



NABO News

The Magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners
Issue 4 September 2016



CRT'S ANNUAL REPORT
NABO'S PRIORITIES FOR
THE COMING YEAR
WALKING THE BOW
BACK 'LINE'



9 772047 211008

The NABO Council

Chairman
Mike Rodd
 16 The Garlings, Aldbourne,
 Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 2DT
 07831 860199
nabochair@nabo.org.uk

Vice Chair, Moorings and NAG (moorings & licensing)
Mark Tizard
 0203 4639806, mark.tizard@nabo.org.uk

Treasurer
Helen Hutt
 07831 682092, hontreasurer@nabo.org.uk

Legal Affairs
Geoffrey Rogerson
 51 High Path Road, Guildford, GU1 2QQ
 07768 736593, legal@nabo.org.uk

News Editor
Peter Fellows
 19 High Street, Bonsall, Derbyshire, DE4 2AS
 01629 825267, nabonews@nabo.org.uk

Webmaster, NAG (operations) and BSS Rep.
David S. Fletcher
 35 Williamson Drive, Nantwich CW5 5GJ
 07719 276659, web@nabo.org.uk

Regional Reps Coordinator
Stella Ridgway
regrep@nabo.org.uk

Continuous Cruising
Phil Goulding
 24 St Brannocks Park Road, Ilfracombe, EX34
 8HX, 01271 865340, cc@nabo.org.uk

Floating Traders
Paul Howland
 07443 635587, paulh@nabo.org.uk

Stephen Peters
 325 Alcester Road, Birmingham B47 6JG
 01564 824927, stephen.peters@nabo.org.uk

Minutes Secretary
 Vacant

General Sec, Promotion and Recruitment

Richard Carpenter
 Mill House End Farm, Leyland, Lancashire
 PR26 9HB, 07989 441674 or 01772 600886
gen@nabo.org.uk

NABO Online



[facebook.com/master.nabo](https://www.facebook.com/master.nabo)
Richard Carpenter



Twitter [@NABO_Official](https://twitter.com/NABO_Official)
John Slee

Regional Representatives

NW Waterways
Stella Ridgway
stellaridgway@gmail.com

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
 Nb Centurion, Kensal Green Moorings, Ladbroke
 Grove W10 4SR, 0208 9644 516
simon.robbins@nabo.org.uk

South East
Geoff Wood
 07968 491118, se@nabo.org.uk

Southern Waterways
Andy Colyer
south@nabo.org.uk

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
 vacant
anglian@nabo.org.uk

Welsh Waterways
Mike Rodd (details left)

The Thames
Graham Paterson
 0118 986 3959, midthames@nabo.org.uk
Dennis Hill
 07973 638866, dg.hill@ntlworld.com

River Severn
Stephen Peters (details left)

Additional Contacts

Assistant For The Disabled
 vacant
disability@nabo.org.uk

Administration
Sue Burchett
admin@nabo.org.uk

NABO News

The magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners

Issue 4 September 2016

Contents

- 4 Editorial
- 5 Chairman's column
- 8 Fly on the Wall
- 9 **News;** Membership matters. Boat insurance. Council tax implications for residential moorings. CRT job advert. Obituary: David Blagrove. L&L bicentenary celebrations. Ombudsman's report. Proposed new mooring restrictions in Oxford. CRT Winter moorings. Winter stoppages. Bridgewater update. I name this boat
- 14 Regional News from Wales and the North West.
- 15 Norwood tunnel exploration
- 16 AGM Nomination form
- 18 **Boating:** Walking the Bow Back 'Line'.
- 20 Fishing from your boat
- 21 Airbnb
- 22 **Talking Points:** CRT Annual report
- 25 Members' benefits.
- 26 NABO priorities for the coming year
- 28 Roving traders
- 29 Letters



Cover photo

This month's cover photo of the sculpture of dockers at the Royal Docks was taken by Val Fletcher on a walk up the Bow Back Rivers, see the story on page 14.

Win a year's free membership by having your photo selected for the front cover of NABO News. Please email photos as JPEG attachments, ideally portrait format with a file size of 2MB or larger.

Next NABO News copy date

Articles, letters, cartoons and photos are most welcome. Images and photos in JPEG format please. Please email or post your contributions to nabonews@nabo.org.uk by **19th November 2016**.

