



NABO News

The Magazine of the
National Association of Boat Owners
Issue 3—May 2013



**CRT MOORINGS CONSULTATION
BRINGING BOATS BACK TO BURSLEM
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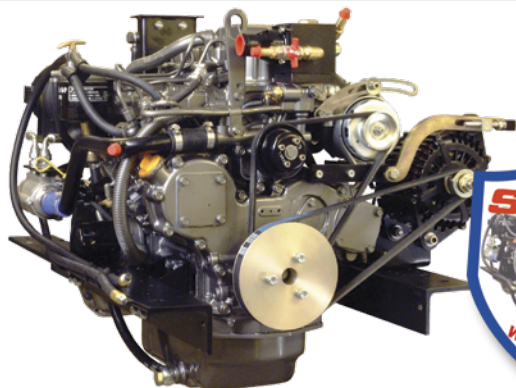


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NABO News

The magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners

Issue 3 May 2013

Table of Contents

- 5 Editorial
- 6 Chairman's Column
- 7 Legal notice
- 8 Fly on the Wall,
- 9 NABO Policies

News:

- 12 APPGW report, Website registration, Boater's reps on CRT Council, New BSS certificate
- 14 NABO response to CRT moorings consultation and ...
- 16 Preliminary CRT consultation report
- 19 Consultation Workshop—a letter to CRT

Boating:

- 20 Bringing boats back to Burslem
- 22 What's not to like?—community boating
- 25 All change on the Rochdale
- 26 Talking Points: Visitor mooring discs
- 27 Crossword
- 28 Rewind—Past NABO News
- 29 Letters

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 15th June 2013

Front Cover Photo Competition



This month's cover is from members Susan and Brian Chadwick, whose daughter, Beckie, has designed this and another canal-related picture as a change from her usual designs. Her website is at www.gyptianqueenillustrations.co.uk

NABO Calendar 2013

Council Meetings in 2013:

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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CRT Emergency No: 0800 4799947

EA Emergency No: 0800 807060

The NABO Council

Chairman

David S. Fletcher

5 Westwood House, Abbey Park, Beckenham,
Kent, BR3 1PL 07719 276 659

nabochair@nabo.org.uk

Vice Chair and Public Relations

Jane Taylor

jane.taylor@nabo.org.uk

centralshires@nabo.org.uk

General Sec. Promotion & Recruitment

Richard Carpenter

Mill House End Farm, Grape Lane, Croston,
Leyland, Lancashire PR26 9HB
07989 441674 or 01772 600886

gen@nabo.org.uk

Treasurer

Stephen Peters

325 Alcester Road, Wythall, Birmingham B47
6JG, 01564 824927

hontreasurer@nabo.org.uk

Moorings and London Representative

Simon Robbins

Nb Centurion, Kensal Green Moorings,
Ladbroke Grove W10 4SR
0208 9644 516

moorings@nabo.org.uk

Legal Affairs

Geoffrey Rogerson

51 High Path Road, Guildford, GU1 2QQ
07768 736593

legal@nabo.org.uk

Council member

Mark Tizard

mark.tizard@nabo.org.uk

Council member

Mike Rodd

07831 860199 mike.rodd@nabo.org.uk

Vacant

**Minutes Secretary, Continuous Cruising &
Webmaster**

cc@nabo.org.uk web@nabo.org.uk

Council Member Southwest

Andy Colyer

The PO, 21-23 Holcombe Lane,
Bathampton, Bath BA2 6OL

south@nabo.org.uk

News Editor

Peter Fellows

19 High Street, Bonsall,
Derbyshire, DE4 2AS

nabonews@nabo.org.uk

Regional Representatives:

North Western Waterways:

Richard Carpenter (details left)

North East, Yorkshire and Humber

Share Owners Representative

Howard Anguish

2 Broadley Croft, Welton, Brough, East Yorks
HU15 1TD 01482 669 876

yorks@nabo.org.uk, shareowners@nabo.org.uk

London Waterways

Simon Robbins (details left)

South East

Geoff Wood

07968 491118 se@nabo.org.uk

Southern Waterways

Andy Colyer (details left)

Rivers

Stephen Peters (details left)

Midlands Waterways

David S. Fletcher (details left)

East Midlands Waterways

Joan Jamieson

60 Waddington Drive, Wilford Hill, Nottingham
NG2 7GX, 0115 981 2047

emids@nabo.org.uk

Anglian Waterways

anglian@nabo.org.uk

The Thames

Louis Jankel

07831 197171 thames@nabo.org.uk

Graham Paterson

0118 986 3959 midthames@nabo.org.uk

Additional Contacts

Assistant For The Disabled

Philip Ogden

Wharf Cottage, Finwood Road CV35 7DH
01564 782516

disability@nabo.org.uk

Administration

Melanie Darlington

111 Maas Rd, Northfield, Birmingham B31 2PP
admin@nabo.org.uk

Technical, BSS & MCA Representative

Trevor Rogers

12 Greenham Mill, Newbury, Berks RG14 5QW
07990 594221

technical@nabo.org.uk

Consult (verb)

Editor **Peter Fellows** considers consultation

In this issue CRT features prominently, not always for the right reasons: it seems to be increasingly confused between what constitutes consultation with its 'customers'—boaters like you and me—and what is a simple reporting of developments. Many, if not most, boaters are still unaware of the detail of what CRT is about and what its policies are, so I welcome the boaters' meetings that are taking place all over the country by Head of Boating, Sally Ash, and Trustee, John Dodwell.

Other routes by which CRT can contact boaters, include Waterways Partnerships, the National Users Forum (NUF), user groups and now 'surgeries'. But is there a risk that this proliferation of 'consultation' will confuse rather than clarify the situation? Waterway partnerships are locally focussed and advisory with little, if any, power over CRT policy. User group meetings are perhaps the most useful to boaters, as direct feedback to local waterway managers, and there seems to be no good reason to replace them with 'surgeries', if this is the intention.

But let's be clear, while informing boaters of new ideas and developments is essential, it is not consultation. That requires a two-way process. On the positive side, CRT has sought boaters' views via its consultation on visitor moorings in the South East, so credit will be due if the views are taken into account with any new policies on visitor moorings. NABO's response to the consultation and CRT's preliminary report appear in this issue.

Why was NABO, the only national group representing boaters,

not consulted when CRT changed booking arrangements for the Rochdale Canal, detailed in this issue? Furthermore, recent pronouncements on mooring permits, £25 overstaying or 'service' charges, community mooring permits and 'no return' rules seem to be being made without widespread consultation. Changes that appear to be the proverbial sledgehammer taken to a very small nut in one area, risk being applied nationally before most boaters realise what has happened. The realisation by some boaters of their lack of influence over policy and the arbitrary imposition of new rules may be one reason for the current backlash on the internet, reflected in the letters I have received for this issue.

It is time for CRT Trustees to clarify the procedures that individual boaters, and their organisations, can take to influence policy and to apply the procedures uniformly and nationally. The four Trustees elected to represent boaters have responded to earlier misconceptions of their role with a statement. They point out that they can take boaters' policy suggestions and concerns to CRT Council, but they are presumably supporting CRT's (im)position regarding 'no return' rules, overstaying charges etc.

CRT was launched with enormous goodwill from most boaters after years of ill will towards BW. It would be a huge pity if this were lost through confused reporting structures and a perceived lack of willingness to genuinely consult boaters—goodwill that, if lost, will take decades to regain.



An apology...

...to Tony Baldry MP, for calling him 'Toby' in the last issue and thanks to Peter Braybrook, the eagle-eyed constituent who let me know, commenting: "In response to your invitation to submit 'names that make me smile', Sir Toby brought a smile to my lips but I am not sure it would have brought one to his!"



Irksome—I like it!

Chairman **David Fletcher** reflects on the latest waterways happenings

We had a very full Council meeting last week, with more present than we have had for many a year. Rest assured the proceedings are very frugal, as anybody who has been to the Waggon and Horses will know. Please don't be shy, come and join us because more are needed.

Trevor Rogers from the Community Boating Association visited us to see what we are up to and share some of his issues. I hope we can work together to our mutual benefit. You can read elsewhere about the organisation he works so hard for.

We have reviewed the NABO policy document to bring it up to date and make it more relevant to the current issues. For long-term members there will be no surprises, as the content reflects what we have been saying for many years. Please take the time to read the policies, and let us know your views.

National Navigation Forum

I recently attended the first meeting of CRT's National Navigation Forum. This august body has no role in the management of the Trust, but follows on from the old BAAF as a communication body. There was a big attendance and hence this can hardly be a forum for debate, but we were spoken to at length about progress in development of the CRT and given an opportunity to ask a few questions. It is another opportunity for CRT to get information out to established and new groups who are less familiar with it than we are. The point of this tale is that Robin Evans,

who was one of the speakers, can be relied upon to say something to grab my attention. He was talking about the Growth and Infrastructure Bill, which disgracefully creates the likelihood of CRT not having the same opportunities for objection to developments as the National Trust. He said that Government were learning that CRT can be 'irksome' if it (CRT) was not treated properly. It was an LOL moment. The boot is really on the other foot now. Irksome is in favour, and I like it.

