot make voice calls, you can now contact the 999 emergency services by SMS text from your mobile phone.

Emergency SMS has been designed for people with hearing loss or speech difficulties, but you don't have to be disabled to register and it could be very useful on boats where there is poor mobile phone coverage. The service works throughout the UK on all mobile networks.

What is an emergency?

You should only use emergencySMS for real emergencies, for example, if:

- someone's life is at risk
- a crime is happening now
- someone is injured or threatened
- there is a fire or people are trapped
- you need an ambulance urgently
- someone is in trouble in the water.

How do I use emergencySMS?

First you need to register—you will only be able to use this service if you have registered with emergencySMS first—do it now, don't wait for an emergency—text 'register' to 999. You will get a reply and then follow the instructions.

In an emergency, Text '999'. They will need to know:

- **Who?** (police, ambulance, fire and rescue or coastguard);
- **What?** (Briefly, what is the problem?);
- **Where?** (exactly where the problem is happening—give the name of the nearest road bridge, house number, postcode or nearby landmark).

The emergency service will either ask for more information or will tell you that help is on the way.

Don't assume that your message has been received until the emergency service sends a message back, usually in about two minutes. If you don't get a reply within three minutes, please try again or find other ways of getting help.

Westminster peers at CRT

Cap doffed, **David Fletcher** meets the MPs and Lords interested in the waterways

'A New Era for the Waterways' can be found at www.defra.gov.uk/consult/files/A-New-Era-for-the-Waterways-FINAL.pdf

Details of the CRT Waterways Partnerships are at www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/meet-the-team/waterway-partnerships

In January I attended a meeting in Parliament of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Waterways (APPG). This is a small group of MPs and Lords who are interested in waterway matters and are holding an inquiry on three items:

- To understand the aims and progress of the CRT Waterways Partnerships to date.
- How Partnerships are developing relationships with Local Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships and engaging with the community.
- To understand the future aims of Waterways Partnerships.

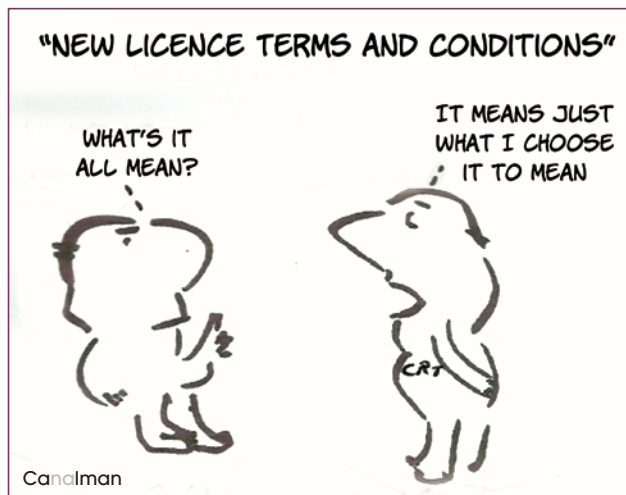
The inquiry will be held over two or three meetings, this being the first. This APPG was most recently involved in setting up CRT and the passage of legislation in 2011-12, and they are now following this up with progress reports. NABO representatives have been to many APPG

meetings over the years. The inquiry is co-chaired by Sir Toby Baldry MP and Huw Irranca-Davies MP and they were mostly asking the questions. There were many user and trade-groups represented, but they were not invited to speak or ask questions. There was quite a bit of repetition so I have grouped some of the comments so that the story flows. This is my summary of what was said:

CRT in the spotlight

The first part was about CRT progress and Robin Evans, the Chief Executive, and Tony Hales, the Chairman, were questioned. They confirmed that 13 partnerships are up and running with Chairs in place and teams have been selected from a wide spread of backgrounds and skills. Partnership Chairs are all people with influence. Formal induction training for the partnership teams has been completed through a number of workshops with CRT managers and directors. It was explained that CRT is still immature and that partnerships are advisory by nature. Partnerships are working on strategy documents that will be available for consultation in the summer.

The breach on the T&M was mentioned and the cash appeal originated by the Partnership raised £20,000, which CRT would not otherwise have had. Partnerships are building relationships with universities (e.g. Liverpool and East Midlands). Partnership chairs are meeting with CRT directors and the executive to use CRT's expertise and share best practice and ideas.



Overall CRT is pleased with developments so far, but there is a long way to go.

CRT managers are using the Partnerships; there is openness, access is good and there have been no complaints on this. Partnerships are looking at outside bodies for enterprise funding, working together and sponsorships. There are many interesting conversations going on—new engagement that never happened before.

CRT said it welcomed live-aboards; there are more around and likely to be more in future. They must move around or have a residential mooring.

CRT confirmed that there are no black holes in funding—indeed it would be very disappointing if there were after so little time. Cash is tight, but they expected it to be so. It will be better when the extra £10m p.a. kicks in. Volunteering is growing, particularly at the local level: there were 260 volunteer lock keepers in 2012 and 95% have asked to come back in 2013; there will be more than 40,000 volunteer days in 2013; and many organisations are adopting lengths of canal. Professional support is also coming forward. They are working on an educational scheme, which would be impossible with paid staff but OK with volunteers. Partnerships are throwing up a mass of opportunities and the problem is how to realise these—it will take effort and will be a challenge.

