



# NABO News

The Magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners  
Issue 5—October 2013

The background of the cover is a painting of a narrow canal. The water is dark and reflects the surrounding greenery. On the right side, a small boat is moored. The banks are lined with tall, weeping willow trees that hang their branches over the water. The overall style is impressionistic with visible brushstrokes.

**NEW MOORING RULES**  
**LICENCE HIKE FOR CHARITY BOATS?**  
**NABO AGM – COUNCIL NOMINATIONS**  
**NABO MEETS CRT**



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# NABO News

The magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners

Issue 5 October 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](mailto:nabonews@nabo.org.uk)

## Next NABO News Copy Date

Please email or post your contributions by 23rd November 2013

## Front Cover Photo

This month's cover is 'The Willows of Gnosall', a painting by Rob Pointon [robpointon.co.uk](http://robpointon.co.uk)



## NABO Calendar 2013

Council Meetings in 2013:  
Saturday 12th October,  
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

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# Sleepwalking into trouble?

Is charity boat licensing a CRT PR blunder asks editor **Peter Fellows** ?



**T**here was a (very short) CRT consultation in July on changing the licensing system for charity and community boats, which would result in them being charged for a standard leisure boat licence rather than a commercial licence, less a 60% discount. Fair enough, you might say: simplify the licensing system as much as possible; but the knock-on effects on the charities could be very serious.

And as two charities point out in their responses, included in this issue, there are other changes proposed, including a ban on 'commercial' revenue-generating activity on CRT land and possible changes to moorings and service provisions for these organisations. This is already being seen by some as the 'big' charity that has all the power trying to take money away from smaller charities that do not. Regardless of the merits of CRT's intentions, is its public relations department sleepwalking? Has it not considered what the public perception of the proposals might be when they become more generally known? Newspaper headlines of small boat-owning charities being forced to close because of CRT would be a disaster for the Trust.

In other articles in this issue, Mark Tizard has data on mooring uptake at the 'honey pot' site of Stoke Bruerne, which show that the new mooring regulations have had little effect on the availability of visitor moorings there. It seems that word has got round that better enforcement means overstayers no longer overstay, so maybe it would have been better to have introduced

better enforcement first to see if it worked before all these 'no-return' rules and so on, which, as I said in the last issue, I still believe should be rescinded as soon as possible. On the subject of the last editorial, Brian and Susan Chadwick point out in their letter that I should have referred to 'continuous moorers' not continuous cruisers—a point I gladly accept. I like to give credit where it is due, and I have included a report from Ian Lane, CRT's West Midlands Principal Waterway Engineer, on the difficult repairs needed to a lock on the Wolverhampton flight following vandalism—all done within 52 days. Mike Rodd recently attended an excellent presentation by Adam Comerford, CRT's Group Hydrology Manager, who has kindly agreed to speak at NABO's AGM in November—put the date in your diary now, November 16th. Finally, a recent sinking on the Huddersfield Canal prompted me to collect a number of diverse safety-related articles together in this issue. NABO now has a new promotional leaflet, so if you would like copies to hand out to fellow boaters, please get in touch with Secretary, Richard Carpenter.

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letter



## Summer reflections

Chairman **David Fletcher** rolls up his sleeves for the AGM

In July the Waterways Minister announced that he had decided to delay the decision on the transfer of the EA Navigations to CRT. Both navigation authorities were in discussions that might have led to a merger in 2015. There are no details as to why the merger has been delayed and I have no insider knowledge. It is my view that first the funding needed to sweeten the deal was not available, and secondly, the merger was sufficiently controversial for politicians not to want to push it through. I do welcome the announcement because I think, and have consistently said, that CRT has enough on its plate in these early years and taking on the EA would be beyond reasonable expectations and risk.

The downside is that it leaves EA Navigations in limbo for the coming years. The long-term commonsense need for new funding of the EA waterways remains, as it did for BW. EA has been consulting national user groups recently on the registration fee increase for next year, proposing to raise fees by above inflation, in part anticipating that the Government Grant in Aid will drop next year. A groundhog moment from the last years of BW: BW Licence fees went up year-on-year and DEFRA neatly cut back the GIA to match—and for good measure took any BW efficiency savings too. We should not forget this is why we still need the CRT concept, with ring-fenced government funding and a chance to find new money from other than boaters. In the meantime, EA is proposing a

registration increase which is simply a further transfer of funding from Government to boaters; I have objected.

And in the meantime for EA? The users are broadly split into Thames, Eastern Rivers and the Medway, with little boating interchange between them. I observe that there is little support for the balance of the funding split between these areas, with the Thames perceived as a prima donna, jealously protected, and the others relatively under-funded. There needs to be wide user support for this budgeting split, something in which CRT is well-experienced. Also the expenditure for flood defence has perhaps benefited the EA navigations, and there is a real fear that this will become a burden or disappear as navigation is ring-fenced, and departmental budget protection kicks in. This needs to be sorted out so that when the transfer is again put comes back on the table, the right solution will have been found and be working.

Val and I have cruised the system more this year than for a long time, moving the boat from one side of the country to the other, and taking the long way round. It has been very pleasant, and the main waterway issue has been 'how quiet it has been.' There have been hardly any boats out, and we have seen many hire craft tied up in the basins. We have enjoyed visitor moorings in towns where none were expected. This is very unusual for us, as we often cruise late in the day and don't expect to find them empty. Where is everybody? I think that the green

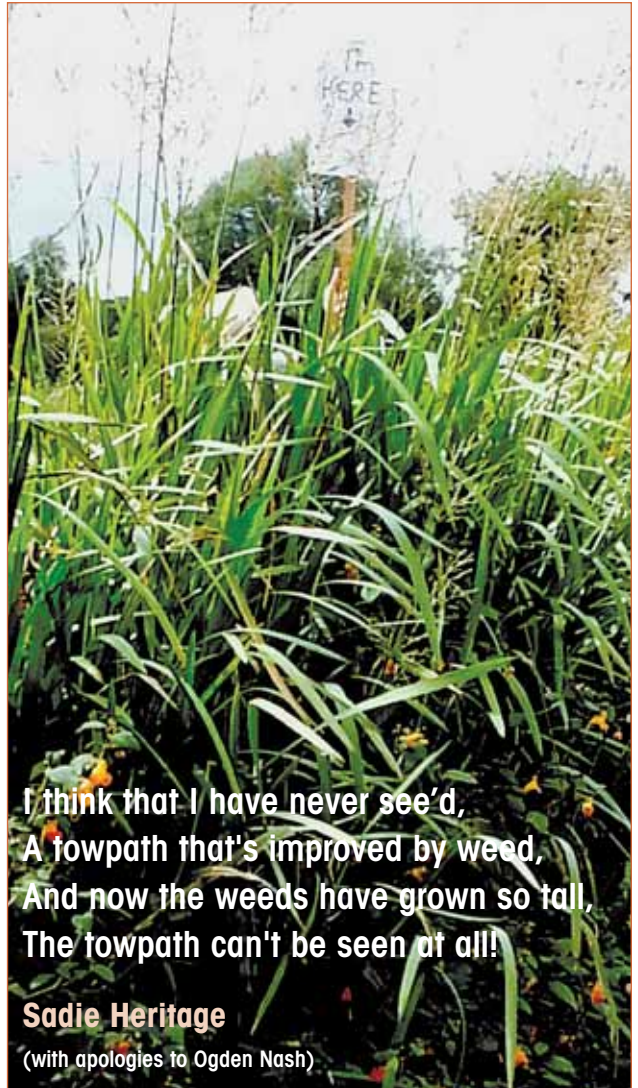
shoots of recovery have not yet flowed down to boaters and the price of diesel is biting.

Which takes us to the new CRT mooring rules and events on the K&A and in the SE. Elsewhere in this issue we bring you up to date with the plans, where minimum cruising distances, no return rules, overstay charges and community mooring permits are all in vogue. I hope we do not have different rules in different areas, as the confusion will affect boaters just going about in their lawful way. CRT is always confident about their interpretation of the Acts, so let us have some action so we can see what the courts think too. This will continue to be a major subject for comment by NABO.