CRT oversteps its powers

CRT has lost a case in the Court of Appeal over riparian rights to moor on the tidal Brent River. It has been widely reported and I will not try to interpret it here. Suffice to say that the judgement includes some pithy comments that are worth reading. Two things for me to say: one is that interpreting the law is not an exact science and requires checks and balances. It is very dangerous when one party claims sole rights on the law, rules by it and rejects any other view.

The courts are a great leveller and they have done some levelling here. The shame on CRT is that it has taken a boater acting for himself to do this. Secondly, I understand that there are significant costs for CRT as a result of this—and that goes back to the first part; the law is expensive as well as dangerous.

SE moorings consultation

The SE moorings consultation is closed and early indications are that CRT will press on. There is much detail to go through and we have put it

into our response.

What really does worry me is that CRT proposes to use 1962 Transport Act power 'as they think fit' to impose blanket non-return rules on visitor moorings in the area. The '62 Act is the enabling act to set up BW (and British Rail) and clearly nei-

It may look good behind a desk, but I suspect it will also not be effective on the towpath.

ther BW nor Parliament expected to leave it to BW to just get on with setting powers forever. BW asked for, and were given, specific powers as private bills, most notably the 1983 and 1995 Acts, which are the Acts that get used for enforcement.

I don't think that Parliament expected in 1983 and 1995 that BW/CRT could later take it upon itself to amend these later Acts as 'it think fit'.

Returning to 'no return'

In the build up to the 1995 Act, BW asked for 'no return' powers and these were not allowed. The more general '*bona fide navigation*' pow-

ers were given because they offer protections for boaters.

Here we are 18 years on and there have been only four court cases that have been relevant to these 1995 Act powers. CRT has already shown its readiness to cite the '62 powers in trivial circumstances. I reported their response to our comments on the latest licence terms and conditions in the January issue. Yes, the '62 powers exist, but their use in discriminatory situations, without any supporting justification, is not right and not the actions of the guardian of the canals.

It may look good behind a desk, but I suspect it will also not be effective on the towpath. Such things need wide support to be effective, or matters will become 'irksome'.

K & A Partnership still in camera

I am eagerly awaiting the K&A partnership proposals for the mooring strategies below Devizes. These have been 'in camera' for quite some time and they need to be published.

There has to be room for new ideas and, if there is widespread support for what they have to say, it may well have the best chance of success. Here's hoping.

Legal Notice

Geoffrey Rogerson

As readers may recall, NABO has obtained legal opinion on two prior occasions regarding various proposals made by BW relating to moorings and cruising. Following the latest proposals by CRT, there have been a number of consultations and a mix of responses from London, the Southeast Region and the K&A Partnership.

These are now nearing finalisation and approval or otherwise by CRT. Stemming from these responses, NABO has now formulated a series of questions to our legal advisers and we should be in a position to challenge CRT in some respects in the near future. This has now a degree of urgency as we understand that CRT intends to introduce the 'new rules' shortly.

NABO News will publish both the questions we have posed and the responses from our legal advisers in due course so that you are fully informed as to NABO's position on the CRT proposals.

NABO Council, 16th March

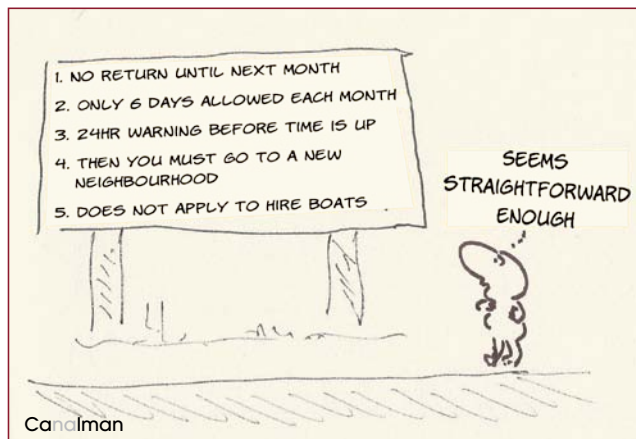
Fly on the Wall

Observes proceedings at the last Council meeting.



Oh dear, oh dear, lots that's not right this month ... For me I missed nibbling crumbs from the pub lunch (again); apparently the Waggon & Horses' landlord disappeared after our last meeting! With a full attendance this month, CRT took up most of the meeting: After all the fanfare about social inclusion at its launch last year, we find it has so far ignored community boating organisations; CRT 'chuggers' are also appearing at trip boat moorings to get people to join the Trust, causing confusion on the K&A when punters think they are signing up for the K&A Trust. CRT is not only competing for other charities' funds but there are reports that it is attempting to control fundraising on CRT property—is this quality control or attempting to grab the public's cash? Then there is Nigel Moore's court case (admittedly started by BW but continued by CRT): does something become unlawful simply because CRT says

so? And was the case really worth all the money it has cost CRT? So much discussion on weblogs about CRT being BW in lamb's clothing: what should NABO do? We decided to stick to the facts and lead the criticism if CRT is clearly in the wrong, which led directly to discussion of moorings consultations, over-staying charges and community moorings—what are these and what will they cost? Why is a 'no return' rule needed and how are shared boats going to cope with this? (Hire boats are apparently to be exempted). The consultation debacle on the K&A appears to be being repeated in London. Where is the evidence of a problem with a shortage of visitor moorings? Council members have spent a lot of time trying to find out and concluded it doesn't exist. New towpath mooring managers are to be recruited—but if there is a moorings' shortage you could build a lot of new ones for their salaries, rather than changing the rules. As someone pointed out: 'public bodies tend to exceed the powers they have or assume powers they're not entitled to.' Then back to transparency (again): CRT is complaining that Freedom of Information requests are expensive and a waste of the charity's money, but what can we do when draft minutes are not produced months after a meeting? And what is all this about CRT 'surgeries'—what are they for now that CRT has all these new Waterways Partnerships and what was wrong with User Forums? As usual more questions than answers, but Council is on the case.... Byeeee.



NABO Policies

NABO Council develops policies from time to time and these form the basis of our consultation with navigation authorities and other user groups. These are reviewed in consultation with the membership and are therefore the nearest we can get to a consensus of opinion within our Association.

Please consult Council members if you feel unable to represent any of the policies shown below, or if you wish to propose an amendment to a policy.

1 NABO's role

NABO is dedicated to promoting the interests of private boaters on Britain's canals, rivers and lakes. NABO was formed in 1991 and represents over 3,000 boaters, predominantly on the waterways operated by the Canal & River Trust (CRT) and the Environment Agency (EA). Views of members are obtained through correspondence, Association publications, surveys, open meetings, and face to face contact with boaters at boat shows and on the waterways. NABO will work positively with all navigation authorities, principally CRT and EA, to represent boaters' views.

2 Waterways Regulator

NABO welcomes the continued presence of the Waterways Ombudsman and the scrutiny this brings to the activities of CRT. NABO would wish the Ombudsman to have a remit covering all inland navigation authorities, to provide a uniform approach applicable to all waterways not presently included in

the various Ombudsman schemes. This should also encompass the navigation functions of the EA.

3 Boater safety

NABO will actively promote safety issues among boaters and other canal users, and contribute to the work of the Boat Safety Scheme.

4 Consultation

NABO is committed to meaningful consultation and would like to feel more confident that the views of users are being taken seriously. There should be meaningful consultation for all significant issues that affect boaters (for example stoppages, terms and conditions, priorities for maintenance expenditure, mooring regulations, use of powers from the 1962 Transport Act and changes to waterside furniture). The application of rules should be consistent across the system. There should be no opportunity for individual Waterway Business Units or Partnerships to interpret the navigation laws.

5 Licensing, Regulations and the law

NABO will monitor all legal cases made available the Association and take legal advice on matters of interpretation and senior court judgements. NABO believes that all regulations must be applied equally to all boaters and have national legality. CRT, being established by statute, must have rules that are in accordance with the powers granted to them by Act of Parliament, and must be seen to exercise and test their interpretation in Court. NABO

will challenge CRT where in its view, CRT are exceeding their powers. NABO does not support 'Roving Mooring Licences' or 'Community Permits', which are from time to time a proposal of CRT but not designated in BW Acts.

6 Licence and Registration Evasion

NABO does not condone licence/registration evasion and will do all it can to promote compliance on behalf of the navigation authorities.

7 Mooring Abuse

NABO supports a 'fair use' policy for all parts of the waterways. Unauthorised overstaying on moorings is a national problem that navigation authorities and land owners should address. We agree in principle with CRT's 'Guidance for boaters without a home mooring', dated September 2012, and will encourage bona fide navigation. Enforcement must be seen to be even-handed and not discriminatory.