NABO News is published by the **National Association of Boat Owners**
 PO Box 104, Leyland PR25 9AN Editor: Peter Fellows Production: Chris Pink

Whilst every care is taken to ensure that the contents of this newsletter are factually correct, we accept no liability for any direct or consequential loss arising from any action taken by anyone as a result of reading anything contained in this publication. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Association. The products and services advertised in this publication are not necessarily endorsed by the Association.

CRT Emergency No: 0800 4799947 **EA Emergency No: 0800 807060**
 Contact CRT waterway managers at canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/our-regions



Lock failures, too much vegetation or too little water?

Editor [Peter Fellows](#) offers some choices for NABO focus.

There has been plenty happening on the waterways since the last issue, as reported in the news section: the bicentenary celebrations on the Leeds and Liverpool will culminate in October with a flotilla of boats following short boat Kennet to re-create the first trans-Pennine journey—with details of how you can take part; Oxford City Council is proposing a public space protection order to restrict moorings on the city's waterways; and the Waterways Ombudsman has issued his annual report for 2015/16. Oh yes, and we have a new waterways minister. CRT has also been busy: doing away with its Central Shires waterway, advertising new posts and giving details of winter stoppages and its sale of winter moorings. It has also published its annual report, reviewed and dissected by Stella Ridgway.

Members who have been out and about on the waterways over the summer have found time to write a bumper crop of letters, ranging from complaints about too much vegetation (especially, but not only, on the South Oxford canal—again!), too many boats moored along towpaths, the build-up of rubbish at collection points, and rebranding of CRT enforcement officers. There is also news from NABO's regional reps, this time Mike Rodd in Wales and Stella Ridgway in the North West.

In his Chairman's column, Mike takes issue with

a recent proposal to allow continuous cruisers with schoolchildren restricted movement during term-time, so that they can remain close to the school. Helen Hutt outlines where your subscription money goes, and as the AGM is fast approaching, Mark Tizard takes the opportunity to seek your views on what NABO should focus on in the coming year: the seeming increase in the number of broken paddles and gates, inoperable pumpouts and failed backpumps, with consequent unplanned stoppages, may be top of your list. Or perhaps it is the lack of towpath vegetation cutting, and overgrown trees that narrow the channel and obscure bends that are your bugbear. Or is lack of depth/need for more dredging high on your list? There's plenty to choose from.

David Fletcher explores London's East End waterways on foot and, although my only experience of fishing is retrieving windlasses with a magnet, I delve into what's needed to fish from your boat. The roving trader this time is Helen Francis, who makes hand-embroidered cushions, sold from her boat Betty.

Mentioning the AGM, NABO really does need some new members on its Council to bring new enthusiasm and ideas, so please consider standing for election—I have included a nomination form to make it easier to do. I look forward to seeing you at Wolverhampton Boat club on 12th November.

Autumn Boating

Photo: Mick Fitzgibbons



Focus: the Thames and K&A

Chairman [Mike Rodd](#) with the good, and less good, news of these adjoining waterways.

I hope that you have all enjoyed some wonderful summer cruising days and probably now starting your pre-wintering work, getting your boat ready for the colder days ahead. We spent last week replacing the coach-lines on our boat. We'd had a leading national hire-boat company repaint our 'new' boat three years ago, when we bought it from the Cambrian Cruisers' hire fleet.

We were very pleased with the job they'd done—well, until the vinyl coach-lines started shrinking and going a nasty brown colour! I then found out from the distributors that the vinyl used was only a '3-year' one, so I guess the deterioration wasn't entirely surprising, but still not what you're looking for, given the cost of a paint job!

It has been a pretty good year for us on the K&A Canal Trust (KACT) trip boats—with the good weather, the public passenger numbers have improved. However, in truth, the chilly winds blown in by the Brexit scaremongering seem to have affected our charter trip numbers. But the K&A canal itself has had a bad year, with a large number of lock gate and swing bridge failures—some brought about by boater incidents admittedly, but the results of CRT's obvious policy of 'fix it when it fails' have also been all too evident. I have to say, though, that when we have reported problems, we've received very good and rapid responses from CRT. A call to their emergency line is soon returned by the local person on standby duty. It does appear that right across the system, this is being a bad year for closures—but still,

most of you seem to have done some great cruising.