I am pleased to say that membership numbers are holding up well after the increase in membership fees and I thank you for your loyalty to the Association. We do lose members, some saying we are too aggressive and some saying we are not aggressive enough. Those who write are most often going ashore because they are selling up—there is little to be said other than best wishes for the future and thanks for your support. As always I welcome letters, and try and respond to all; they give guidance to Council and help it remain sensitive to the mood on the cut.

Melanie has told us that she wishes to step down from handling our membership admin next year, leaving a big gap in our housekeeping. We need to build a new team to handle the essential work and think about the way we do things, maximising technology, minimising effort. Could you be part of that team? Please get in touch if you can help.

We are now approaching the AGM in November and thoughts turn to plans for next year. As always, we need your support to continue the work, and that means new



**I think that I have never see'd,  
A towpath that's improved by weed,  
And now the weeds have grown so tall,  
The towpath can't be seen at all!**

**Sadie Heritage**

(with apologies to Ogden Nash)

faces. Please help to take the load as two long-serving Council members will not stand again this year. The best way is to come to Council and see the work in hand and find what you can do. Please don't be shy. We cannot continue effectively without fresh energy and ideas. Put simply, six cannot do the work of twelve.

# A Place to Stay

Some CRT moorings have new rules, **Mark Tizard** explains.



**Welcome to Stoke Bruerne**

Visitor mooring zones within the Stoke Bruerne area are designated as 2 day or 7 day.

Mooring in the zones is free for the published time. If you stay longer, an extended stay charge of £25 per day applies.

Maximum stays within Stoke Bruerne are 7 days in a single visit and 10 days in a calendar month.

The visitor mooring area extends from Blisworth Tunnel to the waterpoint near Lock 20.

Thank you for your co-operation and enjoy your stay

Further information is available by calling T 0900 540 4243 or visiting [canalrivertrust.org.uk/vmstokebruerne](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/vmstokebruerne)

Registered Charity 1144362

On the 23rd of August this year, the new mooring restrictions and charging regime were introduced at Stoke Bruerne, Thrupp and Foxton. These restrictions limit the time spent on the visitor moorings, introduce a maximum period that a boater can spend at visitor moorings in any calendar month, and also introduce

a penalty charge of £25 per day for every day or part thereof that a boat overstays.

NABO has always supported CRT's enforcement of regulations regarding overstaying, but has ques-

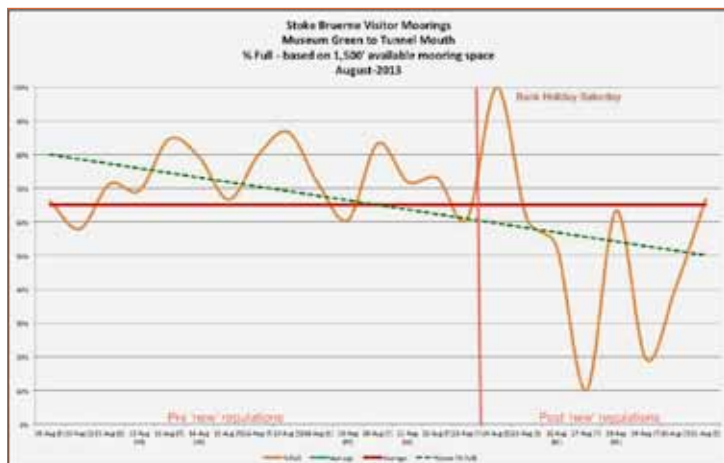
tioned the need for the new restrictions. Members will recall that at the workshops earlier this year, CRT produced no evidence of the need for this change beyond saying it's what many boaters wanted, despite the consultation and on-line petition demonstrating that many boaters did not see the need. If CRT had produced evidence of the need then I suspect many more boaters would have supported the change. At our recent meeting, Denise Yelland agreed that there

wasn't really an overstaying problem now on visitor moorings as the word had got out among boaters that this would lead to an immediate focus by the enforcement team.

NABO takes the view that CRT's previous enforcement activities in 2012 and the towpath telegraph have done the job for them and that overstaying on visitor moorings at Foxton and Stoke Bruerne was already substantially down compared to previous years. NABO

members report a similar situation at Foxton, another 'hot spot' visitor mooring that is subject to these changes. The photograph of Foxton visitor moorings (the bottom section) in July shows freely available spaces. During August a boat-owning resident of Stoke Bruerne kept a record of mooring availability from the museum to the tunnel portal (see graph).

It demonstrates that even at Stoke Bruerne there was plenty of space





in the early evening throughout the peak period of August, both before and after the introduction of the new regulations. The long pound below the Navigation pub had plenty of spaces throughout this period. Perhaps boaters have been put off by having a volunteer banging on the side of their boat asking how long they will be staying when they arrive and again the following day reminding them that they must move off shortly. NABO understands that boaters should not always expect a visitor mooring to be available at popular spots when arriving fairly late in the day, but it would appear that CRT's desire to impose reduced stay times, no return rules and associated penalty charges may not have been necessary. The graph provides an example of the information that one would expect CRT to have pro-

duced to justify the proposed changes at the recent South East Visitor Mooring Consultation, but were unable to do so.

There is some confusion as to what constitutes 'a day,' with volunteers seen logging boats in the early evening then again the following lunchtime. If you turned up that afternoon would you be on your second day or still on your first when logged the second time? Presumably on the second visit, boaters may have received a leaflet saying they were on their second day? CRT



Foxton moorings  
Photo: Mark Tizard

**CRT—How the £25 has been arrived at**

"Our lawyers have been very clear that the charge should reflect our costs, rather than be set as a penalty. As I'm sure you appreciate (because you are keen that we enforce

the rules), monitoring how long people remain on casual moorings and communicating with those who overstay (whether or not they are continuous cruisers) takes manpower. We arrived at £25 some years ago from an estimate of the average costs of the most applicable components of the enforcement process. We included the following:

1. Analysis of sightings data to identify extended stayers (share of overhead—minimal amount)
2. Production of invoice (20 minutes)
3. Production and delivery of warning notices to the boat (say 10 minutes per boat plus travel costs)
4. A small (minimal) element covering the average likelihood of necessary follow-up credit control work.

Of course we had to make estimates of the averages of these for any particular site—figures would vary according to site capacity and the number of boats requiring warnings and then invoices. Our staff hourly charge-out rate (to cover all overheads) is £65 for a boating coordinator (the administrative support person undertaking most, but not all, of these steps). Item 2 involves two steps: first the boating coordinator raises the invoice request; this then has to be approved and the invoice confident on this basis that a judge would not rule this charge excessive."



proposes to survey the boaters that were spotted on the moorings to get their feedback (but not those that decided they didn't need the hassle and didn't stop). I suspect the feedback will be positive: after all they were able to find a mooring easily. However, as the graph shows, this would have been the case previously. I doubt many will overstay and pay the penalty charge; moreover, there is no mechanism for them to do so even if they wanted to.

NABO understands that the data gathering and leaflet distribution are all done by volunteers but we would still query how a CRT-owned marina can charge £12 a night for

a serviced mooring, which surely a judge would also take into consideration.

NABO hopes that CRT will produce evidence of need before making any further changes and understands that there may be further consultation on any proposed additional changes before their implementation.

The new signage makes no mention that the restrictions will be lifted in the winter period, although at a recent meeting with CRT this was confirmed. CRT has also confirmed that in the two weeks after the introduction, no charges had been raised, about which it is pleased.

## Do we have your current email address?

In late August we sent out the second email bulletin to all members, talking mainly about the current and planned representative activities. Did you get it? More than 200 did not, because either we have no email address, or the one we have was rejected.