On the issue of the Oxford Canal (the Chairman's constituency) and the growth of live-aboards, CRT said

it welcomed live-aboards; there are more around and likely to be more in future. They must move around or have a residential mooring. There is a structured programme to manage the issue, with £0.5m extra in the budget next year. Two important court cases have endorsed CRT's legal position. Some users have genuine issues with money and CRT has to help boaters get funding if they are entitled. The non-compliant continuous cruiser issue is probably the most contentious matter at the moment. There are concerns about stakeholder management of the new organisation's structure, with over 200 additional people involved, with a large input. There is a need to be careful with management resources. Also dealing with the weather, water management and resultant damage to facilities are major tasks.



APPG Chairs Huw Irranca-Davies (top) and Sir Toby Baldry

The Central Shires Partnership

The second part of the session concerned the Central Shires Partnership. The witnesses were Charlotte Atkins (Partnership Chair, ex-MP and APPG member) and Mike Maryon (County Councillor, Staffordshire). The Partnership team is not just for boaters; other skills are needed. Twelve members have been appointed from different backgrounds; they spark off each other and are a good team. They are developing a strategic plan and there are great ambitions. The plan will be shared and it is important for people

News

Volunteer numbers

260 volunteer lock keepers in 2012

95% have asked to come back in 2013

There will be more than 40,000 volunteer days in 2013

to buy into it.

Staffordshire Waterways Group is already formed and is covering the Churnet Valley Enterprise Partnership. A CRT Enterprise Officer is working with local authorities and the Partnership on the local part of the national cycle network. There has previously been a lack of engagement with water-side businesses, new opportunities exist for access, team working, volunteering, getting businesses involved. Sponsorships of part of the waterway are being considered. The Partnership is talking with Atherstone Borough Council about using the old CRT workshops for activities and also making the town a stopping-off point for boaters.

Local publicity needs some work: CRT media tends to pick the national events and miss local issues. They would like to have a plan of local events for the region, but are not sure how to get it out there—perhaps future use of Twitter. The Partnership is engaging with local authorities. Staffordshire is already committed, having just spent £6m on Chasewood Reservoir and have

five other restoration projects going on.

The old view of a public waterway not being the Local Authority's problem is changing slowly. The strategic plan will give some clarity; it will be an open process and contributions are now being considered. It has to be a tool for regeneration and for the community.

Local publicity needs some work: CRT media tends to pick the national events and miss local issues.

HS2 and the Trent and Mersey

Phase I of HS2 is already affecting the area: the line crosses the A38 and the T&M near Lichfield and Phase II will cross the T&M again in Staffordshire. CRT said that BW had a special parliamentary procedure for land acquisition that provided some control over developments like HS2 and forced developers to be reasonable. This was lost with the formation of CRT and is the subject of discussion with Westminster at the moment. The irony is that the National Trust has this right for their navigations. MPs said they would write to Ministers in support.

The Partnership Chair wanted MPs to engage with CRT and encourage their local authorities to engage. Waterways are part of the local economy. There is a need to encourage business and local authorities.

This ended the meeting. The questioning was very gentle and clearly all the witnesses were keen to show progress is being made. There is obviously a wealth of opportunities coming to the fore. This is what CRT is all about, and we should welcome this.

**I name this boat ...**

If you have spotted a boat name that made you smile, please let me have a photo to use in future issues. Here's one from the Editor taken a few years ago somewhere up north.

Q at Honeystreet

If you visit the K&A at Honeystreet, you might notice a new message on the canal bank: three modest signs bearing the letter 'Q'. This stands for 'Quiet Zone', the result of a unique cooperative effort between boaters, the local community and CRT. Houses at Honeystreet stand close to the canal, and noise from moored boats sometimes caused problems. It could easily have become a 'them and us' dispute but instead, over a drink at the Barge Inn, boaters and Parish Council representatives looked for a way to solve the problem—or at least reduce it. A Parish Council meeting, attended by some 20 boaters, discussed the issue and CRT was approached. The result was a plan to mark out a short stretch of canal as an official Quiet Zone. The hope is that they could be a model for action at other trouble-spots. Mark Stephens of the CRT said: "The Honeystreet community has really got in-



involved in tackling a local canal-related issue. I look forward to seeing and supporting similar initiatives along the canal." Boater, Sharyn Jarvis, said the scheme was "a really good community way of showing that we can work together." And the Parish Council's chairman, Steve Hepworth, added: "We have had a very supportive response from the local boating community and the CRT."

HS2 takes little account of canals

The Government's preferred routes for Phase 2 of the High Speed Rail (HS2) have been published and show many canal crossing points, some of which have no provision for bridges on planned restoration lines and others look set to ruin the tranquillity of rural canals. Here are the proposed crossing points: The Trent and Mersey Canal: a new bridge between Woodend and Shade House locks, above Fradley Junction; alongside the marina at Great Haywood; the T&M and Middlewich Branch near Bostock Hall. On the Bridgewater Canal at Agden Bridge and across the Manchester Ship Canal. Across the Coventry Canal at the Pooley Fields Heritage Centre at Polesworth. The River Soar at Redhill, the River Trent's Cranfleet Cut, twice across the Erewash Canal at Sandiacre, three times across the Sheffield Canal and the Aire & Calder Navigation between Wakefield and Leeds.

However, there are no indications of any new bridges across the restoration line of the Chesterfield Canal between Staveley, Renishaw and Killamarsh, adjacent to the Ashby Canal

proposed restoration line at Burton Road in Measham, and across the Dearne and Dove, the Nottingham Canal at Trowell and the Barnsley Canal. Canal restoration groups are already lobbying to protect future restoration projects. You should contact your MP if you object to the plans in your area. The plans and further information are available at the Department of Transport website at www.gov.uk/hs2-phase-two-initial-preferred-route-plan-and-profile-maps.