EA waters

We continue to monitor the EA/CRT situation very closely. We note that the EA has moved its National Navigation Users Forum to December 2016, as CRT's Board isn't meeting until November. We know that the CRT Trustees are rightly concerned about the financial arrangements involved in any transfer of EA navigations. On the Thames, our members report an ever-increasing lack of lock-keepers, with many required to do 'double-' or indeed 'triple-manning'. (These terms may seem amusing—unless you are a Thames user—as they don't mean double or triple the number of lock-keepers, but conversely that each person is required to look after two or three locks simultaneously!). Of course, EA has also been attempting to attract additional volunteer lock-keepers—sounds rather like CRT, doesn't it! The real issue here is not only the lack of lock-keeping, but also how this will affect all the flood prevention that the permanent lock-keeper do, funded from a different purse from the navigational responsibilities, of course.

Our members also report seriously reduced vegetation cutting on the Upper Thames—again, in line with the reduced funding of the EA. It is also clear that many local councils are taking very heavy-handed action in moving boats that are illegally moored on their property. While we can understand this action, one has to wonder where the boats will move to—the K&A perhaps?



Harvey engine beam weighing 4½ tons in Crofton Pumping Station
Photo: Derek Carvin
www.gypsyover.co.nz

Good news for Crofton

As I mentioned in our recent e-newsletter, we are thrilled to report that after four years of hard work, KACT has been awarded first round funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the project to restore the world-famous Crofton pumping station, which has serious problems with a failing building and associated complications, including some major asbestos issues. This award means that HLF has endorsed the outline proposals and has earmarked funding, giving us an immediate smaller award to fund the development of the project so that KACT can submit a second round bid next summer.

The whole project will require total funding of close to £1 million.

This means, though, that we have to raise nearly £200,000 in match funding, including additional funds to replace the rivets on the boiler which, we discovered a few months ago, is in trouble. That requires bringing in a specialist company, which will involve some £50,000 to cover work that even our skilled volunteers cannot do. But it's all worth it—Crofton simply has to be looked after! Did you know that the world-famous Devizes to Westminster International Canoe Race would not have happened this year without Crofton—CRT's electric pumps having failed yet again! (Maybe we should build another Crofton at Bradford on Avon for when those modern electric back-pumps next conk out).

Too many boats?

The K&A is also (together with London) one of the hot-spots for issues relating to non-compliant continuous cruisers. I have to admit that I grow weary of much of the well-planned and carefully crafted, highly publicised work by a small group claiming to represent continuous cruisers. That they only represent a small group of people without home moorings does need to be recognised—NABO has a large number of folk in this category and most have no problem in meeting CRT's requirements—they do indeed continuously cruise!). So the noisy campaigns are particularly annoying, given the fact that most CC-ers on the K&A are fully compliant and the small number with special problems are generally well looked after by CRT. The recent (and totally misinformed) statements from a recently elected Tory MP have been less than helpful. The only thing I would add—from feedback from our members—is that CRT's enforcement has to be more consistent.

The negative reports appearing in the social media about the K&A not being a good place to cruise, because of too many non-moving boats, lack of visitor moorings and failing locks and bridges, is partially true. But then one has to observe that many of the boats that don't move, and/or consistently occupy visitor moorings, are by no means all liveaboards, but simply boats that are being dumped for weeks on end—reinforcing the need for proper enforcement. Also, the growth in hire-boat numbers over the last five years has been exceptional, and one has to be at Bradford on Avon Lock on a weekend to see the problem of too many boats simultaneously wanting to go down and moor in Bath.



CCing with kids

Your NABO Council continues to monitor all this and accepts CRT's very minimal requirements of a 'range' of 25 miles a year and a move every 14 days of at least 1 km. We do not believe that new rules allowing reduced movement during school term-time would be appropriate—indeed, we wonder how many families actually have problems like this. Introducing new conditions has unseen consequences and CRT already has flexibility within the Waterways Act to grant dispensation where required—as we know they do where appropriate. Let's be quite honest, if you have schoolchildren, then surely the needs of the kids should come into consideration right from the start? Subsequently buying a boat, knowing full-well what the cruising requirements are, doesn't suddenly make it CRT's fault if there's a problem getting them to school.

Finally, an appeal to all, the NABO AGM approaches and, with several Council members retiring, there is an opportunity for new members to stand for election. Not an arduous job—a Saturday meeting every six weeks or so, starting at 10.45 am and ending at 3.00 pm, with lunch provided. Essential travel expenses are met. We really do need some new folk to bring new enthusiasm and new ideas, please! And, the company is great, I promise!