Following previous appeals in NABO News, there has been a steady flow of members updating their email addresses and personal data, and thank you to those who have done so. But we still have a very long way to go. So please check if you did not get the email on the evening of the 28th August. If not, then it is most likely that we do not have a valid email address for you. If this is the case, and you want to use email, please drop a line to the webmaster\* at [web@nabo.org.uk](mailto:web@nabo.org.uk) and we can put you on the list. We will not bombard you with spam and we will not pass on your email address to others who do!

It is also possible to add your email address to the NABO system online. To do this it is necessary to 'sign in' through the website. The system is secure and you can only see your own data. Only admin staff and Council members can see the members' data as is needed to operate the Association. Individual members need to register in order to be able to login. If you have not done this before, the best thing is to email the webmaster to get it organised. New members joining via Paypal have this all organised as they join.

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. There is an FAQ in the **Visitors** section with more details. My thanks again to all those who have taken the time to email. If you have problems with the web system, please drop me a line.

*Webmaster*

The Webmaster's position is currently vacant, but website maintenance is being handled by a Council member.

# Fly on the Wall

observes proceedings at the last Council meeting.

After their summer break, Council members reconvened to chew the fat, with many commenting on how quiet the waterways are this year despite the sunny weather: plenty of empty moorings everywhere; unwanted hire boats filling their boatyards; no congestion at locks; etc. Maybe the cost of diesel and people feeling the pinch?

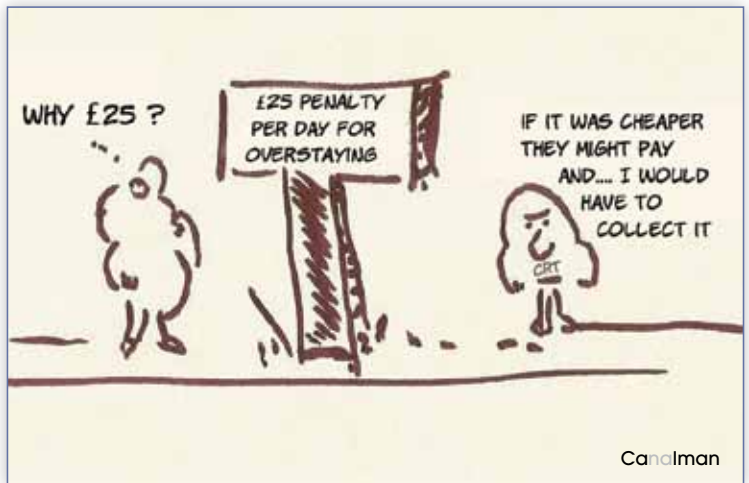
Moorings were high on the agenda in various forms: many visitor moorings in the South East are underused; roving mooring permit holders will have free winter moorings on reserved stretches of tow-path but RMPs are creating division among some boaters; the outcome of the CRT mooring consultation on the K&A has ignored views expressed by many of those involved; the use of visitor moorings as winter moorings (you can't have one unless you registered as a continuous cruiser in June and getting one seems very complicated); signs

telling boaters of reductions in 14-day moorings—the Council thinks 14 days should be the default length of stay unless a good reason can be given for a shorter time; and enforcement of mooring on the Thames being taken over by a carpark company (are boaters now to expect their props to be clamped?)

There was also a wide-ranging discussion on safety: the CRT out-of-hours 'emergency' 0845 phone number gets

routed to the ambulance service, with no guarantee that it will be answered (use 999 if you have a real emergency); the recent sinking on the Huddersfield Narrow after a boat became stuck on the cill leaving a lock when apparently badly-leaking bottom gates lowered the water level, which could happen to any one of us; idiots observed with a barbeque alight on the bow of their boat and the front doors open—so many different types of accidents waiting to happen there, from carbon monoxide poisoning to a knock from a passing boat depositing hot coals into their saloon. Perhaps in the era of package holidays everyone expects everything to be made safe for them by the holiday company, but the waterways are not like that.

See you at the AGM in November ... Byeeee.



# Court Correspondent

**Simon Robbins** sums up the recent legal outcomes.

After various attempts using Freedom of Information requests and obfuscations on the part of the then BW, you can see the court orders and judgments CRT have obtained since April 2012 at the CRT website: [canalrivertrust.org.uk/publication-scheme/publication-scheme/court-action-to-remove-boats-from-our-waterways](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/publication-scheme/publication-scheme/court-action-to-remove-boats-from-our-waterways)

**Y**ou may recall that, arising out of our legal complaint, NABO persuaded CRT to publish the outcomes of 'boating enforcement' cases that went to court. Our legal advice suggests that some of the claims BW/CRT were making about their supposed powers were controversial and challengeable. In practice we reached the situation where we had to 'agree to disagree' on some points. However the ultimate test on these issues is when a case involving these disputed points is taken to court, and whether the court agrees with what CRT are claiming their powers to be. We also decided to look at recent court cases to see if there was anything enlightening in those.

*Pursuing a man with almost no assets for thousands of pounds seems like a fruitless exercise.*

Most of the cases are on the face of it straightforward and apparently were not subject to a formal trial. Most involve failing to renew boat licences and/or mooring permits and are in themselves uncontroversial; we have no problem with CRT going after those who do not pay their basic dues. Even in these circumstances, in a number of cases the court made suspended orders requiring the boater to pay back the money owed in instalments and pro-

vided they did that, no further action would result. However it was clear that BW and then CRT intended to make a small number of cases 'test cases' on their general powers. The Paul Davies case on the K&A, much reported already, was one and although not a precedent case, it gives an indication that what most people know as 'bridge-hopping' is probably not acceptable.

Another case we suspected BW/CRT saw as critically important has also now been resolved; that of George Ward, also on the K&A. In the end the outcome is somewhat underwhelming; CRT did not argue a case about distance moved, over-staying or any of the controversial issues, but instead focused on the considerable delays George took to relicence one of the boats he owned.

## **An empty triumph**

However the whole thing turned in a Pyrrhic victory: George sold the boat in question during the proceedings and so by the time it got to a judgement there could be no order made for him to remove the boat because it was no longer his. More interestingly, the court apparently declined CRT's request for a sweeping order requiring George personally and all his other boats to be excluded from CRT waters indefinitely. CRT apparently sought this order despite the fact that the other two boats George owns now have insurance and safety certificates; CRT will apparently still not relicence them. What is more curious is that it's reported that CRT is also trying to claim £76 000 in court costs from

George, who is a disabled man in receipt of benefits. Given the fact that pursuing a man with almost no assets for thousands of pounds seems like a fruitless exercise and I for one have doubts over the wisdom of CRT pursuing matters further.

George himself is apparently much more explicit about how he sees things: *“CRT’s move to take over £76,000 from me that they know I don’t have is vindictive and malicious. They are determined to hound me off the waterways. They failed with the Section 8, they failed to get an injunction, so they are trying another way to make me homeless”.*

***Surely the point of the exercise is to get licence fees paid and ensure boats are properly licensed in future?***

He continued; *“This is harassment; they are trying to put psychological pressure on me so that I move off the canals. They won’t succeed, except over my dead body”.*

If it’s right that CRT is pursuing £76k in costs, that does seem to be a sledgehammer to crack a nut and it will be interesting to see what a court makes of this. Surely the point of the exercise is to get the licence fees paid and ensure George keeps his boats properly licensed in future? One does wonder what the agenda really is here. Time will tell.

As alluded to above, the more controversial issue of overstaying charges/fines have it seems still to be tested in court and there is nothing much added to the court’s view of how far continuous cruisers have to move, other than what we heard in the Paul Davies case.



# Environment Agency News

## EA Keeps its Waterways

In July, the Government announced that a decision on transferring EA waterways to CRT has been postponed.