8 Visitor Mooring Charges

NABO is opposed to charges being applied to visitor moorings. NABO believes that if such moorings are included in the licence fee, then there should be no further charge. This should be by default 7 or 14 days and only shorter where the demand for mooring in that location exceeds the supply and it is not possible to provide sufficient extra moorings to satisfy that demand. A mix of available mooring durations is NABO's preferred option. Where a vessel overstays the advertised mooring period, NABO will support the application of CRT's charges, but not the refusal of a licence on these grounds alone. NABO would like to see a test case to underwrite the legality of the level of charge.

9 Boating Cost Increases

NABO will seek justification and wherever appropriate challenge any increase in licence, permit, mooring or other boating fees that exceeds the rate of increase to which pensions are linked.

10 Scope of Licence and Moorings Terms and Conditions

NABO believes that licence/permit Terms and Conditions should be restricted to those essential to the successful administration of the system and be transparently based on the applicable laws. Safety requirements should be limited to those that protect third parties from proven risks.

11 Mooring Fee Justification

NABO believes that navigation authorities and service providers should offer written terms and conditions for boaters. A justification and breakdown of mooring fees should be available to all. NABO does not support the auction of CRT moorings, and prefers a waiting list system.

12 Vegetation Management

NABO believes that vegetation should be managed so it does not impede or prejudice the safety of activities concerned with navigation.

13 Dredging and Channel Dimensions

All navigation authorities should recover the original profile of channel dimensions whenever dredging takes place, except where exceptional engineering or usage reasons exist. Dredging at designated mooring areas should be sufficient to allow deep-draught boats to come alongside the bank.

14 The role of CRT

NABO believes that CRT should place its obligations as a navigation authority at the top of its duty priorities, and only conduct other commercial activities as a means to further this aim. NABO believes that property development, pub management, water distribution, communication data distribution, marinas, event organisation, nature conservation and development of the waterway corridors as linear public parks should not in any way prejudice the maintenance and development of the waterways as routes for travel by water.

15 Cycling

NABO is against any organised cycling or performance events on the towpath. Boaters and pedestrians should have priority over cyclists on the towpath and we remain very cautious, on safety grounds, of the 'upgrade' of towpaths in order to create cycle ways. NABO is in favour of any steps taken to ensure that cyclists slow down before passing moored boats and pedestrians. CRT should take responsibility for allowing cyclists on towpaths and enforce its bye-laws

16 Angling

NABO is opposed to angling-only lengths of bank. Boaters should have sole use of lock landing stages and facilities points and priority at designated visitor mooring sites. Elsewhere, priority should be on a first-come-first-served basis.

17 Crime and Vandalism

NABO will support all agencies and do whatever else is necessary to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour on the waterways.

What it's all about; boating on the
Rochdale summit
Photo: Peter Fellows



Second APPGW Meeting

A report by **Mike Rodd** on the inquiry into Waterway Partnerships

Tony Baldry was Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Waterways on 29 January, until he was called to a Division halfway through the second session. A theme of the questioning was how the Partnerships were going to fundraise, but there was no reference in these sessions to them being engaged in development of their waterway business plans. In the first session, the West Midlands Partnership Chair, who led one of the three Trial Partnerships, has formed a strong group with 20+ members and they have developed excellent relationships with some of their local authorities.

His theme was engagement with non-boating businesses and communities. Through the local authorities, they are also trying to develop good relationships with schools and other youth organisations, aimed at increasing the use of the waterways, largely for non-boating activities. A staff representative from Birmingham City Council said that their main thrust is to increase canal use by non-boating communities and stressed the need for better materials for school-children.

The South East Partnership Chair reported that it is early days and he is still seeking members. Their aspiration is to build alliances with local authorities and possibly parish councils. In the second session, the All Wales Partnership Chair noted that this Partnership has a role to link to the Welsh Assembly and the two other Partnerships that cover the Welsh Canals. The Acting Chair and a member of the Kennet & Avon Partnership reported that this Partnership is already engaged with their riparian Councils through the long-standing Heritage Lottery Fund Partnership.

They also described the value of the strong K&A Trade Association. The Acting Chair is also working on getting Guides and Brownies more active on the waterways and has introduced a Guides' Waterways Badge

The Manchester & Pennine Partnership Chair said it was early days and there were many challenges, mainly because of the wide range of ca-

nals that this Partnership covers. They are forming a group of mainly new, non-canal, people.

Some ideas that were discussed at the meeting include:

- Use APPG to make relevant MPs aware of their waterways.
- Urge Riparian Councils to have a member responsible for their waterways.
- A prize for the parish that makes the best use of its waterways (similar to 'Britain in Bloom' awards)

Clearly each partnership is taking on a different characteristic and each is at a different stage of development. It was evident that CRT sees Partnerships as advisory with the key role being fundraising.

Register Your Details on NABO's Website

Following the appeal in the last NABO News, there has been a steady flow of members updating their data. Thank you to those who have, but we have a long way to go, so please log in and update your data if you have not done this recently. The system is secure, and you can only see your own data. Only admin staff and Council members can see the member's data as needed to operate the Association.

You need to register in order to be able to 'login'. If you have not done this before, the best thing to do is email the webmaster at web@nabo.org.uk to get it organised. New members joining via Paypal have this organised as they join.

If you are brave enough to have a go, but are unsure of login details and have not registered your email with us, type www.nabo.org.uk to find the website. Follow the instructions on the website or in the last issue. If you have any problems, there is an **FAQ** section with more details in the left-hand box of the Visitors' part of the website.

Boaters' Reps on CRT Council—what we're here for

A statement by **Ivor Caplan, Ann Farrell, Clive Henderson** and **Vaughan Welch**

We are aware that there is some confusion amongst boaters regarding the roles and responsibilities of the four Council members elected by private boaters. These notes are not formally adopted by Council but are our understanding of them. As Council members we have a responsibility to support the Trust in developing and managing the waterways for the widest public benefit in the long term. This includes providing guidance to Trustees and managers from our knowledge and experience to help shape policy and inform debate on general issues. We are also there to assist communications between boaters and the Trust Council. We have a role monitoring the Trustees to ensure that they act in the best interests of the Trust and have the power to appoint or dismiss them. As boaters' representatives we have a responsibility to represent our constituency of private boaters and provide a voice for their interests. We tend to refer to navigation rather than boating as this gives a wider perspective of the importance of a good quality canal corridor to all waterways users. This representation does not cover in-

dividual concerns raised by boaters: there are reporting processes in place for these, although we have an interest in ensuring that these work adequately and are well-communicated to boaters. Rather, we act as a sounding board for strategic matters raised by boaters, assimilating these from communication with our constituents and, if we think it appropriate, passing them to the Council, Trustees or managers. Council time is limited and agendas are busy, so this will often be done informally with the relevant managers. In a wider sense we have a responsibility to champion navigation for the long-term, within the various interests represented on Council. To date we are encouraged that Trustees and Council members recognise the primacy of navigation, but we are there to fight for it should the focus of the Trust's activities ever change. For the sake of clarity, we are elected solely to represent the interests of all private boaters and do not in any way represent any other organisation or category of boater. Thus we must act on our own consciences and in the best interests of the Trust on behalf of the boating community.

New-Style BSS Certificate

Starting in April, the BSS examination records changed to an online database system which enables examiners to directly input the records of examinations. Boat owners no longer have to send off the blue copy of their BSS Certificate to the boat's registration or licensing authority. After an examination, the owner will receive a copy of a new style certificate, named a BSS Examination Report, for their records. It will either record a pass or it will outline any failure notifications and advisory information.

Navigation authorities now have access to the BSS database and can check your boat's certification details and expiry date. They will no longer use printed BSS documents and the change will allow them to develop online boat registration and licensing applications, making administration easier. The database holds only examination and boat data; no personal information is included.

The change also allows BSS examiners to provide the new certificates either as electronic files or printed on plain paper. The improvements will enable boat risk information to be recorded online as part of a plan to improve safety on the waterways.

Existing BSS Certificates continue to be valid until their expiry date and boat owners should continue to pass on the BSS certificate to the new owner if a craft is sold. A guide to the new-look certificate is available online at www.boatsafetyscheme.org/boat-examination/arranging-the-examination/new-style-certificate

Consultation (*noun*)

NABO Responds to CRT Mooring Consultation

Mark Tizard on signage and rules for South East visitor moorings



NABO agrees that some parts of the waterways are congested at certain times of the year and that there can be limited availability of designated visitor moorings for local leisure boaters and visitors. There has been a poor track record on defining the problem in the past (e.g., the River Lee and the K&A). It is not a matter of denying the problem: 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 will cause enormous resentment. We would like to see consistent, rigorous enforcement of existing regulations at the hot spots.

However NABO is concerned that CRT has not published any evidence gathered from regular inspections by its own staff to support any of the proposed changes. When CRT makes proposals for mooring periods at specific places, it would be helpful if an explanation was given in each individual case. Furthermore, once the changes are implemented, it would appear that CRT's intent is to conduct subsequent daily inspections to confirm (or otherwise) that those changes were necessary. NABO suggests that this is the wrong way of implementing changes and that CRT should seek to carry out daily inspections for a defined period on the proposed sites, at both high and low seasons, to determine the extent of the need. Then propose a solution, should one be required, to address that need.