Toilet talk

Selecting the right pumpout loo

LeeSan Director **Gary Sutcliffe** describes a couple of their recent toilet installations in luxury liveboard narrow boats

Lee Sanitation are at Fenny Compton, Warwickshire, CV47 2FE, and can be contacted at 01295 770000, by email at gary@leesan.com or via www.leesan.com

While boaters are out enjoying cruising, Gary Sutcliffe, Operations Director of Lee Sanitation Ltd., (aided and abetted by a certain Mr C. Coburn) is waiting for them to break their toilets or decide that this really is the final year on a plastic bucket. Here he describes toilet installations for two satisfied customers.

Regardless of their chosen interest, enthusiasts the world over are opinionated. Of course enthusiasm infers special interest in a subject and strong opinions, likes and dislikes— these are all part of what makes interest groups interesting people. Among boating folk one of the most discussed topics is 'the heads'. Even that name and its origin are hotly discussed!

A bit like the adage, 'it must be true, it's in print', the more enthusiastic the enthusiast the more credible their opinions are considered. My advice regarding marine sanitation is to beware of the towpath toilet expert. Many have opinions based on experience from inappropriate or poor equipment that may have also been wrongly specified or incorrectly installed. Do not be under any illusions regarding toilets on boats. The aforementioned towpath experts may suggest there is no such thing as a completely odourless marine toilet but that is absolutely not true. I speak with my hand on heart; my own boat, NB Progress, now 30 years old, has travelled extensively over pretty much every inch of the mainland UK waterway network as

well as a taste of mainland Europe waterways and 2000 coastal miles (all mentioned to emphasise the durability of the system installed) and it still incorporates the toilets that were installed during the boat's original build—and there are no nasty niffs, not even little ones!

As you would expect of a toilet salesman, I do talk to a lot of people about toilets for boats. I suppose it's because I have been doing it for years and have become, as one does with age, a bit of an old grump. I have developed a tendency towards impatience with those who feel they know better than me or my colleagues. If one wants something to be right, the best way to achieve that is to work with a professional and take their advice.

Pumpout or Cassette

One of the most basic and frequently asked questions is whether to install holding tanks, a cassette system or a portable toilet. Of course, cost can often be the defining element but for the sake of this article I am assuming 'convenience' rather than price to be the objective. So, on that basis I do not want to have emptying my cassette every other day or, worse, having to use a Mickey Mouse portable toilet and then empty that every other day. This therefore leaves us with a holding tank installation. The concerns that are raised regarding a tank system mainly centre on being caught with your trousers down, or rather unable to get them down, in the event of ice or any other barrier to

reaching a pump out station. If that is the concern then carry a small portable toilet for peace of mind. I have done so for 30 years and it has never been used! Of course, there is the issue of the cost of pump-outs but we have already agreed that this article is about convenience and comfort, not economy. I have not mentioned composting toilets because in practice they are most unlikely to suit an 'upmarket' narrowboat owner. The idea sounds great but they are a compromise for those whose boats can't be moved at all and are miles from a foul sewer.

I would like to introduce two customers, Couple A and Couple B (see how creative toilet salesmen can be!) They are both liveaboards. Both craft are in the top echelon of narrowboats and their different toilet systems are from two types available, offering slightly different facilities depending on individual boating and perhaps personal habits.

Couple A

Couple A had their boat built for them in 2001. She is a bespoke boat so they were very closely involved with every aspect of the design and planning and, since they were going to live on board permanently, their decisions about the toilet arrangements were a major consideration, not least because of a medical condition which makes this even more relevant. After much research and discussion with their builder, the couple decided to ask a toilet specialist to work with them to plan, design, supply and commission a vacuum powered system with two 'vacuflush' toilets discharging into a 100-gallon holding tank. As live-aboards who need to move their boat to a pump-out station for tank emptying, tank size and flushing water consumption were serious considerations and were a large part of the reason

for selecting these toilets which feature minimal water use.

The end result is that the tank is pumped out about once every three weeks. The tank capacity would normally allow greater duration between pump-outs but they both admit to being enthusiastic users of their toilets! A simple 'Tankwatch One' gauge gives a red light when the tank is nearly full, but they know by experience and the job is one of easy routine. The holding tank is stainless steel, provided by the boat builder, and was designed with

a sloping bottom and a small sump to ensure maximum efficiency of pump-out. The vacuum generator which powers both toilets is remotely sited under the floor in the wardrobe with maintenance access via a removable panel, although the skipper says that apart from replacing the pump plunger about every five years they never really needed to touch it. The only breakdown was caused by a visitor who dropped a bracelet down the toilet, requiring sequential dismantling of the pipework till the offending item was found. The lady of the boat says that they decided on the toilets because they wanted them to be as close as possible to domestic ones in size, quietness of operation, comfort, ease-of-use and appearance and a vacuum system



Vacuflush Toilet

Boating: Lee Sanitation



because it maximizes the holding tank capacity. A holding tank system was chosen because the couple did not want to be dragging a cassette a quarter of a mile up a rough track on a daily basis to empty it. Last year however, with six inches of ice on the canal, they did have to use a basic portable toilet for a few days, as they were completely frozen in and could not motor to the pump-out station. They comment that this is the first time that this has ever happened since they lived there. Having to use a 'plastic' toilet for only a few days was certainly preferable to 365 days a year. The boat is not on mains power so apart from a 2.5kVA generator, used to occasionally run high-consumption electrical equipment and re-charge the batteries, everything else is operated on 12V. This system is also maintained by a large solar panel. This was the first toilet system of its kind that the builder had installed so they asked us to work closely with them through all stages of planning and we even went back to the yard to commission it on completion. Ongoing maintenance consists of occasional treatments with a commercial de-scaler which has now eliminated a scale problem that built up over some years.