## Navigation Charges 2014-15

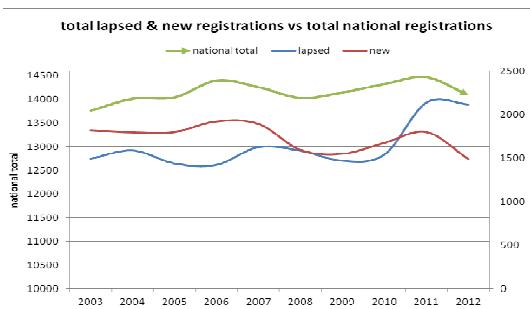
Around 65% of EA's waterways' funding comes from Grant in Aid (GIA) by the Government, which funds work or services for the wider public benefit. Navigation charge payers cover all expenditure directly related to the services they receive. EA states there is a need to increase charges above inflation to both pay for current activities and to help reduce the impact of reductions in government funding (it expects to hear how further GIA reductions will affect its navigations in the autumn).

The EA Navigation Charging Plan for 2012-2015 established that navigation charges would increase by CPI+2% each year to 2015, except for commercial boats where charges are frozen at 2011 levels. In 2014-15 this will be an increase of around 4.9% or £300k more than in 2013-14, costing each boat owner an additional £10-14. EA discussed this with national navigation customer representatives in July who challenged the '+2%' element and requested more evidence be made available to understand why this was necessary. Local consultation took place during August and a national customer meeting took place in September prior to a final decision by early October.

Currently EA houseboat owners do not need to have insurance and the agency is also proposing that there will be a requirement from 2014-15 for houseboat owners to have a minimum of third-party insurance when they register their houseboat.

An EA customer survey in March this year showed 72% of customers were satisfied with the overall services provided by the EA; 92% of customers felt safe using EA sites and facilities; 90% felt safe using EA waterways; and 90% said they were likely to continue boating next year. EA boat registrations have increased in the last ten

years (see graph); there has been a small decline in new customers and an increase in lapsed customers (not re-registering). National customer representatives agreed that price increases play a small part in decisions to continue boating, with the weather, age and health being more significant. In 2013, so far, boat registration numbers are holding up.



## Thames Mooring Trial



The EA and other landowners provide free 24-hour visitor moorings on the River Thames, but it has reported that some boaters stay longer than they are entitled to. It has now employed the car park management company,

District Enforcement, for a six-month trial, applying the civil enforcement rules used to monitor parking in private car parks. During the trial there will be a penalty charge of £100 (£60 for early payment) for any boat owner who breaches the conditions of use of free 24-hour moorings. District Enforcement will send a Mooring Charge Notice to the registered boat owner and pursue payment, using County Court proceedings if necessary. There will be an appeals process in accordance with industry-approved codes of conduct. The six-month pilot started in August on East Street in Oxford and sites in Weybridge and Walton upon Thames, and will finish next February.

# Boat Safety Roundup

## Hirer Safety Review

As NABO members will know, an extensive revision of the Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) as applicable to private boats went 'live' earlier this year. The next stage is to review the standards applicable to self-drive, powered hire boats, including day-boats. The outcomes will influence the revised BSS standards for such boats, last reviewed in 2002, as well as ensuring that safety-focused licensing conditions for hire boat operators are proportionate and relevant.

To ensure hirer safety, the review aims to strike an appropriate balance between the respective roles and responsibilities of the navigation authorities, the hire operators, and the hirers themselves. The detailed work for the review is being undertaken by a sub-group, constituted through the full BSS Technical Committee (chaired by NABO Chairman, David Fletcher) and the BSS Advisory Committee (on which NABO is represented by Trevor Rogers). All hire boat operators have been invited to attend open forums on the topic in November. NABO is being represented on the working sub-group by Council member Mike Rodd [mike.rodd@nabo.org.uk](mailto:mike.rodd@nabo.org.uk), who would welcome input from NABO members, many of whom first started boating as hirers, and who also have unique experience of some of the issues that face hire boaters.



Photos: Peter Killan [www.penninewaterways.co.uk](http://www.penninewaterways.co.uk)

to fall quickly in the lock and the stern sank before the boater was able to remedy the situation by running water into the pound above (it would have been difficult anyway as the paddles are fitted with anti-vandal locks and cannot be opened rapidly in an emergency). This was not due to carelessness or inattention and is something that could happen to anyone—a similar incident is reported to have happened in 2011. If you are ascending Lock 9w and see that the short pound above is low, which is likely if you have just filled the lock, run water down from Lock 10w before exiting Lock 9w. Descending from Lock 10w, run extra water down if the pound looks low and do not attempt to enter the lock if levels are low.

## Sinking on the Huddersfield

In early August, there was an incident on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal in which a reportedly single-handed boater was travelling uphill at Lock 9w. As the short pound above the lock was low, the boat grounded on the top gate cill as it was exiting the lock. It is reported that water leaking out of the tailgate caused the water level

The NABO AGM

# Come and join us ...

at The Annual General Meeting of the  
National Association of Boat Owners

**Nominations** must reach us by 10th October 2013

Please send the General Secretary any **Resolutions** you wish put before the AGM meeting with the names of proposer and seconder by the 10th October.

Please send to:

[gen.sec@nabo.org.uk](mailto:gen.sec@nabo.org.uk)

or by post to:

RICHARD CARPENTER,  
Mill House End Farm,  
Croston, Leyland PR26 9HB

**T**his year make a decision to join the dedicated, but dwindling, band of discontents (only joking guys and gal!) that make up NABO Council and stand for election for 2013–2014. The Council meets around seven times per year and the work is rewarding and interesting, giving an in-depth insight into what is really happening on (and to) our waterways.

You'll learn what goes on behind the scenes and make some new friends. There are few formalities and you can choose how much or little you are able to contribute—either from the comfort of your home

or out and about at meetings. This year the Council really needs people with administrative and computer skills, so if this is you, don't be shy and let us know. Please complete the nomination form, photocopy it if you would rather keep your NABO News intact, then return it to Richard Carpenter, General Secretary, by 10th October. If you don't have anyone to pro-~~po~~se and second you, just phone one of the Council members and we can sort that out. Please use the space on the nomination form for necessary declarations or include them on an attached sheet.

## In relation to nominations, the NABO Constitution states:-

Only full members are eligible to be nominated for election to, or to be members of, the Council.

Any member seeking election or re-election to the Council who is, or has at any time in the previous 12 months, held any position of influence or authority in any organization which is involved with the inland waterways, or has any personal interest which is likely to affect their dealings with outside bodies on behalf of the Association, shall declare their interest at the time of being nominated for the Council.

Any member seeking election or re-election to the Council shall declare the full circumstances and current status at the time of being nominated for the Council if he or she is, or has been at any time in the previous six years:

- convicted of any criminal offence,
- involved in or threatened with litigation,
- involved in or threatened with formal insolvency proceedings,
- or the subject of a formal inquiry.





# Nomination form for the Nabo Council

Nominee

**Name**

**Address:**

**Tel:**

**Email:**

**Boat name:**

**Signature and Date:**

Proposer

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Tel:**

Seconders

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Tel:**

In 80 words or less, please tell members why they should elect you to NABO Council:

Any declarations required by the Constitution:

Send to: RICHARD CARPENTER, Mill House End Farm, Grape Lane, Croston, Leyland, Lancashire, PR26 9HB to arrive by 10th October 2012

# NABO meets CRT

Mark Tizard reports

## The teams

### CRT

Sally Ash, Head of Boating

Denise Yelland, Head of Enforcement

Damian Kemp, Communications Manager

### NABO Council representatives

Mark Tizard

Mike Rodd

With so many issues in being discussed and the moment and to keep our members abreast of the latest policy and thinking at CRT, NABO organised a meeting at CRT's Offices on 10th September. The discussion was wide ranging, covering many of the subjects which form the focus of boaters' concerns.

From a NABO perspective this was a robust but very constructive meeting, where we were able to get a clearer view of some of the Trust's future plans. We hope that we can continue a regular dialogue and that the Trust will proactively engage with NABO when planning further changes that affect boaters.