Any shortage of space at peak periods may be attributed to a shortage of sufficient moorings rather than boaters overstaying. For over a decade, one of our longstanding criticisms is that, while boat numbers have increased substantially, infrastructure and facilities for visiting boats have not increased proportionately. It is not currently clear if the problem is too many boats, too many boats not moving, or just not enough moorings.

We do not wish to see widespread rules that are not required.

Where there is no sign, the default maximum stay is 14 days for any boat. NABO supports the principle of full usage of visitor moorings, which is encouraged by limiting the longer periods. However NABO believes there should always be a mix of durations to cater for different uses.

It should be expected that at busy times it might not be possible to find a visitor mooring at a hot spot late in the day. For private, share- or hire-boaters to expect otherwise is unreasonable. To this end, a desire to achieve the maximum possible turnover of visitors just by shortening the mooring periods is an inappropriate remedy. Additional visitor moorings must therefore be another option that CRT should consider.

NABO notes that CRT wishes to adopt rules about frequency of return to a mooring site. This has no legal basis and we reject it. NABO welcomes the use of Mooring

Rangers to record daily sightings of boats moored on visitor moorings within an area, providing that they are CRT employees and not volunteers or third-party contractors. We urge caution in making extended-stay charges when there is no demand for moorings and there is no evidence of serious abuse.

We would like to see consistent, rigorous enforcement of existing regulations

NABO supports the enforcement of the current 14-day maximum mooring regulations. NABO has also noted that at many of the 22 moorings listed, there are currently (February 2013) substantial mooring spaces available, so the current enforcement practices would appear to be effective. We would like to see general enforcement of visitor mooring durations and enforcement of the 14-day rule in hot spots. We will get nowhere until boaters can expect to be asked to conform to this basic requirement.

NABO is concerned that hire boaters may be exempt from these proposed changes—why is this? NABO would seek confirmation that all boaters (private, share, hire and commercial) would be subject to any rule changes and charges levied. It has been suggested that the hire boat industry has exerted undue influence in shaping these proposed changes.

In the schedule of moorings, we commented individually where we had detailed knowledge. In doing so, we kept the following guidelines in hand:

- There should be a mix of 48-hour, 7-day and 14-day moorings available at all locations.
- 24 hours is not favoured.
- Two hours outside supermarkets,

for example, is appropriate, although they are hard to monitor.

- Special sites, such as pubs, museums, village centres etc. should be consulted on individually at a local level. It should not be assumed that short periods are best for users or for local businesses and attractions. We note that BW's, and now CRT's, record on the effectiveness of local consultation is at best uneven.

In summary, NABO recommends that any changes to visitor moorings should be undertaken only when a better evidence-based case can be made. These proposals should at least be deferred until CRT has carried out a period of daily observations, both in the spring and high summer, to enable it to quantify the periods that boaters are currently spending on the 22 visitor mooring sites at issue, with a focus on enforcing existing regulations. These observations should be the basis for any new proposals for altering the current mooring durations or extending visitor moorings to meet observed needs.

No special weight should be given to hire-boats, commercial shared boats or trade groups. NABO suggests that, if CRT adopts these rules or similar ones, it should apply them in such a way that there is a clear and consistent policy.

With specific regard to the documentation that supports changes to the Thrupp moorings, NABO would point out that Thrupp volunteers need to be trained, identified and insured. They could be summoned to appear in court to testify on their reports of overstaying. They would also be open to cross-examination in the witness box on their motivation in becoming wardens and their attitude to, for example, continuous cruisers. Has CRT made them aware of this and made suitable provisions?



...a response

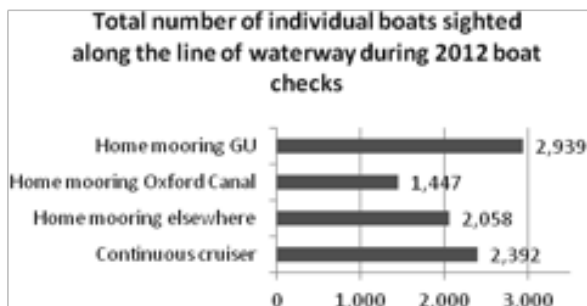
Summarizing CRT's Preliminary Report

Prepared by **Damian Kemp** for feedback workshops in March.

South East Waterways carried out a series of consultation workshops with a range of users, mostly represented at local user group meetings. The purpose was to review whether present maximum stay times were appropriate for current boat traffic levels and usage patterns as part of a programme to improve the 'offer' to boaters from all parts of the country. 22 sites were defined as a priority for review/implementation. It was also noted that representation of continuous cruisers in an earlier consultation had not been strong. So we decided to invite comments on the proposals directly from any boater with an interest in SE visitor moorings.

Response rate

We received 357 responses (i.e. a little under 10% of those directly mailed). These were from 178 regular users of the visitor moorings, 65 occasional users, 138 boaters with a home mooring in the south east, seven hire-boat operators, 14 roving traders and 92 'others' (a mix of roving traders, local residents and boat-share owners). Some people identified themselves as fitting more than one of the categories. We interrogated our boat sightings database to determine the home moorings of the individual boats observed during our regular boat checks on SE waterways throughout 2012. We identified 8,836 boats and analysed their home mooring arrangements (see chart).



We contacted all boaters for whom we had email addresses and who had been sighted in the South East over the preceding year, or who had a home mooring in this area (around 4,000 boaters). We also promoted it in Boaters Update (around 9,000 boaters nationwide), used social media and published it on our website.

Overview of responses

1. Are the time limit rules reasonable and clear?

There was an even split between those agreeing and disagreeing. For those who answered positively, the main comments were:

- They are reasonable but the proposed rules are too lenient.
- It needs proper enforcement.
- Higher-capacity visitor moorings are needed.
- Rules should be relaxed in winter.
- Comments by those answering negatively were:
 - "Lack of evidence supporting a need for change".
 - "I've never struggled to find a mooring".
 - "You'd solve a lot of problems by just properly enforcing current rules".
 - "Too complicated, need stand-

ardisation across all sites.”

Just over half of regular users agreed with the time limits while occasional visitors were marginally more likely to disagree. Those with home moorings in the South East gave a bigger stamp of approval. In contrast with this, those who classified themselves as ‘other’ were significantly more likely to oppose the time limit changes than other respondents. Hire operators were generally positive.

2. Is the proposed information for boaters clear? How could it be improved?

Although slightly fewer respondents answered, the overall picture is less ambiguous: more felt that it was clear than not, with associated comments focussing on:

- The need to include the definition of ‘summer’.
- The leaflet is clear but the supporting information flawed.
- Canal-side signage needs to complement the leaflet.
- For those who didn’t feel it was clear, the main reasons given were:
- It’s too complex, especially the non-return rules.
- Information needs more clarity and consistency—don’t say ‘month’, say ‘X days’. Don’t say ‘adjacent’, say ‘in front of’ or ‘before’.
- Contact details for local staff should be provided.

To varying degrees, all segments felt that on balance the information was clear.

3. Is the map clear? How could it be improved?

Fewer respondents answered but the majority felt the map didn’t need improving.

Other general comments

Many respondents added views about the principle and substance of the consultation itself. Predominant

themes, particularly from the ‘other’ category, were that we hadn’t provided evidence that such a consultation was needed.

“These proposals are unnecessarily draconian. What is your justification for bringing them forward?”

In reply: the proposals in general terms are to a) check that local time limits are appropriate to the current traffic levels; b) make the signage enforceable by being clear on how frequently an individual boat may use the site; and c) to put in place a credible sanction against overstaying. We do not think that these in principle amount to draconian measures. They would only be draconian if the precise choice of maximum stay times and return rules were unreasonable. This is why we are consulting.

We are of the view that after 20 years, there is no need for further justification for reviewing visitor mooring arrangements. Growth in boat numbers and changing usage patterns signal to us that it would be irresponsible not to undertake this work. And we must anticipate continued growth, albeit probably at a slower rate than the 3% p.a. of the past two decades. Busy waterways need good facilities for visiting boats and ‘fit for purpose’ visitor moorings are an important part of the boater offer. We note that in our boat owner survey in 2011 one in six boaters reported being affected by congestion at visitor moorings, up from one in eight in 2009.

“Why don’t you just start enforcing the signs that are already in place before making changes?”

In reply: the signs need to be clearer on matters such as sensible return rules and a sanction against over-



Your views?

Mark Tizard wants to hear all members' comments on CRT's response. Please send them by email to: mark.tizard@nabo.org.uk or by post to FREEPOST (BM8367), Birmingham B31 2BR

staying (which is less draconian than cancelling a licence because of a breach of licence terms). Once we have up-to-date rules and up-to-date signs so people know what those rules are, that will be the time to step up enforcement. The £25 extended stay charge is not a new development. A few sites around the country (Oxford, London and the K&A) have signs already stating that a charge applies for overstaying. Charges have been levied successfully where boats persistently overstay and do not respond to requests to move on, but we have not had the resources to carry out enough checks to implement this systematically.