The couple say that they are delighted with every aspect of the equipment and installation and really do feel that, apart from their occasional pump-out trips, they have the best of all worlds and something that is about as close to a domestic installation as it's possible to get, without heavy use of flushing water and the inconvenience that would cause.

Couple B

Couple B are also committed live-aboards but had a different challenge and made some different decisions, and, because they took advice from us, say that they are absolutely de-

lighted with their new system. Their boat was built in 1991 in a rather more traditional style and was originally fitted with a plastic 'dump-thru' toilet, mounted on top of a steel tank that had been built integral to the boat's construction. The couple purchased the boat in 1995 and in 2009 they discovered that the holding tank was very badly corroded (to the extent that there were pinholes through the hull of the boat) and was therefore in urgent need of replacement! This was not as disastrous as it may have been: a vigilant boatyard had over plated the hull outside the tank and their first warning was when the toilet became loose on top of the tank.

The heads compartment was stripped out and the offending tank cut out of the boat. The owner says that he was horrified when he saw just how bad the corrosion was. Once again, after some research they selected a specialist to provide expert advice, help to design the system and supply all the components. The owner's brother is a plumber so he was press-ganged into helping install everything. The couple had previously had good experience with domestic macerator toilets so decided on a 'Sanimarin 48' toilet and a new plastic holding tank with a 'Tankwatch One' gauge. They purchased the complete system, including tanks and pipework, hoses and fittings, from their chosen supplier. As the heads had been totally cleared, the lady of the boat thought that this would be a great opportunity to fit a big shower and re-site the toilet. So, after the old tank area had been completely re-plated and rust-proofed, new bearers and a new floor were installed, followed by a smart new shower and a very elegant, domestic style toilet. The holding tank was relocated under the main bed, but with the connec-

tions and inspection hatch easily accessible under the wardrobe.

Like Couple A, Couple B are careful about what they do and don't put down the toilet (they say that the sticker under the lid says it all) and don't use chemicals, bleaches etc. that would harm the workings of the toilet or prevent important natural 'action' in the tank. Again, because the 'Sanimarin' toilet incorporates an eco-flush function, water use is minimal and this installation is only pumped out by hand using a manual pump-out kit once a month. The Skipper says he has it down to a fine art and he can do a clean, trouble-free empty in less than 15 minutes. He also says that this saves him the cost of membership to a gym!

Once again the decision to fit this system was influenced by their desire for something as close to a domestic bathroom as possible and their absolute refusal to carry and empty cassettes on a daily basis. Although the boat is on mains electricity on its home mooring, the toilet and most else on board is battery-powered enabling total cruising freedom when time allows. They comment that with hindsight they are both extremely glad about deciding to invest in a properly designed holding tank system. They say it is odour free, quiet and extremely reliable and makes living aboard so much more comfortable than any of the alternatives.

So there we are, two examples that prove that correctly designed, specified and installed holding tank systems really are by far the best and most convenient solution to onboard sanitation installations. For those concerned about any difficulty in getting 'pumped out' a small portable toilet can be hidden in a locker, but experience shows there is no need for compromise on the main installed system.

Boating: Lee Sanitation



Sanimarin 48 Toilet



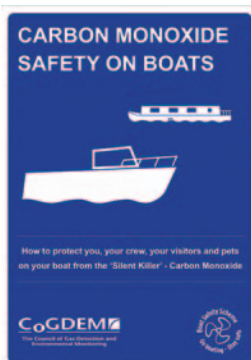
Dometic Tankwatch 1 holding tank warning system



LeeSan manual pumpout kit

The silent killer

Carbon monoxide—New advice from the BSS and Council of Gas Detection and Environmental Monitoring



More Information

Copies of the guide can be obtained from

CoGDEM, Unit 11, Theobald Business Centre, Knowle Piece, Wilbury Way, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 0TY,
Tel: 0800 1694 457

Further information is available from BSS at www.boatsafetyScheme.org/co, and CoGDEM at www.cogdem.org.uk/CoGDEMCOSite, which also has links to a guide to CO alarms.

The Gas Safe Register for gas fitters is at www.gassaferegister.co.uk

Each year, boaters die or are made ill from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning and in response, the BSS and Council of Gas Detection and Environmental Monitoring have brought out a booklet on protecting yourself and crew. CO is produced when any fuel doesn't burn completely and so it can be produced by stoves, generators, engine exhausts and even barbeques. The gas cannot be seen, tasted or smelled, and at high concentrations it can kill within minutes. At lower concentrations, symptoms include headache or bad temper, feeling sick and dizzy, tired or confused. Where victims survive they can be left with long-term brain damage due to CO causing oxygen starvation. If you suspect that you or a crew member has CO poisoning, get everyone and any pets outside immediately, if possible turning off appliances as you go. Seek medical help straightaway because CO poisoning can only be tested for shortly after exposure and its traces begin to disappear when you breathe fresh air. If CO poisoning is confirmed, get a qualified engineer to examine and repair appliances or the engine before they are used again.