### Non-compliant Boaters

A very useful discussion was led by Denise on the challenges and long-term objectives, and we were broadly in agreement with her views and objectives. It was agreed that there wasn't really an overstaying problem now on visitor moorings as the word had got out among boaters that this would lead to an immediate focus of the enforcement team.

Denise described the analysis of a rolling 6-month sample of boats that had been sighted at least four times and not moved 5 km in that period and which were highlighted for attention. She mentioned that CRT is investigating moving from this '5 km' approach to the number of 'places', but this review is ongoing and no decision has been made. Denise reported that there are currently some 700 boats that had not moved 5 km in the last six months (March

to August). She also stated that the Trust isn't acknowledging that any cruising beyond 5 km is considered as acceptable (i.e. 6 km over a six-month period isn't 'continuous cruising') but it has to draw the line somewhere so that it can focus its efforts on those moving the least.

*According to CRT there are currently 700 boats that have not moved 5 km in the last six months.*

There are also approximately 70 new continuous cruising boaters every month (the number with home moorings remains broadly the same). Of considerable concern to the Trust is that a significant number of these new boaters were not moving 5 km, despite the new guidance and the attempts being made to ensure that they were aware of the requirements to move.

Denise confirmed that it was the Trust's intention to start refusing to relicence a boat as a continuous cruiser, if it is identified as not having moved the required amount over the first 6 month period (initially 5 km but this distance would then be expanded), unless the boater could demonstrate having a home mooring.

Once a licence was refused it normally took about 10 weeks to get through the Section 8 process, so there was time during this period for boaters to demonstrate that they had

found and paid for a mooring to enable them to remain on Trust waters. The Trust's legal advice has shown that this approach of refusing to release a boat was legally enforceable.

### **K&A Consultation**

Mike reported that many people involved with the K&A were unhappy with the recently released consultation document, which was poorly structured, repetitive and confusing. The first section was seeking support (or otherwise) for the specific recommendations of the Moorings Sub-Group, and the second section, seemingly, was seeking views on aspects which had either not been discussed in full by the Sub-Group or, indeed, rejected by it.

There were also proposals that seemed to conflict with work coming out elsewhere, especially the SE consultation. Sally reported that the Trust had little control over the content and format of the consultation, and what had been produced was as the Local Partnership wished it to be.

Mike responded that while he understood this, in the end it was a Trust consultation and most responders were not aware of the Partnership. It was agreed that we should ask NABO members to add their views, and there was space for additional comments under the questions in the consultation document.

### **Roving Mooring Permits**

The small pilot exercise in the London area is to go ahead and the Trust asked that NABO keeps the specific details confidential until they are published on the Trust's website shortly. We have respected this request. Boaters who do not have a RMP will still be able to freely moor within the defined RMP cruising area.

### **SE Visitor Moorings**

Mark shared a graph of use of visitor moorings at Stoke Bruerne (see p8) showing that there was little need for the new regulations. Sally said that the plans had gone well and that no boats had been charged. A survey was going to be sent to boaters who had stayed on the moorings asking for their views, the results of which will be publicly available. The restrictions would be lifted in the winter as promised at the workshop.

*There are approximately 70 new continuous cruising boaters every month.*

Mark suggested that before they changed the other moorings, a study a bit like that at Stoke Bruerne should be carried out. Sally said that they did not have the resources to do this. Denise understood the problem and talked about having a 'moorings full' button or similar on the website. We felt that she would be open to any suggestions to help her understand the problem/demand. Damian mentioned that he and Sally had done a lot of soul-searching after this consultation exercise and further consultation via a workshop was planned, probably in November, to look at other visitor moorings and review feedback on the initial implementation.

### **Visitor Moorings**

Sally said that these were defined as moorings in popular areas where stays of less than 14 days were appropriate. Sally mentioned that, due to funding available from external sources, some visitor moorings had been established in inappropriate places. We did not have time to discuss plans for additional moorings.

### **Important information for new boaters**

<http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/boating/mooring/want-to-be-a-continuous-cruiser>

**Long Term Moorings (LTMs)**

Sally mentioned that there were no plans for more LTMs, apart from some areas in London. It was important to appreciate that the establishment of LTMs could be seen to be increasing the competition with marinas, many of which were struggling to fill places.

*Winter moorings will only be available to those without home mooring on the 1st June 2013, so if a boat is not identified as having a home mooring on this date then no winter mooring in 2014 and 2015*

**Winter Moorings**

Details of winter mooring arrangements have been published on the Trust's website. In principle, these will only be available to boaters who

the Trust identified as having a continuous cruiser licence on 1st June 2013. The Trust is reviewing future winter mooring arrangements and shared some ideas with us, but as they are still under review we have respected their request not to publish details until the future policy has been determined.

**Boat Movements**

Sally confirmed that the hire industry was really suffering and she agreed with the NABO Council members' observation that there were, overall, fewer boat movements over the past year.

**Meetings**

Damian had been asked by some National Advisory Group members to organise quarterly meetings with all boater's associations. We said this was a good idea and Sally wondered if individual meetings were necessary, as it requires much additional work in preparing for a meeting. Our feelings are that individual meetings are still important if there is going to be real communication.

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## New Boating Guidelines for K&A

The K&A Waterways Partnership is seeking views from boaters, businesses, local authorities and other canal users on ideas for improving fair access to moorings on the canal between Devizes and Bath. The Partnership is looking for feedback from all those who use and enjoy this popular canal to help it develop a 12-month pilot project. People are being asked for their views on:

- Work to identify stretches of the canal as places that boaters should be recommended to cruise between.
- Ideas for creating a local appreciation of what constitutes a bona fide journey in these places.
- Setting up a panel of experienced and respect-

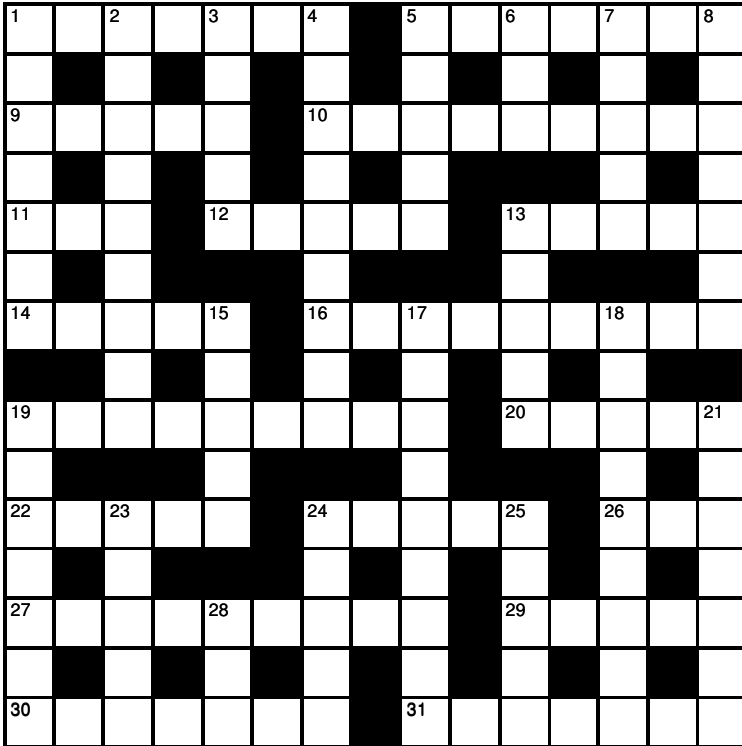
ed local people, the Waterway Partnership and CRT's Mooring Manager to impartially assess enforcement cases that arise.

- Agreeing local guidance between boaters and CRT to improve understanding of, and adherence to, local mooring requirements and Trust policies for boating in the area.

The consultation takes place until Friday 29th November 2013. Following the consultation, and subject to any changes resulting from it, there will be a 12-month pilot of the plan. For more information about the proposals and the consultation, see <http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/consultations/current-consultations>

# NABO News Crossword N° 13

By Canaldrifter



### I name this boat ...

If you have spotted a boat name that made you smile, please let us have a photo to use in future issues. Here's one from David Fletcher.