"Are you relying on extended stay charges to fund the costs of monitoring?"

In reply: no. Trustees have committed additional resources to improve enforcement of rules relating to short-term mooring along the towpath, concentrating on ensuring proper use of visitor moorings and compliance with mooring guidance by continuous cruisers. £0.5 million p.a. for the next three years has been put aside to fund additional manpower for boat monitoring, enforcement, signage costs and communications. We are advertising for three towpath mooring control managers to undertake the necessary local consultations in areas subject to greatest pressure and to implement the resulting measures. The primary purpose of the extended stay charge is as a credible sanction to deter overstaying. We do not expect a large income stream to result. The Trust would prefer not to generate any income in this way—that would show the deterrent was working.

"Boaters don't have confidence that you can implement your plans. Why

don't you listen to them?"

In reply: we are very keen to listen to constructive suggestions for improving the proposals, particularly for stay durations and return times. We are confident that we have the resources and systems to test the new arrangements at a few sites during 2013 and will fine-tune the plans for other locations in the light of experience. We are aware that some boaters are strongly opposed to the plans on principle, but they have not clearly articulated the fundamental reasons for their opposition, other than to assert that change is not necessary and to cast unwarranted aspersions on the Trust's capacity to implement change.

"What authority do you have to define different stay lengths and to make charges?"

In reply: The Trust is the legal owner of the waterways. Section 43 (3) of the 1962 Transport Act gave BW (and now the Trust) 'power to demand, take and recover such charges for their services and facilities, and to make the use of those services and facilities subject to such terms and conditions as they think fit'.

Mark's Comments

Mark Tizard adds: "In brief, CRT stated that despite only approximately 50% of responses being in favour of the proposals, it was keen to proceed with the proposed changes to the first eight moorings as a pilot scheme. Participants were invited to discuss the proposed changes to these moorings and we await the outcome. There was general agreement that any changes should be applied to the summer season only. NABO will consider the report and further details will be published in the next issue."

...and a workshop

A copy of the letter Mark Tizard sent to CRT after the Moorings Consultation Workshop held on 28th March

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the workshop yesterday. I have one main observation which I would like to share: I, like many others, really welcomed the transition from BW to CRT and there was a substantial groundswell of good will that came with the change. This consultation process however has seemed to me as a tick box exercise, as it was apparent from the workshop that CRT intended to introduce these changes regardless of the views of those whose feedback was negative, whether as individuals or collectively.

The consultation lacked legitimacy in many peoples' eyes, as no evidence was produced to validate the need for change. Referring to user group meetings of four years ago was not really relevant. It would have been easy for CRT patrol officers to have sampled the eight trial sites and validated that overstay was a real issue as opposed to a wider lack of available visitor moorings. This evidence would have lent credibility to your case.

In my personal experience, many boaters felt that overstay was becoming a problem as more and more boaters were choosing to live aboard, but they didn't see this as an issue specific to visitor moorings. In 2012 the message I was getting is that CRT was beginning to get to grips with this issue and the word was getting out and boats beginning to move, in the areas covered by the consultation.

In the example I sat in on at the workshop, Foxton, the CRT manager stated twice that he had no problems with overstay and boats al-

ways moved. They had four problem boats in the area and they knew who they were. This begs the question why change at all!

It would have been easy to have sampled the eight trial sites and validated that overstay was a real issue

Our group analysed the changes and we agreed that there should be a mix of mooring durations; the main difference being the bottom stretch being 48hr, 7- and 14-day in thirds. In peak season it was accepted that there will be times that boats will need to double up. The feedback forms showed that the highest number of respondents (17) said the changes were unnecessary and 11 felt they were good. In most consultations this would have resulted in no change. This could have been presented in a positive light, CRT having listened etc. etc.

Those that I spoke to felt the proposed changes were mainly minor but felt that the £25 'charge' was something that would be difficult to collect and would not deter the serial overstay. Many wondered why existing regulations couldn't be applied.

In conclusion, I think the consultation process is a really positive step but for the future CRT should perhaps spend a bit longer ensuring that they present the case for change with some specific evidence. And then perhaps demonstrate that it has listened, which hopefully the feedback and workshops will enable it to do so.

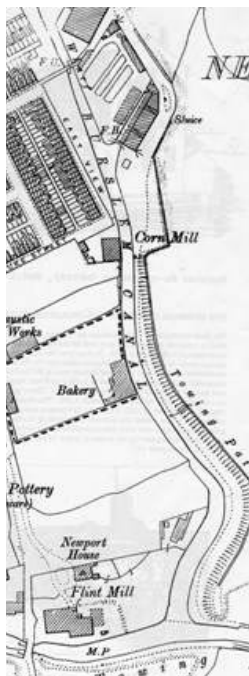
Regards, Mark Tizard

Bringing boats back to Burslem

The Burslem Port development project

A report by **David Dumbleton**

David is Project Officer for the Burslem Port Project. You can read more about the project at www.burslemport.org.uk/



The line of the canal in 1912

The Burslem Branch Canal was a short industrial canal leading off the Trent and Mersey (T&M) main line at Middleport, Stoke on Trent. Opened in 1805, it was breached and infilled in 1961. In its short length, it accommodated two major wharves for the Anderton and Mersey Weaver companies, a boat repair yard, a corn mill and a large steam bakery—not bad in just 3/8ths of a mile!

The infilled line of the old canal remains clear of development and there is an extant wharf, warehouse and an original footbridge. On one side of the canal there is a mixture of cleared housing land awaiting regeneration and semi-derelict industrial properties, whereas on the other there is wild rising land, all surrounded by a substantial urban area of the city.

Our volunteer project aims to restore/replace the old canal as the

centrepiece of a much wider Stoke on Trent City Council community regeneration programme, focusing on leisure and employment. Our scheme will include restoration of the wharf and warehouse, with the warehouse containing a café, toilets, shower room, laundry and upstairs, a 'Village Hall'. Outside there will be picnic and play areas and within the wharf, a performance area and offices for boat operators. The whole site has been recently designated as a conservation area and the surrounding open land will be enhanced with paths and cycle ways, providing part of a circular route around the whole site, including part of the T&M main line. At the northern end, we will use existing, more recent buildings for light industrial activities, which will

The original Mersey Weaver warehouse (c.1860) on the line of the old Burslem Branch Canal as it is today



hopefully include canal boat building, for which the site is well-suited. We plan to have a number of long-term and residential moorings and plenty of visitor moorings in an attractive and safe 'haven' for boaters passing through or visiting Stoke on Trent—and, of course, provision of services for boaters on the 7,000 boats that pass along the main line every year. In all, the project breaks down to no less than 17 different parts, some of which could be developed in isolation from the others.

The project is much more than a canal restoration, although that was the starting point for the waterway enthusiasts who first imagined restoring the old waterway but, like Topsy, it has just kept growing. The idea was first investigated in the 1990s but progress was substantially slowed by the need for the City authorities, faced with a massive post-industrial problem in the area, to catch up with our plans and develop their own schemes for the surrounding area—and now, of course, is challenged by the country's general economic problems.



The Burslem bakery

Photo: BW

Moving from our original status as a sub-committee of the T&M Canal Society we are now an independent trust with our own trustee team of senior local business, public sector and professional people (including an OBE, an MBE and even a Lord Lieutenant who is also Chairman of a major local pottery).



A vision of regeneration

The Trust's vision is for the project to make a major difference to the quality of life in Burslem and Middleport. The completed project will deliver the re-opened canal branch, a mini-marina in a newly constructed pool at Furlong Mills, recreational facilities in the 'heritage' buildings on the present waste-transfer site, and outdoor/sporting activities along the canalside. The project will also provide canalside living for the Slater Street and Co-op Bakery residential redevelopment sites.

We are fully supported by, amongst many others, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, CRT, English Heritage, the T&M Canal Society, the local Branch of the IWA, and Renew North Staffordshire, the local housing regeneration body. While we are not yet a membership organisation, it is something we very much want to be when the time is right. You won't see us breaking the ground at Burslem Port for a while yet, but our ambitions are great and our enthusiasm is strong with each day bringing new potential opportunities and, unfortunately, regular disappointments. Has anyone ever said that waterway restoration is easy?

Time team at work

A National Coal Board narrow boat from Wolstanton Colliery called Elizabeth was moored in the canal near its junction with the Trent and Mersey main line canal; it was left stranded when the canal breached in 1961 and was believed to have been buried when the canal was filled in.

An amateur ground study in 1999 indicated that the boat was still in its original position in the disused canal. If it is found to be in good condition the boat may be lifted out and considered for possible restoration.