Here are some things you should do routinely:

- Check all fuel-burning appliances and engine or generator exhausts for staining, discolouration or sooty deposits. If appliances are difficult to light or keep lit, burn weakly with a 'floppy' yellow or orange flame, or emit smoke into the cabin, get them serviced.
 - Check that flue pipes are clean and sweep solid fuel stove chimneys at least once per year.
 - Make sure flue or chimney outlets have not been damaged by bridges or restricted by stowed equipment on the roof.
 - Check engine or fixed generator exhaust systems for leaks and do not use a portable generator inside any accommodation space. Mooring with the exhaust against a bank and certain wind conditions can also result in CO entering the cabin.
- And here are some things that you should never do:
- Allow cabin ventilators or an appliance air inlet or heat outlet to become blocked (e.g. by piled clothing or cobwebs).
 - Leave LPG appliances on overnight, unless they are room-sealed type.
 - Use mobile gas heaters in a boat.
 - Bring used barbeque charcoal or ashes into a cabin unless they are completely cold.
 - Use a solid fuel stove with its doors open.
 - Run a portable generator in a cabin or covered cockpit with doors, windows or ventilators near to the generator closed.
 - Swim near to moored boats that have engines running—the exhausts can create a toxic atmosphere at water level, particularly when the air is still.

CO alarms do not take the place of regular servicing and proper maintenance of appliances. Only use alarms that meet BS EN 50291 standard and not the 'black-spot' colour changing indicator cards—these do not give an instant warning and do not have

an alarm. CO alarms should be fitted in all sleeping quarters unless the boat has a single multi-use cabin. In the main cabin they should ideally be placed 1-3 metres (in plan view) from a fuel-burning appliance, high on the cabin wall but at least 150mm from the ceiling. In bedrooms, alarms should be placed on the wall in the 'breathing zone' near the top of the bed head.

Test the alarm to make sure you can hear it from any point in the boat—if you can't then buy another one. Replace alarms before the expiry date and temporarily remove the alarm from the boat if you are working with paints, solvents or degreasers, or over winter if there is a risk of long periods of sub-zero temperatures that may affect the sensor or batteries.

BSS review

Significant changes to Boat Safety Scheme

Communication manager at the BSS, Rob McLean outlines the changes

The following is a summary of changes to the BSS Examination Checking Procedures for privately owned and privately managed boats, which came into effect from 1st January 2013. Most of the changes are to tidy up terms and descriptions, the aim being to see that the checks are applied consistently by BSS examiners, reducing risks and making boats safer.

The other changes can be summarised as:

- portable fuel tanks will not be allowed in inboard engine spaces to connect to fixed engines,
- five new advice checks concern the type and condition of inlet and lead connections in AC systems, ensuring that it is impossible to connect simultaneously more than one power source to the AC distribution system and a check that all AC circuits pass through a consumer unit,
- a new advice check for cracks and unintended gaps on solid fuel appliances,
- 15 existing checks are amended to introduce enhanced technical requirements,
- 63 changes have been made to

the existing checks that reduce or slightly change the technical impact,

- two checks, one about marine fuel filters and the other about AC shore connections, are being removed.

Note: Examiners will not disconnect LPG cylinders so boat owners must ensure that the examiner has full access to be able to check the LPG locker for condition, including the temporary removal of LPG cylinders.

Owners should discuss their locker arrangements with the examiner before the examination as this may require the owner to attend or make prior arrangements with service agents.

Boaters are also asked to make available for examination AC shore-power, battery charging and other power source leads for examination of type and condition. They should provide information about the location of the AC consumer unit to the examiner before the examination.

If practicable and safe to do so, owners should disconnect shore-power, battery charging and other power sources for the examination.



More Information

Full details and the rationale are at www.boatsafetyScheme.org/about-us/news-from-the-bss.

A complete version of the revised BSS Checks is available at www.boatsafetyScheme.org/boat-examination/private-boats.

An inspector's call on Leeds Wharves

CBOA Chairman, **David Lowe** reports on the recent ruling on Leeds' commercial wharves

In July 2011, Leeds City Council published the 'Leeds Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan', which will form part of the statutory development plan under the Government's new Local Development Framework. There was a public consultation last year and inspector Melvyn Middleton's report has just been published, upholding the plan as 'sound'. All future applications for planning permission will need to comply with it.

The Plan deals with protecting existing canal wharves and other locations with wharf potential in Leeds, including CRT's Leeds Inland Terminal at Old Mill Lane, Knostrop. BW had initially supported protection of this site, but the policy was reversed by CRT owing to perceived 'bad neighbour' issues affecting residents of nearby Yarn Street development on the former Goodman Street and Hunslet wharves. Mr Middleton said that such issues could be resolved saying: "This is a large site and it would be possible to screen a canal development from the housing and to locate any noisy aspects of such a development away from it. Its inclusion in the plan as a safeguarded

inter-modal transfer site is therefore justified and effective as well as contributing to a requirement expounded by national policy."

The other existing protected wharves are at Haigh Park, used by ASD Metal Services for storage, and the Fleet Oil Terminal. The Plan also protects a large CRT site in Skelton Grange Road with potential for a new wharf, which had been earmarked by BW as a container terminal but could also be used for handling general cargoes and marine aggregates.

Protected sites should not be sterilised indefinitely, will be subject to five-yearly review, and that under certain conditions activities that do not use water transport could be permitted.