### Answers to Crossword 12

Across: 1 Standedge, 6 Canal, 9 Alluvia, 10 Dynamic, 11 Deepcut, 12 Nesting, 13 Set ashore, 15 Angst, 16 Empty, 19 Eastwards, 22 Face cut, 23 Strings, 25 Ejector, 26 Smaller, 27 Dosed, 28 Weedhatch.

Down: 1 Shard, 2 Ailment, 3 Devices, 4 Draft, 5 Endangers, 6 Canasta, 7 Numbing, 8 Lock-gates, 13 Sheffield, 14 Overthrow, 17 Packets, 18 Yachted, 20 Warpath, 21 Ringlet, 23 Susie, 24 Sarah.

### Across

- 1 Rebuild a postern on the Lancaster canal (7)
- 5 Wades in a lock? (7)
- 9 A poem on the hull! (5)
- 10 Jazzy tune lover helps CRT (9)
- 11 Principal principle (3)
- 12 Leaves quietly for a long time (5)
- 13 Marina with washing facility (5)
- 14 Cash in Tesco insurance (5)
- 16 Pigs on the Coventry? (9)
- 19 The direction of 18 down? (9)
- 20 Deceive one of 5 down (5)
- 22 A boss in front (5)
- 24 Goes towards ship's toilet (5)
- 26 Finish off rickety 6 down? (3)
- 27 Boat's cooker ring fixed and studded! (9)
- 29 Shaken rider not so wet (5)
- 30 5 across at the stern (7)
- 31 Gently opened throttle, but slowed down (5,2)

### Down

- 1 Pick mostly around last hull material (7)
- 2 Scattered coins come to help with efficiency (9)
- 3 To moor is to make busy (3,2)
- 4 Canal builder with a sextant? (9)
- 5 Foreign quants? (5)
- 6 Outlaw's private cabin? (3)
- 7 Soon removed loose ends on the Aire (5)
- 8 Coiled lines? (7)
- 13 Lads showing the way we hear (5)
- 15 Wades around cut (5)
- 17 Abuse and lose a windlass we hear (9)
- 18 Skill turn for a good breeze (5,4)
- 19 Ride out to where the wreath floats (7)
- 21 Cross current backing in inspired it (4,3)
- 23 Declined and went out (5)
- 24 Hulls left out with potassium on board on the G&S at Purton? (5)
- 25 Tumblehomes to take (5)
- 28 Beer knocked back in elation (3)

# A Sting in the Tail

## Is CRT trying to clout charity boats?

In a consultation document in July on revisions to charges for business boat licences, CRT has proposed to withdraw the 60% discount on charity and community boats. CRT has also said: 'Now that we ourselves are a charity, we need to agree to all fundraising activity that takes place on our land to

ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that waterway visitors are not being overly targeted for contributions.' NABO News asked two organisations involved in running charity or community boats for their reactions. Here are the replies from the National Community Boats Association and The Bruce Trust.

## National Community Boats Association Response



The National Community Boats Association (NCBA) is pleased to support CRT in reviewing the system of waterways licences which, for community boating organisations (CBOs), has always been a slightly disorganised and inconsistent process, but it recognises that these changes may have a negative impact on some community boats.

It is not easy to define what a 'community boat' is: they are owned or managed by organisations rather than individuals; operated by charities, local authorities or corporate bodies; they may have charitable aims in their constitution or no constitution; maybe an educational project, deliver training with excluded, disabled or disadvantaged people; they may deliver rehabilitation contract services for the health or justice sectors; or they may simply offer residential capacity afloat for community groups.

Simplicity in licensing is essen-

tial, particularly as the number involved is less than 1% of the total licensed by CRT. A complex system of discounts is not easy to administer but CRT's proposal does not appear to resolve this. NCBA is pleased that its proposal of using the Charities Act as the qualifying criteria (whilst not necessarily being a registered charity) has been adopted by CRT. These are relatively clear and, where interpretation is in doubt, relevant case law may provide an external 'arbiter'. In the absence of something more positive, NCBA supports the central proposal of charging these types of boat the standard leisure boat licence fee. After three years of discussion, to get back to the position we started in is disappointing, but it should at least be no more costly.

The 'stings in the tail' of these proposals are:

- 1 The attempt by CRT to introduce an outright ban on 'commercial' revenue-generating activity; and
- 2 The failure of CRT to include

moorings and service provisions in any agreements. Generating revenue to support the aims of a CBO by using charitable assets is an entirely legitimate activity. CBOs may use revenue to subsidise their target groups; particularly those who are charities themselves or unable to afford the cost of accessing the waterways by other means.

NCBA strongly objects to CRT's position on this, which appears to be entirely based on a perceived problem of competition with commercial operators. CRT has failed to provide any evidence of such conflict. NCBA's research demonstrates that not only is there no such evidence but that relationships with commercial operators are usually extremely positive and even symbiotic. Despite seeking to retain a roughly com-

parable licence fee for community boats, the attempt to restrict lawful income generation will have the effect of significantly increasing costs to end users and create more work in fundraising. This is nothing more than a covert tax on helping those who need help the most. It is unclear what powers CRT has to stop such legitimate activity and NCBA questions whether such proposals could stand up to either legal or public scrutiny.

NCBA sees no conflict in navigation authorities providing support to organisations seeking to use income for the benefit of a charitable objective—indeed other navigation authorities do just that. It is entirely proper for CRT as a licensing body to support organisations delivering social outcomes as it contributes to its own corporate social responsibil-

All photos: The Bruce Trust





ity provision. NCBA is disappointed at CRT's lack of willingness to engage with the social, charitable and 'public benefit' benefits of these types of organisations. CBOs

rely on volunteers to deliver their services, and this is another opportunity missed by CRT to engage constructively with organisations that could support another strand of

its aims in a significant and measurable way. Some CBOs use CRT facilities in their operations, with a variety of arrangements from 100-year leases to 'turning a blind eye'. These arrangements are negotiated locally and may have

been in place for many years. The financial impact of not honouring such arrangements could be huge on those organisations that have historically paid little or nothing for

moorings. New charges of potentially thousands of pounds could quite simply mean the closure of some of these organisations and CRT should acknowledge that. It is also unclear how CRT intends to police any of the proposed systems: meeting the qualifying criteria, details of the target users, absence of revenue generating activity and robust operation will be almost completely impossible to scrutinise under these proposals. An opportunity to endorse proper oversight, if not add to its rigour, was also missed.

Finally, NCBA is extremely disappointed with a number of issues relating to the consultation process: the proposal papers were delivered in June with only a matter of weeks to respond. CRT decided to deliver the proposals directly to those involved rather than publishing them on their website and several member organisations received the consultation papers very late or not at all. Given that part of the issue was the inconsistent and disorganised state of the current licence listings, approaching the communication process in this way was less than satisfactory.

## ... and from the Bruce Trust

We are a charity that operates four specially-designed, purpose-built, wide-beam canal boats for disabled, disadvantaged or elderly people to enjoy holidays on the Kennet and Avon Canal. We would prefer them to be known as 'charity boats', which exclusively provide holidays and day trips specifically for people with a wide variety of special needs rather than 'community boats'.

The situation as I understand it is this:

1 There are two types of licence: a standard licence (that applies to

privately owned canal boats) and a business licence, of which there are various categories including 'Community Boats'.

2 CRT is proposing a new licensing structure that applies to all business licences including community boats.

3 In the past our boats have been charged at the commercial licence rate, less a discount of 60%.

4 The current proposal is for community boats to be charged at the rate of the standard licence (i.e. the same rate as a privately



owned boat of the same length) rather than being charged at the commercial licence rate less a discount.

To qualify as a community boat, the use of the boats must strictly comply with all of the following criteria:

- It is owned and operated by a registered charity or properly constituted not-for-profit organisation.
- It is used solely for a charitable purpose, as defined by The Charities Act 2011.
- It is never offered to the general public for trips or hiring of any kind.