Dr Pringle, Lecturer in Geoscience at Keele University said, 'We will be using geophysics, like Time Team does, in an effort to search for the hidden boat. We will have a fairly good chance of finding it as it should only be around six feet down and within the filled-in canal, if the reports are correct.'

What's Not to Like?

Transformational changes through the waterways.

Trevor Roberts looks at how we can use the waterways to combat the effects of social exclusion.

Trevor Roberts is Chair of the National Community Boats Association. To find out more about their work visit www.national-cba.com

It takes one person to steer a boat, but how many does it take to navigate it through a waterways system? Someone has to open the locks, someone has to make the

tea, someone has to throw the rope and someone has to catch it. This needs teamwork and communication, which leads to the personal and social development of everyone involved. As an example, a young man came to an NCBA project as a last resort before exclusion from school for anger issues and truancy. Six months later, he spoke at an international conference to an audience of 150 delegates and received a standing ovation, having previously not dared not speak up in class. He is now working with an environmental project and another 'offender' is now an assistant manager with a chain of national electrical stores. These and many other examples show that NCBA's interventions have reduced or eliminated offending behaviour and re-integrated trainees back into mainstream education and employment. They did not progress into waterways-related employment, but all of them recognise the effect of the waterways on their progression.

People with disabilities

Despite the Disability Discrimination Act, there is only one company that provides disabled access to one boat in its hire fleet; all other waterborne disabled access is through members of NCBA. To illustrate some muddled thinking on disabled access, £250,000 was set aside as part of a recent waterside development to provide a ramp for wheelchair users alongside steps from the canal to a riverside walk. However, A-frames on the towpath on both sides of the



Photo :NCBA

steps prevented wheelchair access and the riverside walk was only a half-mile long and ended in either an industrial estate or steps to a main road. For half of that money, a community boat project could have built a brand new boat with full disabled access and covered the operating costs for a year. This would have provided quality access to the waterways for a vastly greater number than would have accessed the riverside walk.

Health benefits of the waterways

CRT promotes the inland waterways as a green gym; you can walk or cycle the towpaths but what about the elderly? A group of older people went on an NCBA boat trip and at the first lock, an 80-year-old lady alighted from the boat to walk to the lock so that she could see how it operated—a distance of 30 metres, which her carer said was the furthest she had walked for years. Many also note the calming effect of tranquil boat journeys, particularly on some of the younger clients who display anger and other problematic behaviour traits. This gives a saving in both the mental health arena and preventative health strategies.

Community benefits

The inland waterways were at the centre of Britain's industrial infrastructure, but with loss of manufacturing and economic decline, they are now at the heart of some of our most disadvantaged communities. You have to be rich to use the canals—it costs upwards of £60k to buy a boat and 2k per year to run it. A ribbon of affluence runs through economically-deprived communities, which can lead to social tensions. For example, Bradford is exploring the feasibility of reopening the Bradford Arm, which cuts through two communities that are in the top 10% of

the Deprivation Index. The former canal is now grassed over and is the only significant green space for these communities. NCBA pointed out that there is unlikely to be much demand from boaters to travel five miles and operate 20 locks there and back to a cul-de-sac. The response was that there is a lack of moorings so boaters could moor along its length! The communities see themselves losing one of their few assets for the benefit of others more affluent. Such exclusion breeds resentment and tensions, whereas a community boat provides an opportunity to include communities by having true canal experiences and provide social regeneration as well as physical redevelopment.

All community boat projects support Government agendas in relation to criminal justice, education, health and engaging communities, but they operate without any strategic support at either a local or national level. Inclusion leads to greater knowledge, understanding, respect and most importantly ownership of the waterways as a national asset. But development of community boating is often individualised, sporadic and ad-hoc, with each project having to justify its value to individuals within the statutory sector. Community boats also operated in spite of British Waterways: a member of the senior BW management team stated that it was

“The vision of NCBA is a network of well-resourced, well-managed community boating organisations, which promote access to the waterways, and the safe use of community boats for the benefit of disadvantaged and excluded groups in ways that promote social cohesion, protect the environment and support economic regeneration.”

Who are the NCBA?

The NCBA has a diverse range of members: for example, one member has 6 boats, no paid staff, 80 volunteers and carries 14,000 passengers per year; another does not have a boat, has two paid staff and facilitates over 750 passenger-days per year. There are over 70 members who operate 166 boats with over 2,000 volunteers, but only 180 paid employees.

Formed in the early 1980s as an informal network of groups, in the 1990s NCBA set out to provide accredited training and by 2001 it had appointed four staff members to support a more comprehensive training structure. In 2005, it was registered as a charity. Since then, it has been a turbulent ride to build up the business ethos and raise the Association's profile with major stakeholders to secure the benefits that community boating organisations bring.

The majority of its £155,000 income is from donations or grants. Over half of members operate with an annual income of between £5,000 and £50,000.

NCBA's role to deliver Corporate Social Responsibility targets and their role was to provide the physical infrastructure to enable it to do so. BW's National Co-coordinator for Volunteering indicated that there was no money to support NCBA's 'voluntary' efforts but he was keen to use its figures to support BW efforts in volunteering. Has this lack of support changed with the advent of CRT? A true and meaningful partnership would provide the vehicle for developing community boating and 0.1% of the waterways' income would secure it. With this security, NCBA would be able to develop a national voice, improve quality standards and training and share good practice. This support for the membership would allow them to concentrate on delivering what at the moment is good value for peanuts.

The Canal Boat Adventure Project's boat Ada. The CBAP has won 17 awards between 2009 and 2012 and an MBE for its work with children and young people. The project's canal boats have proved to be a springboard to improved life-chances and economic activity for young people.

Photo :NCBA



Rochdale: all change

Peter Fellows summarises the new arrangements for booking passage on the Rochdale Canal

Following consultation with the 'IWA, Rochdale Canal Society and private boating organisations' (but not NABO!), CRT is trialling new booking arrangements for the Rochdale Canal, which started in March and will continue to Sunday 10th November.

Rochdale Locks 65 to 81

The flight is locked at Locks 65 and 81. Passages are 8.30 am at Lock 81 and 9.30 am at Lock 65, every day except Wednesday. You must be through the flight before the locks are locked at 4 pm. You should ensure your passage is booked at the latest by 4pm the day before by contacting the Red Bull office before 4pm Monday to Friday.

For passages Sunday, Monday and Tuesday after a Bank Holiday please telephone the Red Bull office no later than 3 pm on Friday. If you arrive at Lock 81 or 65 without a booking passage will not be possible, and any boats arriving late will be re-scheduled to the next available date. You are not advised to moor overnight by locks 65 or 81 so travelling from Lock 65, CRT recommends that you moor overnight at the Rose of Lancaster Pub near Lock 63 (1½ hours cruising). If travelling from Lock 81 the recommended visitor moorings are in Piccadilly Basin, Manchester, between Locks 83–84, or New Islington Marina between Locks 81–82.

Rochdale Summit

Passage over the summit is freely available and it is no longer necessary to book. Depending on water resources, CRT may introduce re-

strictions without notice. Boaters wishing to moor on the summit overnight may do so but water levels can fluctuate significantly and mooring of unattended craft is not permitted. Recommended overnight moorings are below the summit at Locks 36 and 37 and visitor moorings are available on the Littleborough Flight at Locks 46 or 48. There is strictly no mooring between Locks 38 to 44.

Locks 1, 2 and Lock 3/4 (Tuel Lane Deep Lock, Sowerby Bridge).

Follow the local signage and the lock keeper's instructions. Do not enter the tunnel below Lock 3/4 without the lock keepers permission.

A lock keeper is present on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday from 8.30 am to 5 pm and no booking is required for passage on these days. A booking system is in operation for passage on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays between 8.30 am and 3 pm. Bookings can be made by calling the Red Bull office on Monday to Friday no later than 4 pm the day before you wish to travel. If you book at short notice your passage may need to be fitted in with other pre-booked craft.

Bookings for Tuesdays after a Bank Holiday weekend can be made on the same day by telephoning the Red Bull Office before 10 am.

If you want to offer feedback to CRT on these changes, email the Red Bull office at enquiries.manchesterpennine@canalrivertrust.org.uk

Passages can be booked by phoning CRT Red Bull office on 03030 404040



Tuel Lane Lock, arguably the deepest lock in England

Photo: Peter Fellows

Visitor Moorings

A proposal to improve fair use by Reg Whittall

This is a shortened version of a proposal presented by boater Reg Whittall, which evolved from an idea first floated at a meeting in Skipton between CRT and a number of unaffiliated boaters

The following proposal is an alternative solution to the problems of overstaying on visitor moorings. It was motivated by what was seen as the muddled and inappropriate proposals outlined in CRT's 2012 Briefing Paper and various statements made by the IWA. Following the subsequent publication of CRT's proposals for SE visitor moorings it is seen as even more relevant.

The proposal is that every boat wishing to use a visitor mooring displays a simple disc that features the ability to display a time of the day, day of the month and month (e.g. by an adjustable clock face and pointers). On arrival at a visitor mooring, the boater sets the disc to indicate the time and date of arrival.