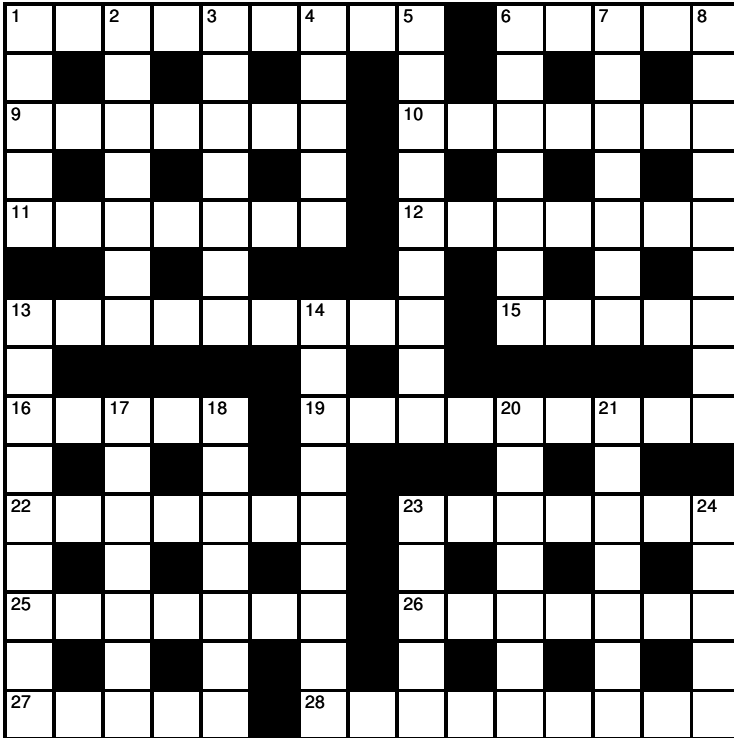
An excellent result that justifies all the hard work by CBOA officers, who have worked with Leeds City Planners on the project. We are grateful to the many people who have written to planners to support this policy and this obviously impressed the Inspector. It is now up to the industry, its customers, planners and the CRT to work together to maximise use of these facilities.

CRT Leeds Inland Terminal at Knostrop



NABO News Crossword N° 10

By Canaldrifter



Answers to Crossword 9

Across: 1 Dredger, 5 Rowlock, 9 Reading, 10 Latrine, 11 Evidently, 12 Rails, 13 Thesaurus, 16 Ibsen, 17 Antic, 19 Fisheries, 22 Pluto, 23 Eye-opener, 26 Initial, 27 Capstan, 28 Damaged, 29 Lustres.

Down: 1 Derwent, 2 Examine, 3 Guide, 4 Right, 5 Rallyists, 6 Water-line, 7 Origins, 8 Keelson, 14 Anchoring, 15 Refuelled, 17 Applied, 18 Tourism, 20 Igniter, 21 Springs, 24 Excel, 25 Pipes.

Across

- 1 Pickle maker sails around the bend at GU location (9)
- 6 Plain girl with Dad (5)
- 9 Senior Officer, with notes is revered (7)
- 10 Powder sprinkled around the cut at GU location (7)
- 11 This means ten sail about? (7)
- 12 You or me own an imp? (7)
- 13 Windows broken by a posher lot (9)
- 15 Audible icons fiasco (5)
- 16 Caper, at fifty missing from ocean (5)
- 19 Local Area Network spreader on North Western canal (9)
- 22 Interim confusion where canals end (7)
- 23 Irish Family Group appear around North Eastern areas (7)
- 25 Song could be for a cosy pal (7)
- 26 Repeating a passage through a tunnel? (7)
- 27 Earls confused by bright light (5)
- 28 Vessels back away from leaves during canal maintenance (9)

Down

- 1 Dashing young man down the weed-hatch? (5)
- 2 Gauge the morning rhythm (7)
- 3 Yare Navigation city possibly rich now (7)
- 4 Payments left when corrupt buyer drops out of trolley-bus deal! (5)
- 5 Canal guide publisher redevelops school and inn (9)
- 6 Blocks the old climbing into tugs (7)
- 7 Girl told to moor, even, we hear? (7)
- 8 A terrific mess for an RN technical rating (9)
- 13 Fish heads back from a tickle we hear, when possible (9)
- 14 Common money going to Dad, perhaps, if sucked in? (9)
- 17 Amphibious creatures that can do a turn (7)
- 18 Vessel used to make a cut? (7)
- 20 Dizzy Irish PA in a vessel? (7)
- 21 Abuzz at a meet up with a mixed gin (7)
- 23 Belief system within poor decor (5)
- 24 Reversible stories? (5)

A look at the past through NABO News

ReWind 15 Years

15 Years to February 1998

Tony Haynes continues to edit and abridge former NABO Newsletters



Depth: 'BW should be required to maintain its current published channel dimensions on rivers, and the minimum canal depth of 4ft as recommended in the Fraenkel Report.'

Gas Street Basin: 'NABO objects to BW applying, on behalf of a developer, for planning permission to erect a four-storey floating restaurant in the form of a Chinese junk in the basin.'

Stourport: 'The BW manager appears to have fallen out with everybody over his

plans for pontoons in the basin. It is his unwillingness to listen to and accommodate what they have been saying, which has led to this situation.'

Angling: After excellent consultation, BW's revised Code for Anglers has been accepted by all boating groups, but unfortunately nobody at BW remembered to show it to the National Federation of Anglers.

Rivers: Under Stephen Peters and Peter Foster, Council decided there was considerable merit in setting up a section to cater for the needs and concerns of boat owners who use river navigations.