The proposed licence does not define 'general public'. It would not be difficult for CRT to contend that all people, including those with disabilities, are members of the general public. For that reason we recommend that a definition be included within the licence terms as follows: 'General public' means members of the public excluding those that are disabled, disadvantaged or elderly, together with their carers and able-bodied people that provide training and assistance in operating the community boat.

While we understand the move towards trying to simplify the system, we feel that by removing the 60% discount for charities, the fundamental intent of a charitable trust like ours has been ignored. It should not be a concern that the discount system may lead to a charitable boat paying less than a private boat, as

this is relative to the aims of a not-for-profit organisation like ours—providing canal boat holidays to disabled people who would not otherwise be able to have this experience either due to commercial prices being too high or a lack of suitable equipment.

The removal of the charity discount and re-sectoring will, for us, increase the annual cost of our licences which we will either have to pass across to our disabled hirers or we will have to find further ways to fundraise at, no easy task in this climate.

We believe further consideration should be given to the licence fees required from not-for-profit organisations, to reflect the fundamental intent of charitable trusts like ours. The 60% charitable discount should remain and be applied to the Standard Licence fee. This would simplify the fee structure, reduce admin costs enabling a reduction of the fees for those taking charitable trips, thus ensuring the fundamental intent of the charitable trusts would be met, which we feel is not currently being considered as it should be. Although we appreciate that this is been considered, we also believe a cap should be implemented over a longer length of time (perhaps 5 years) with the percentage paid towards the new fees gradually increased over time. The jump to 100% more in one year is too large.

**Rebecca Bruce**

### ... Mike Rodd, of the K & A Canal Trust...

From a canal trust's point of view, one of the biggest issues is the threat in the original CRT document that their decisions will in future take into consideration that they are now

a charity. This hints very strongly that CRT could refuse a licence if it felt it might like to run, say, a public trip boat. Given that trip boats (provided they are volunteer-run) are a significant source of income to most canal organisations, this is a massive potential problem.

# Emergency Repair at Lock 20

CRT's Principal Waterway Engineer for the West Midlands Waterway,

**Ian Lane** explains what was involved.

1. First view of the damaged wall.
2. The props in place.
3. Sandstone blocks removed using lifting rings.
4. Failed brickwork removed.
5. Tying in the new wall
6. The finished job.

Photos: CRT

**V**andals flooded several locks on the Wolverhampton flight: pounds were emptied by removing the anti-vandal locks and opening the top and bottom paddles. Lock 20 in particular was inundated with water, and floating debris and scour marks were evident on the ground around the lock following the vandalism. The flooding exposed an unknown weakness in the lock wall, where it had been refaced in the past, but not brick-bonded or mechanically tied back into the original brickwork.

This weakness ran for 15m from the back of the lock copings, behind the large sandstone blocks beneath them, to a point 2m down in the brickwork below the coping level. In addition, the joint between the original and refaced brickwork appeared to have been poorly filled, leaving a slim void between the two parts of the wall, allowing water to find its way in when the flight was vandalised. When the lock drained, it is thought that a build-up of water pressure caused the initial movement of the wall along the line of the old repair. This small amount of movement pushed the wall out 2m down from the coping level, and the full weight of the sandstone blocks that formed the top section of the wall began to bear down on the failed section (the blocks were 600 mm x 600 mm and 2m+ long, with one block weighed at 2.5 tonnes). This caused slow, further movement of the failed section, as it gradually slid out at the bottom and buckled at mid-height.

## Emergency response

The lock required immediate propping to prevent the wall from failing completely, which would probably have caused sound sections of the wall at either end of the failure to be pulled into the lock, extending the damage further and causing irreparable damage to the copings and sandstone blocks. Props were designed and installed to halt the movement and a working platform was built in the lock chamber to allow demolition and rebuilding of the wall. The expectation was that the



failed section of wall would be up to 600mm thick (in line with the thickness of the sandstone blocks), but it was hoped that the failure would 'step in' towards the face of the lock wall and reduce the rebuild thickness.

**Demolition and Rebuilding**

Before the thickness of the failed section could be confirmed, the copings were carefully removed to expose the large sandstone blocks (even this was not an easy job as the copings were wedged tightly together at the back by the movement of the wall).

With agreement of the Conservation Officer, each block was drilled and fitted with two lifting eyes and lifted off by crane. Again, this was a difficult operation with the sandstone blocks sitting tight against each other. With the blocks removed, the remaining brick wall was removed by hand and the extent of the damage was revealed. The failure did indeed 'step-in' towards the face of the wall and ranged from 450mm to 100mm wide over the 15m.

The previous repair had not been made with brick ties and the old wall had been broken back flat with a slim repair section in front of it. To avoid a future failure, the new repair was fully brick-bonded back into the old wall, and mechanically tied in with stainless steel helical ties and Expomet mesh. The brickwork was rebuilt with matching handmade Furness bricks and lime mortar. The sandstone blocks were carefully replaced and the copings reset, with the loss of only seven coping bricks, most of which were already damaged before the work started.

The lock was closed for 52 days from the date of the vandalism and reopened with the contractor managing boats through while the lock-side and quadrants were repaired.

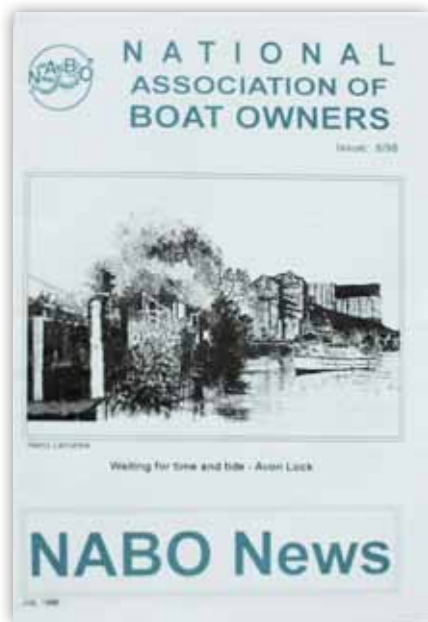


A look at the past through NABO News

# ReWind 15 Years

## NABO News in 1998

Tony Haynes continues his look back, this time to Issue 6 July



**Finch Pinched:** Mr Finch is inside for three years!

**High Intensity Cruising Licence:**

This proposal has created such a furore that a question was asked in Parliament about it. Under Secretary of State, Angela Eagle, stated: 'BW announced on 9th June that it was withdrawing its proposal to introduce a high intensity use cruising licence'. Let us hope that common sense prevails.

**R e c i p r o c a l**

**Licensing:** is being

discussed by BW and the EA. It would be lovely if this could be sorted, especially for those travelling between the Oxford/K&A/Grand Union canals.

**Dredging:** Costs are to be ring-fenced and a timescale will be fixed in which planned dredging will be carried out.

**BW Trust:** BW hopes to receive £6m a year from membership fees, donations and legacies.

**Licence Dodgers:** In the past year there have been 160 prosecutions for licence evasion.

**Towing Paths:** 'We have been assured that towpaths will be paved to provide cycleways where inappropriate' (sic).

**Winter stoppages:** NABO suggests

that this should be published on the internet as the canal entry on Ceefax no longer exists.

**NABO Membership:** Increasing steadily due to hard work at rallies.

**Winding Holes:** After comments in the last NN about boats being moored in winding holes, BW has now allowed pontoons in winding holes at Market Drayton and Penkrudge.

**Continuous Cruising:** BW wants to take boaters to court to get the term defined by law.

**Wolverhampton Locks:** The flight of 21 is to be locked as a result of vandalism.

**It's a Boat's Life:** Nancy Larcombe, whose sketches adorn the 1998 front covers of NABO News, has written a book which details her cruises from her boat's point of view. Called 'It's a Boat's Life' and is illustrated with her sketches throughout. For many years Nancy's Springer, 'Nancy Bell' and her floating gallery 'Towed Haul', were moored at Mytchett on the Basingstoke canal. Nancy passed away in 2010.