It is anticipated that the scheme would have an immediate positive benefit, irrespective of CRT management. It should be largely self-managed, an important factor in its success as self-imposed rules are always easier to follow than those imposed by an authority. In relation to overstaying problems, the simple act of displaying an arrival time has the following potential effects:

- A boater will be acknowledging to themselves that their stay should be limited.
- The time for departure will be acknowledged from the moment of arrival.
- The constant display will act as a reminder of the time for departure.
- Overstaying will require a more obvious, deliberate action.
- The display will be observable by those passing by. This addresses

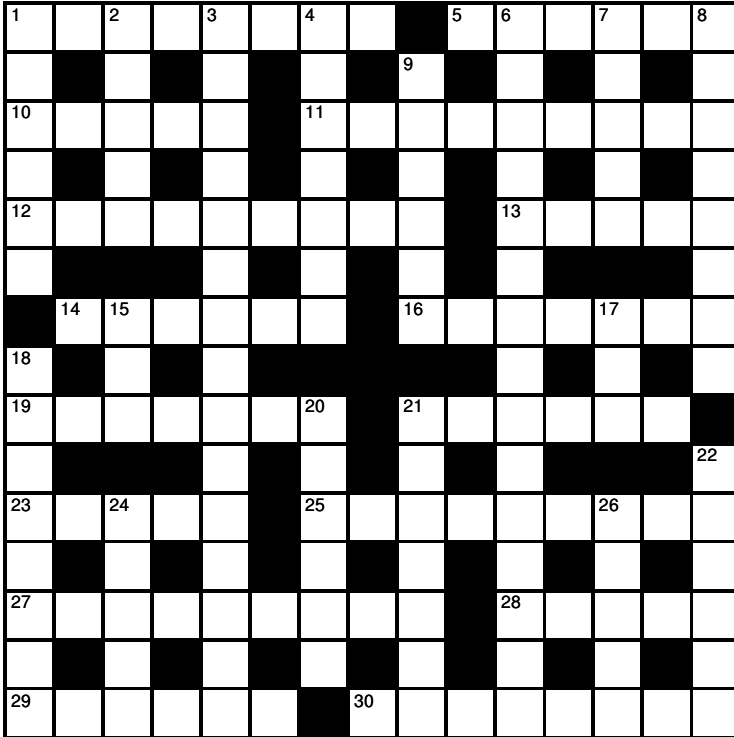
the likelihood of detection, and even if no one does observe the display, the boater will have no means of knowing one way or the other. A law-abiding person will make the assumption that someone has noted their time of arrival and they will be consequently far less likely to break the rule.

- Altering the date on the disc in an attempt to 'cheat' a longer stay will be physically very easy but psychologically difficult for a law-abiding person. Altering the disc amounts to a very deliberate act of deceit.
- Good policing of the scheme by CRT will inspire confidence in boaters and make it unlikely that boaters will check on each other. The current atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion between boaters has probably largely been allowed to take root because there has been a perception that no one is managing the system.

In addition, the scheme will provide CRT officers with a valuable, non-confrontational tool to improve their enforcement. Officers will be able to use the disc as an reason to initiate a dialogue with any boater suspected of overstaying. A boater wishing to use a currently-occupied visitor mooring will now have the option to engage the skipper of that boat in conversation and return when the mooring is free. This will make the use of visitor moorings more effective by increasing their occupation by a larger number of boaters. The scheme will be reinforced by the very effective principle of peer pressure, something completely lacking at present.

NABO News Crossword N° 11

By Canaldrifter



Answers to Crossword 10

Across: 1 Dredger, 5 Rowlock, 9 Admiral, 10 Calcutt, 11 Entails, 12 Oneself, 13 Portholes, 15 Sonic, 16 Antic, 19 Lancaster, 22 Termini, 23 Corners, 25 Calypso, 26 Echoing, 27 Laser, 28 Stoppages.

Down: 1 Blade, 2 Ammeter, 3 Norwich, 4 Tolls, 5 Nicholson, 6 Pulleys, 7 Maureen, 8 Artificer, 13 Practical, 14 Lollipops, 17 Turtles, 18 Clipper, 20 Airship, 21 Teeming, 23 Credo, 24 Sagas.

Across

- 1 Key to profit by one old pence, girl! (8)
- 5 Love festivals where sea flows back around gap (6)
- 10 Could derelict canal be dry? (5)
- 11 Bad nitro leak aboard vessel (9)
- 12 1 across in red is repaired (2-7)
- 13 Doctor at the stern checks depth (5)
- 14 Red warning for one who is stranded? (6)
- 16 Evil monarch going down (7)
- 19 Plot a crossing at new link canal destination (7)
- 21 Servant, we hear, appears nonchalantly (6)
- 23 Close and stormy (5)
- 25 Culvert we saucily alter (9)
- 27 Mechanics call in Emergency Repair Service for their power plant (9)
- 28 Nautical Gardner in Holland (5)
- 29 Naturalist stud in trouble (6)
- 30 I idled so badly I was famous! (8)

Down

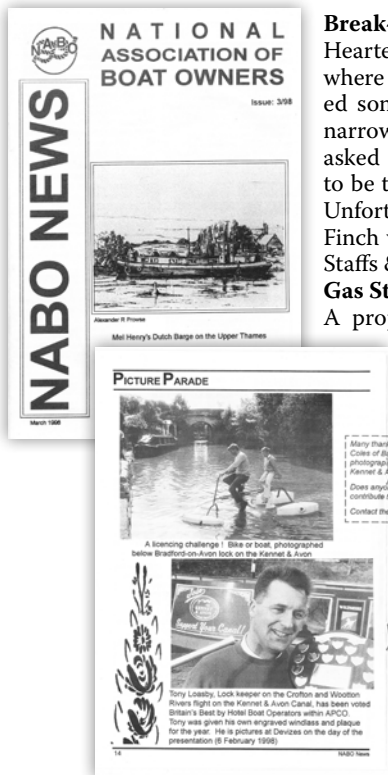
- 1 Protection for sea-birds? (6)
- 2 Point in neither this nor that way (5)
- 3 Employing crew could be a blessing! (6,2,2,5)
- 4 Bruised when flooded (7)
- 6 1,000 joining waterway? (5,5,5)
- 7 First class pie? (5)
- 8 Plan to try gates wrongly! (8)
- 9 Paddles that slip? (6)
- 15 Men leave maiden to get help (3)
- 17 Sick so steers bows out of the billows? (3)
- 18 Desperate bear need in Scotland (8)
- 20 Morse hurries! (6)
- 21 I cursed about where we sailed (7)
- 22 Recurred on the towpath? (6)
- 24 Encouraged to be pointless past 26! (5)
- 26 Greets the sea (5)
- 24 Reversible stories? (5)

A look at the past through NABO News

ReWind 15 Years

NABO News in 1998

Tony Haynes continues his look back, this time to March of that year



Break-ins

Heartening news from the GU where police have apprehended someone for breaking into narrowboats. The villain has asked for 80 similar offences to be taken into consideration. Unfortunately this was not Mr Finch who is still active on the Staffs & Worcs.

Gas Street Junk

A proposal to float a restaurant in the form of a Chinese Junk at Gas Street Basin was scuttled by the council ruling it unacceptable on heritage grounds.

BW vs Heritage

Worried by unsuitable plans being prepared for Gas Street and Stourport, chairman, Peter Lea, writes: 'If BW is prepared to be this insensitive and inflexible and has so little understanding or concern for what is appropriate at key

locations while under government control, what would it be like if it were an independent trust?'

Disabled Access

NABO is concerned that disabled boaters' needs are not being met across the canal and river network. We have written to BW and the EA asking them to audit existing facilities in the light of current legislation.

Tidal Lock Charges

BW proposes to introduce charges at Sharpness, Marsh Lock on the Weaver and a passage licence from

Selby or Goole to Keadby. NABO thinks this could be the thin end of the wedge because this is exactly what our licence fees are supposed to pay for—the right to roam the waterways.

BW on call

Council were informed that BW will help deep-drafted boats, so ring them if you get stuck. They will also remove mattresses from props. (Pity they didn't remove them from canals in the first place!)

K&A Sales

The K&A Trust is raising money by asking people to adopt a piece of canal for £2.50 per metre.

Membership

NABO membership is still growing. NABO is working towards improving this even more and will be flying the flag at rallies this year.

Day Star Theatre

Council has decided to sponsor Day Star for the second year running. It feels that Day Star do a superb job of educating people about our waterways and are pleased to help them continue with their work.

Red Diesel

Concerned about the threat to red diesel a useful centre-fold pull-out listing MEP's addresses is provided so that individual members can contact them.

The Trent

In a guide article we are advised to avoid falling into the water. Do not jump off your boat with a rope in one hand a prayer in the other. Get the boat alongside and rope the mooring by 'deft wrist action'. (Bodhran players might have a distinct advantage here!—Tony)

Letters to the Editor

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

Some Thoughts on Moorings

I am pleased that NABO is having an internal debate on the CRT moorings survey, but disappointed that many contributors don't seem to see a problem. RC Hamilton writes in the last NABO News that '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', and this is certainly one cause of the current problem.