Boats at Bradford-on-Avon lock
Photo: Emma Holcombe

Fly on the wall

Observes proceedings at September's Council meeting



Down to the Coventry Canal and the Tamworth Cruising Club for the second Council meeting there. David Lowe from CBOA and CRT's NE Waterway Partnership gave an update on exciting developments in the commercial use of the NE waterways.

Members report more unplanned stoppages and broken infrastructure (paddles, swing-bridges etc.) as I noted in June, and CRT reported 65 canal closures in August alone (although 10 were not within its control and 27 related to problems with Plank Lane swing-bridge on the Leigh Branch of the L&L). The real problem is management of maintenance and repairs: if a paddle fails, it is not immediately repaired because there are two of them. But then the second fails and the lock is closed.

The inspection engineers report faults, but they do not have 'ownership' of a waterway section in the same way that lengthsmen used to have—and lengthsmen are no longer responsible for repairs.

Both offside and towpath vegetation continues to grow at a higher rate than Fountains staff can cut it back, especially on the South Oxford, and the EA has similar lack of bank maintenance on the higher reaches of the Thames, with trees across the river.

After a lunch provided by Tamworth C.C. that was so good there was nothing left for me to salivate over, it was back to business. There is a proposal that boaters without a home mooring

who have schoolchildren would only be required to move their boat in accordance with CRT guidelines during school holidays and be allowed to remain moored within two miles of their children's school during term-time. Council members questioned how many such families found it difficult to comply with CRT's continuous cruising requirements, as many members know of families who are able to move the prescribed distances during term-time without difficulty. The Council's concern with the proposal is that if such a dispensation is included in CRT's guidance to boaters without a home mooring, it could be extended to boaters who want to be near their place of work, for example.

The '95 Act already has the flexibility to allow some dispensation by local enforcement officers and Council members thought it is the lack of consistency between enforcement officers in different areas that is creating towpath rumours which are exaggerating the scale of the problem. The Council supports the existing enforcement regime, provided that CRT operates within the law (Acts covering Education, Equalities, Children and working with local authorities in relation to the Housing Act).

Finally, Councillors learned that there are two types of smoke alarm fitted to boats: one is a toast alarm that tells you when your toast is ready; the second waits for 'proper' smoke from a fire. Make sure you have the right one fitted.

Byeee until the AGM in November

NABO calendar 2016

Remaining Council meetings in 2016: October 15th and November 12th. Remember that members are welcome to attend meetings—please just let the Secretary or Chairman know in advance. See the website for the venue.

Don't forget the AGM at Wolverhampton Boat Club, Barnhurst Lane, Bilbrook, Wolverhampton, WV8 1RS on Saturday November 12th. The form for nominations and resolutions is on page 16

Membership matters

Most new members these days join with PayPal, because it can be done on line there and then. We had some troubles with the PayPal account during the summer, but it is back in action again with links on the website for access. PayPal is great, and easy on administration; the only downside being it costs us about £1 per payment. Is there a chance that you could change to counter credit, direct transfer or standing order?

We are now in the final stages of the move away from members' standing order payments going to our Santander account. This has now been closed and any payment attempted to the account will now be bounced back to the payee.

We still use paper systems, with membership renewals going out this way, but if members ask us to send membership renewals by email we are happy to do this. Just send us a message or you can request this online in your membership records page. Please only do this if email is a regular part of your life: there is no use asking for correspondence in this way if you never look at your email. And not to worry, we will not be going all email anytime soon. We know that most of our membership prefer to have paper communication. Don't forget that we send out an email bulletin covering the month's representative activities and other snippets of news. You only get this if we have your email. We never give email addresses to third parties.

And finally, we understand that members sell their boats and go ashore. It is part of the normal cycle of membership that we have always seen. Please tell us if that applies to you. If you continue to receive NABO News after your renewal date

has passed, it is a sure indication that we are hoping and expecting you will renew.

Thank you for all your assistance, and don't forget to find us some new members! If each of you found a single new member, it is evident that we would double our membership.