**The Pirates of Peterborough!** Not content with proposing an Elizabethan Galleon on the Nene at Peterborough, an application has now been put in for a pirate ship! NABO and others have made objections as these structures would be completely out of character and take up visitor moorings.

**The Full Monty:** Abuse of boaters by anglers on the Trent has included obscene language and missiles being thrown. One angler also removed all his clothes, performing the 'Full Monty' for ladies aboard.

# Letters to the Editor

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

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## We Are Not All The Same

In response to your article *No Place for No Return* in July's issue of NABO News, we agree with much of what you say regarding the CRT mooring signs stating maximum stays per calendar year and no returns etc., which are ridiculous in the extreme. Although more often than not this affects the boaters who come out of their marinas every weekend to a certain popular spot. Whereas, the good old law-abiding continuous cruiser usually stays for the required time then continues on his journey.

We feel, however, some of your comments are prejudiced against continuous cruisers/ liveaboards. Is it continuous cruisers/liveaboards that you are getting at or continuous moorers—there is a world of difference between the two? For example with regard to the popular spots where boaters seem to gather, how can you tell whether they are continuous cruisers/ liveaboards or not? Short of asking them it's not easy to know (or is there a secret signage going on that we are unaware of!) Here's a for instance: if 20 boats leave their various marinas on a Friday night and head for a so called 'honey spot' and there is only room for 10 boats, are people assuming that the 10 boats that got moored are all continuous cruisers? We continuous cruisers/liveaboards are beginning to feel that there is a witch-hunt against us.

When you really think about it, should a boater who has a mooring in a marina and comes out of said marina for 6/7 months of the year not be classed as continuous cruisers/liveaboards as well? Nearly every boater we speak to on the cut is one of these.

Another point you raised is having to go on tickover past lots of 'liveaboard' boats every hundred yards and on either side of bridges (once again how do you know they are liveaboards and haven't just come out of a nearby marina or are on a continuous journey?) Do you feel the same way about boaters moored for miles on the end

of a farmer's field who pay for their mooring? On the Shroppie for example we constantly have to go slow for long periods of time past these moored boats. Do you not expect to find moored boats on the canal—after all everyone has to moor up eventually—even you, unless of course you travel 24 hours a day non-stop!

We do agree with you with regard to the continuous moorers who do moor near bridges and don't ever move and create untidy conditions—but please don't assume these are all continuous cruisers/liveaboards; we are not all the same. These are continuous moorers and should be written as such. Out of the total number of boat owners on the cut the percentage of continuous cruisers is very small.

**Brian and Susan Chadwick**

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## Passionately Engaged

Thank you for the detailed articles on the matter of moorings in your July issue. In January you quoted part of a letter from CRT, following their unilateral changes to the terms and conditions for boat licences. BW (sorry CRT) said: 'I note the reasons for your objections. We do not accept NABO's position, just as you do not accept the Trust's. It will be a matter for the courts to decide, as and when a specific case makes this necessary. As you know, we employ highly experienced and reliable lawyers, supported by learned Counsel to guide our policy and it is they to whom I must turn for guidance rather than NABO.'

Statements like this would have been bad enough in BW days, but they were disgraceful on the part of CRT. Totally counter-productive to the ethos of CRT. It shows how management regards the change as one of changing one logo for another. As David Fletcher mused in his article, 'normal correspondence, and doing the 'right thing' in consultations, simply does not work'

I am impressed by the dedication and ability

## Letters

of NABO Council, and you are probably ahead of me, but my thoughts are that you spend not a penny more on lawyers or counsel. You say (and keep saying) to the new boss of CRT, and at meetings, that this is a yardstick of the true intentions of CRT.

People tell CRT that moorings are an issue which needs sorting out. CRT takes this as meaning that they take the decision on what to do. WRONG. It is their job to keep discussion going until a consensus appears. Clearly, it has not filtered into the working practices of senior CRT staff that their world has changed. Tell the new boss to get a grip on his staff, and remember not only that CRT has to work totally differently; it has to be seen to be working differently.

When CRT resort to quoting their legal powers, they have lost the plot, and the new boss needs to wrap knuckles, and make it clear that such attitudes will not be tolerated in CRT. For your part, do not quote the law at them, and if they quote the law at you—or anyone else—you create a fuss. They are a voluntary organisation. They speak of building relationships; inspiring people; engaging positively. Richard Perry says that he would much rather have people passionately engaged, than indifferent, and they are spending all their time trying to stimulate our interest. Hold him to these fine words.

**Jim Buckley**

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**It Won't Be The Same**

All of this century (and a bit before) I have had the absolute joy of not only travelling round the canals with Fred, who has spent his entire life on the waterways, but also in historic ex-working boats. Fred has a wealth of knowledge and experience, especially of the BCN where he was employed by BWB as soon as possible after his family ceased commercial boating. In those days waterways head-hunted workers with canal experience. When in an expansive mood, Fred would tell me a great deal about the commercial traffic and where various wharfs, old buildings and old arms used to go off; where they went and what they were used for—such a quiet man and so knowledgeable. It has always been a joy to be beside him and to observe first-hand his boating skills. When anyone commented on him completing a tricky manoeuvre he would just say: “Oh the wind was with me,” or “I was lucky.” We have now sold Lynx, and as a friend observed, “It’s the end of an era.” A genuine ex-working boatman on an ex-working boat. A sad day for us but it had to be; please don’t ask if we will miss it! We still have Straw Bear and once health problems are sorted out we look forward to boating again, but it won’t be the same. This picture of Lynx shows my idea of perfect happiness.

**Sadie Heritage**



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### No NABO

In the CRT briefing paper on 'Non Compliant Continuous Cruising' for a Council Meeting on 27th September 2012 (<http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/media/library/2153.pdf>), the tiny National Bargee Travellers Association, the RBOA and the IWA all get a mention (page 3), but NABO doesn't, anywhere in the document. The RBOA is listed as having 2,000 members. Have they included NABO as part of the RBOA, or don't they understand that there are in fact two organisations? Or, are NABO and the RBOA planning a merger (perhaps not a bad idea in the current situation)?

**Tony Haynes**

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### Why Shouldn't All CRT Mooring Permits Be 'Roving'?

I am in the middle of bringing my boat back from Worcester to our home mooring in Banbury, via Tardebigge and Birmingham, in two-day steps. Yesterday, on arrival at Hatton Top lock I found there were no 14-day visitor moorings, unringed 48-hour visitor moorings from St Johns Bridge No 55 and 'Permit Holders only' closest to the lock. There was room for three 60ft boats unoccupied on these. I needed to leave the boat for about three days so I decided to put it on the 48-hour moorings, using the last ring of the permanent moorings for my bow rope and double pins for the stern mooring line. I am not encroaching the permanent mooring site but I might overstay by a few hours on the 48-hours! But how much simpler would it have been if, as a CRT Mooring Permit Holder, I could have used the unoccupied site? After all, I am away from my own designated mooring site. Someone could use that. It seems common sense to me.

**Peter Braybrook**

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### The Etiquette of Speed

What is the speed etiquette for (usually) narrow-boats on a long pound having different speeds? The faster boat will appear on the slower boat's stern making quite clear there is a differential speed and both may have perfectly good reasons for their respective speeds. Tick-over and 1600

rpm are both within safe and non-wash making progress—passing moored boats is not an issue here but how does one overtake in this situation? EITHER the slower boat gives way when safe to do so with a cheery wave and some comment as to “hope she is worth it” and a hearty “thank you” from the faster boat, resulting in two happy boaters. OR the slower boater refuses to allow a safe passing manoeuvre, thinking their speed is adequate—result two unhappy boaters. I have encountered both. The reasons for a faster boat, however valid, cannot be communicated to the slower boat who would surely give way if known. Interesting.

**Mike Gladwell, nb Samantha Buckler**



Photo: John Slee

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