BW Fined: In November 1997, BW was prosecuted for allowing over-abstraction from the Shropshire Union Canal and fined £30,000 plus £750 expenses. NABO asks that BW

should review its abstraction licence conditions as any transgressions clearly waste considerable sums of money that could be better spent on improving navigation.

LANT prosecute boaters: The Lower Avon Navigation Trust successfully prosecuted two boat owners for failing to register their craft. Each was fined £900 with £300 costs. 'This is an interesting case because the boats were moored in a marina. It appears that the LANT byelaws extend to backwaters, basins and marinas, unlike those of BW or the EA.'

WWW: In October 1997 the official NABO World Wide Website went 'live', thanks to Michael Wooding.

Sharpness: NABO has lodged a formal objection to SUSTRANS' proposal to erect a lightweight foot-bridge across the Old Arm entrance as part of a new cycleway along the Gloucester & Sharpness.

Letters: The CE of BW writes to refute the claim made by a NABO member in the previous month's letters column that £200,000 was missing from BW accounts. 'He created the difference just by comparing two completely different costs.'

A member is sickened by the endless complaints about BW. 'They are doing what any other undemocratic oligarchy would do. They are doing what suits them.'

Well did you ever!: Someone once wrote an article about the late Sir Francis Chichester and the caption under the accompanying picture read... 'the great yachtsman who, with his 24ft cutter, circumcised the world.'

Letters to the Editor

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

NABO Fees

In the latest NABO News you asked for comments on the subscription level and sought volunteers to help with the running of the organisation. I realise these are difficult problems to fully resolve but herewith a few comments:

Raising fees is a difficulty that many voluntary organisations get into when they do not regularly raise their subscriptions in line with inflation. It is fine to say our costs are less than our income so we do not need to increase fees but in my experience this only works for a short time before action needs to be taken. Then the organisation often finds the level of increase required is one that may cause anguish to the members. So I say raise the subscription by £10 but at the same time put into action a mechanism that records the new fee level as a bench mark and in future the fees rise by say £2 when general inflation indicates it ought to be done.

I think to get members to take on some of the big jobs in the organisation they need first a gentle involvement within it. So a couple of ideas that might be worth considering if they have not been discussed before. Set up e-panels that would allow members to contribute their views on relevant topics. I am sure one that would attract a lot of input would be on mooring issues. One would hope that a moderator would not be required. Start off by stressing the parameters for the panels. I do not know any other NABO members near me (say 25 miles) yet there must be some. Try and think of a way that we might occasionally come together in a not too serious way and with a chance for informal social contact.

John Martin

The Future of NABO

I have been reading with concern that NABO is considering closure due to lack of funds and membership. I have been a member for some

years, and during that time I have come to rely on NABO News as my main source of information about waterway politics. For what it's worth here's the story of why I joined—I'm not sure if any lessons can be learned from my experience, but maybe my situation is not untypical.

It started when I left the safety of Bristol Harbour and headed up the K&A. Initially the plan was to take the boat to London and once there, find a permanent mooring. So I signed all the BW forms required to get my licence, with no idea about continuous cruising or the 14-day rule. A few weeks of wonderful cruising later I arrived at Little Venice. After two weeks it was dawning on me that finding a permanent mooring was not going to be straightforward, so two weeks turned into four. Nobody said anything, so I thought, 'let's just see what happens.' The guy on the boat next to mine had also arrived not having a clue. As soon as the Mooring Warden came back from holiday he chased me off, saying I was 'taking the piss'. I found that a bit strong as I wasn't aware of having had done anything really awful. I moved on to the next mooring at Paddington basin. That was overseen by private security, who also got rid of me after a while. I started realising that you were welcome only as long as you didn't hang around. So I was getting a bit concerned as to where I was going to keep the boat. Some guy told me about winter moorings and I immediately signed up and spent a trouble-free winter in Islington. Come May, the local Mooring Warden had a word with me to get moving, but he was a lot more friendly than the one at Little Venice. My plan was to set off, spent the maximum allowed period at every mooring and see how long I could last. After about six weeks I found myself back at the outskirts of London. Then I fell into a pattern of shuttling back and forth between Paddington and Kensal Green mooring, spending 14 days each time, which carried on throughout the summer. This seemed to work okay, and as far as I was concerned I was obeying the 14-day rule.

Letters to the Editor

Another happy winter was spent on the winter mooring, after which I recommenced the shuttling pattern. The only problem was this time there was a meaner, nastier and very persistent mooring warden at work. He was uniformed, in police style, and oversaw a whole stretch of the canal. This guy followed my every movement. I felt persecuted. When I asked him what I was actually doing wrong he explained to me the concept of linear progression in one direction. At first I saw no point in this except unnecessary harassment. All I wanted was to keep the boat relatively near to work. I didn't want to commute too far, saving money, fuel, pollution, wear and tear of lock gates, etc. To me it made no sense. The scary thing was that there seemed to be nobody accountable at BW, I couldn't work out where these strange rules came from—sometimes enforced and other times not. I felt at the mercy of a vengeful, irrational and unpredictable authority. Where were the elected representatives?

The other boaters that I knew around London found various ways of dodging the rules. Usually that meant some kind of cat-and-mouse game with the mooring warden. Others took it a bit further and took on BW, knowing that their powers were limited. I couldn't really blame them as I had found BW anything but helpful. Personally, I didn't fancy the idea of being locked into a permanent struggle with the authority, so I started looking around for help.