From my perspective, the problem is not just the number of available moorings but where they are. We cruise about one-third of the year and not just in the peak 'season', yet we have sometimes had trouble finding a suitable spot to moor close to where we want to. We have also chatted to many other boaters, particularly hirers and share-boaters, who have a similar problem. The cause is that every boater has their own needs from their mooring each night, and they may encounter difficulties if these cannot be met nearly all the time. For example, many boaters out for a short trip don't take much food with them, so rely on finding an overnight mooring that is close to a pub or has access to a town where they can eat. If there are no free moorings at the spot they plan to stop at, they have a real problem. In another example, boaters on a long cruise may need to leave their boat at a mooring with easy access to public transport or a parking space, and again may face severe difficulties if no such space is available. Many hirers and share-owners may aspire to owning their own boat, and their whole experience of the waterway network may be soured by their inability to stop at the sites where they plan to. For those of us on longer cruises, a similar problem can occur at moorings where there is access to supermarkets, laundry facilities and public transport. In both cases this ultimately leads to less income for waterside businesses, which we need to encourage—use them or lose

them. There will always be boaters with many widely different needs, whether they be long-term moorers, extended cruisers or those on a short break, and it is important that CRT looks at each individual site to make sure that as many of these needs are met as possible. The first step might be to find out why people decide to stop at each one. This doesn't need to be an expensive survey, but could simply be done by asking anyone interested to complete a simple survey along the lines of 'where did you stop?' and 'why there?' for each night of their cruise.

I am concerned that spending time debating whether fines for overstaying are legal or not is a waste of effort. Ultimately what we need is to understand the problem (and, yes, there definitely is one), and find a solution that works for as many users as possible without favouring one group of boaters over any other. After all, NABO represents all boat owners, doesn't it?

Bob Brock

Pat on the Back

I want the Editor and Council to know that I fully support the work you are all doing in the name of NABO. I am sorry I did not respond before the most recent NABO News, but I hope this email of support is better late than never. Although I am also a member of the IWA, I think the work NABO is doing is more important than ever now that the IWA and CRT are both charities doing much the same thing. I am sorry I am not able to help as I am not only in my 78th year, but also live on the Kent/Sussex border as well as being substantially involved in village activities where I live (I am trying with difficulty to wind down so I understand the difficulties the Chairman and fellow Council members have in trying to hand over) but rest assured I am very keen to see NABO continue and am happy to pay an increased subscription. Keep up the good work.

Christopher Blyth

Not-So-Free calls

I read with interest the feature in the March newsletter regarding mobile phone charges to 0800 numbers. The inset panel states calls to 0800 numbers on the 3 Network are free.

Being a 3 user I found this attractive, but this is not correct, according to a call I made to 3 customer services and reference to the website 'www.three.co.uk' and click on '3 Price guide'. It is only Telephone Helpline Association (THA) 0800 numbers that are free, whatever they are! Perhaps you would check this information and issue a correction as appropriate.

Tony Lenten

Editor's note: I checked and it was not easy to find the information but, yes, Tony is correct. 0800 numbers featured on the Telephone Helpline Association (THA) list and Police Casualty Bureau numbers are free, as are calls from the UK to 3 Customer Services, Pay-As-You-Go top-up/balance enquiries and 999/112 calls. Charges apply to 3 Mobile Broadband customer services On-net Mobile (see individual price plan for details). Single non-emergency calls are 15p per call. 0800/0500/0808 numbers that are not on the THA list, in All Pay Monthly price plans are 15.3p per minute and Pay-As-You-Go are 10.2p to 15.3p per minute. Confused? I was but check the website www.three.co.uk and search for '3 Pay Tariff' if you need more details

What's Good for the Goose....

Last week I was reading a CRT report relating to boats overstaying on moorings and overnight on water points. While I was passing Great Haywood Junction, I watched two CRT work boats moor up side by side on the water point/service area. The workers all went off in a works pickup, leaving the boats altogether. My thoughts returned to the CRT report and what they had said about mooring on water points. I do believe CRT should get their house in order and lead by example before moralising about boat users. In their defence, I contacted CRT Central Shires and they got back to me later to say: 'Boats awaiting collection wagon, delayed until Wednesday morning, boats will be moved off then.' I pointed



out it was unacceptable for them to moor on a water point/service area, especially when there was a mooring available less than 100m away. Later, next day they had been moved; one had gone altogether and the other had been moored on the available mooring I had suggested, less than 100m away. Ten out of ten for Central Shires, but if mooring on water points has become the norm, CRT have a lot of work to do educating their workforce from the bottom up. They need to look at the rules, boundaries and most importantly, lead by example.

Jane Taylor

More Mooring Matters

This letter is copy of Mr & Mrs Masters' response to CRT on the recent Moorings Consultation

We have held a BW licence for more than fifteen years and we are concerned about some aspects of the moorings consultation. We do not intend to comment on individual mooring sites but would make the following points:

1. Our main concern is about the proposal to levy a charge of £25 per day on boats that overstay on restricted moorings. We are not convinced there is any statutory authority to levy these charges particularly in respect of moorings up to 14 days. Any perceived infringement of local mooring restrictions should be taken up with the boater at the time and not just appear as an amount added to their account which would not become apparent for up to 12 months after the event.

2. There should be an opportunity on every mooring site to stay for up to 14 days.

3. Over the past three months we have travelled the length of the Grand Union Canal from Braunston into London and it is apparent that

your enforcement teams have been very successful in applying the existing rules. It seems to us that there is no need for additional rules and regulations as the CRT already has sufficient powers which have the desired effect if properly enforced.

4. During the winter months we find there is very little boat movement and we suggest that moorings that need to be restricted during the summer because of increased demand should in general revert to 14 days in the winter. There is a precedent for this in Braunston where restricted summer moorings become 14 days in the winter.

5. To introduce more and more regulations and restrictions inevitably increases enforcement costs even if volunteers are used. To keep enforcement effective and the costs down, the rules need to be SIMPLE, CLEAR and FAIR.

We trust that these comments are helpful because we realise that it is in our own interests that the waterways are properly and effectively managed.

RG & H Masters

And Another Perspective on Moorings

Many moons ago, an ex-submariner and ex-chief of ICI, Sir John Harvey-Jones, starred in a TV series called 'The Troubleshooter,' on the voice-over he often repeated this statement: "the simplest questions are sometimes the hardest to answer". I was most pleased therefore, to see NABO adopt this approach with regard to the recent 'moorings problems issue' and ask CRT management some simple questions of the type: 'How many complaints have you had?' and 'Which moorings are causing problems?'

The replies have not been encouraging. Cynics could argue the whole thing is a result of lobbying from marina owners and boat hire companies. After all, we have known there have been trouble spots around the system in London, Bath and Oxford for years, so why claim this is something new? In fact I've found mooring within the Midlands to have been easier in 2011/12 than in previous years.

Here are a couple of simple questions of my own: How often are busy 48-hour moorings patrolled at the height of the season? (Would motorists observe yellow lines if there were no traf-

fic wardens?); Why have continuous moorers in trouble spots not been dealt with before?

Furthermore, boaters like myself that spend many weeks of the year out and about, know those (few) boaters that flout the rules (continuously), so here's another couple of questions:

If boaters know who the anti-social moorers are then surely CRT should do too? That being the case, why have they not been dealt with? Could it be simply that some of these folk are (deliberately?) unpleasant so BW/CRT have left them alone?

Instead CRT now wants to introduce widespread rules, (whether it is legally allowed to do this is another matter) that will effect all boaters, including the 95% of boaters that 'play the game' anyway; so that's a nice way to treat your major donors, eh?

In the area I cruise there are well known continuous cruisers that don't progress around the system, but they don't overstay on moorings and generally moor in the sticks. The locals don't mind them and in fact keep an eye on them in bad weather. As far as I can see, these boaters' only 'crime' is to be old, have limited income and not possess a shiny boat. To 'harass' these people, who have probably lived on the cut since Adam was a lad, is disgraceful. What is the point? Would the country as whole benefit from them being in an old folks' home instead? I think not. Why would a sensible person suggest such a course of action? Are they ignorant of the 'way things work' on the cut or just plain lazy? Maybe being seen to be 'doing something' is all that matters at CRT HQ? 'Charitable' and 'Trust' are not words I associate with such behaviour, that's for sure.

I do wonder if the decision to penalise innocent boaters rather than sort out well known offenders is driven by another factor. Could it be that those supporting more rules are simply green with envy that people like me can mooch around the system all summer in a pseudo-random manner without a care in the world? Recent actions suggest there are those in CRT who would like to put a stop to that! Of course, maybe they just haven't a clue what the result of their actions will be and their oversized egos prevents them asking 'damn-fool questions'.

Ralph Freeman

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