I came across NABO on the Internet and they seemed to have a reasonable view of things. I took the small plunge and spent £15 on membership. Reading issues of NABO News I came to realise what it was all about, and that people had been worrying about those things for some time. I also gathered that there was a lot more talk than action, but still. It all started to make sense and I decided to change my wicked ways and start falling into line. It seems obvious now, but it took some time for me to realise that the canal was a limited resource and in order for everybody to enjoy it, it's necessary not to hang around one place for too long. It meant that I had to modify my lifestyle, but I am lucky that my work allowed me to operate using a laptop on the boat. I stuck a small motorbike on deck and started cruising continuously during the summer. I discovered the canal system around London and then way

beyond into the Midlands. I loved it. So in the end the crisis became the proverbial opportunity.

These days I am back in the West Country and have a permanent mooring, so I am a bit out of the loop. However the effects of poor BW management and boaters' dissatisfaction are all around and not getting any better. I have no idea what CRT will do, but I can't see how it's going to work without organisations like NABO. The way I see it, the disconnect between the boaters and the waterways authority is the main cause of the problems. NABO is ideally placed to act as an interface. Boaters need someone who represents them in the decision-making process.

Otto

Membership matters

It is with regret that I read of our current membership and funding difficulties. They do not however come as a surprise. I am inclined to vote for a significantly higher sub, if NABO's modus operandum is to support, campaign and fight for a more *laissez-faire*, less rule bound, less expensive, pro continuous cruiser waterway environment rather like it used to be when I bought my first boat 40 years ago.

However I am not inclined to support NABO, in fact I am inclined to resign from NABO as I have from RBOA, if the direction is to split the boating fraternity by supporting contentious issues, and kowtowing to the control freaks, be they in CRTor within the membership. Even where I can stomach what I do not like, I want NABO as a priority to campaign, with teeth, for lower boating costs on every front. Licences and moorings in particular are too high and CRT management costs are too high. To our shame and cost we tolerate them all. We shouldn't! NABO needs strategies for non-compliance and a clear understanding of red lines we will not cross. We haven't got them.

I believe membership is falling and existing boaters are not joining because they don't see what benefit NABO is to their boating wellbeing. The fact that we think they should is of no consequence. Most boaters know NABO exists but do not believe we are able to hold CRT to task and stop it from making our boating lives more difficult, cumbersome and expensive. So why join an

organisation that can't hold back the floodgates. There is no merit in being well meaning if you're ineffective. There is only one way to go to remain viable and that's to become tougher. I look forward to being part of a tougher NABO.

I could even be persuaded to volunteer my time and energy again for a more robust, tougher NABO. But I can't jump onto the NABO bus if it ain't going to the destination I want or is likely to give up the ghost before getting there. I would rather have kept our current difficulties unspoken and gone in for some dramatic, high profile campaign that generated lots of exposure and I believe the new membership would have quickly followed. Something like:

New Campaign for a New Year
Boat Licence Costs Too High
Mooring Costs Too High
Senior Management Costs Too High
Stop CRT Pricing us off the Water
NABO Launches Campaign to Halve Boating
Costs by 2015
Support Us—Join Us. Share Your Thoughts and
Ideas. Get Involved.
Campaign with NABO Now.

At least if it all goes pear-shaped, NABO will have gone out with a bang. But then I'm just banging on the same old drum that I've been banging for ever!

Simon Greer, Canal Boat Arabia

NABO's Future

I joined NABO a few years ago at a time when I thought IWA was in the pockets of BW. NABO certainly fought a good fight. I particularly appreciate having my six-month cruising licence fee reduced from 80% of a full year's licence to 60% after NABO had taken the issue to the Ombudsman.

However, I am a silent narrowboat owning member; I pay my fees and expect others to act for me. Judging by the turnout at the AGM, most other members think the same and, clearly, there are not enough volunteers to fill the various posts. So it seems that boat owners do NOT need NABO enough, or they think that issues like

licence fees etc. can be taken up just as well by the IWA or other boating organisations. Perhaps that is the problem: too many organisations representing, in one way or another, canal and river boaters. I would be sorry to see NABO go and do appreciate the efforts of council members, but if too few people are doing all the work and getting fed up with it, and appeals for help fall on deaf ears, that seems to be the logical outcome.

David Kennedy, nb Liberty Bell

CRT moorings

As a long-term member of NABO I have just sent the following letter to the CRT. (I hope I am not alone!):

Dear Sirs,

I have just read your consultation document on new mooring rules in the South-East. I am quite horrified by your proposals. We have been boating on the canals now for almost half a century, and we see absolutely no need for these draconian measures. Any problem concerning a shortage of visitor moorings around the country is simply the result of insufficient new visitor moorings having been created over the years to accommodate the steadily increasing number of boats that need to use them. It is obvious that more boats need more moorings! We would imagine that the imposition of fines by the C&RT is illegal. However, whether the imposition of such fines is illegal or not, we are horrified that the C&RT are now introducing the sort of measures that apply to motoring on the roads to the lovely, relaxed way of life that has always been part of the ethos of the canals—a lovely, relaxed way of life which for nearly half a century has drawn my wife and I, like all our boating friends, to the inland waterways. I would imagine that the early pioneers of pleasure boating such as Tom Rolt are turning in their graves when they see how you are seeking to destroy the wonderful ambience of the canals. To conclude, I would repeat that what we need are more visitor moorings (including the designated 14-day ones which were promised at the time of the passing of the 1995 Waterways Act) to match the increase in the number of boats, and not these draconian measures.

Yours sincerely, RC Hamilton.

UPCOMING EVENTS!



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