7.5% OFF
BOAT INSURANCE
THROUGH SPECIALIST INSURANCE BROKER CETA

CALL CETA ON
01608 647601
AND ASK FOR A BOAT
INSURANCE QUOTATION

OR, IF YOU PREFER,
CETURL.COM/YMZ6J
FOR AN ONLINE
QUOTATION

- Say you are a member of NABO and qualify for 7.5% discount.
- Talk through your requirements for a quotation.
- Complete the questionnaire.
- Choose the option which suits your needs (or go back to modify your data).
- Continue until you get to the 'shopping basket'.
- Type 'NABO' into the promotion code box.
- Click on 'recalculate' for your discounted quote.
- Click 'next' to proceed to purchase

If you are already insured through CETA, ask for your discount at your next renewal.

NABO Webmaster, David Fletcher, says: "The web system is good at displaying the quotes but I had questions regarding surveys, and our marina was not recognised, so it would have been easier just to telephone and hang on until all was settled. The end result was insurance from Canopus for £133, a saving of £44 (including the NABO discount) against the renewal quote from my previous insurer."

The scheme is still in its early days, so we are learning as we go along! Please give it a try and let us know how you get on.

Council tax implications for residential moorings in marinas

The Valuation Office Agency, which informs local councils on council tax, issued new advice in January 2016 to identify the council tax implications for boaters and their moorings, where the boat is their sole or main residence. Previously, a move to a new berth every ten months was a satisfactory method to avoid being eligible for paying council tax, but the new advice states that this shows too little transience and swapping between just two berths is too regular. The change, which will cause marina staff as much hassle as it will cause residential boaters, requires two moves using three different berths in every 12 months. Thus, a residential boater on the current berth (berth 1) will need to move in say October to a new berth (berth 2), then a further move in say March to berth 3 and then back again in the following October to berth 1, repeated each year.

Further information is at manuals.voa.gov.uk/corporate/publications/Manuals/CouncilTaxManual/council_tax_man_pn/ct-man-pn7-app4.html

EA, here we come?

- An extract from a recent CRT job advert.

Job Description: The post-holder will increase the organisation's influence among key opinion formers (politicians, policy makers and other influencers), raise the profile of its key champions, in particular the Chief Executive, and build relations with key internal and external stakeholders.

Primarily focused on Westminster and Whitehall, the post-holder will also work closely with colleagues managing both government relations in Wales and the London Assembly and with regions which have recently negotiated new devolved powers and duties. To support the delivery of local public affairs activity, the post-holder will work with local teams and volunteer partnerships. There will be a particularly close working relationship with the policy team, helping to translate a devolution engagement and positioning programme into public affairs actions.

NABO comments: is this to replace EU grant funding post-Brexit, or loss of government funding, or raising the CEO's profile?

David Blagrove MBE

David died peacefully at his home in Stoke Bruerne on 12th August after a long illness. He was a lock keeper, working boatman, campaigner, volunteer, writer, historian, musician and a witty raconteur with a fund of original waterway stories and canal songs. As Vice-President, he often represented the Commercial Boat Operators Association at meetings of the Parliamentary Waterways Group. David was an IWA Council member for 9 years to 1990 and was appointed Vice-President in 1991. He was a good friend to NABO and also helped set up the Friends of the Canal Museum (FCM) at Stoke Bruerne in 2005. He was awarded an MBE in 2014 for services to restoration of the UK waterways and was appointed President of FCM earlier this year when his failing health forced him to step down as Chairman.

His funeral was held on 24th August after his last journey on narrowboat *Sculptor* to the tunnel portal and back

Videos of David recalling his life afloat; www.youtube.com/watch?v=Np851W2oGmI, www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0BC9eOeRK4 and www.youtube.com/watch?v=FgdcqkFXtZI



Photo: Harry Arnold, Waterway Images



Photo: CRT

L&L bicentenary celebrations

In October 1816, flotillas 'decorated with flags and streamers', accompanied by 'hearty cheering of immense assemblage of spectators' greeted the first ceremonial boat journey along the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. The trip lasted five days but this year the L&L Canal Society crew will take nine days so that more people can celebrate in daylight hours. The heritage education short boat, *Kennet*, will leave Leeds on Saturday 15th October and arrive in Liverpool on Sunday 23rd. It will re-create the first complete 127-mile trans-Pennine journey by the merchants of Yorkshire and Lancashire 200 years ago. Organiser, Harold Bond, said: "We are calling on heritage boats, boat clubs and boaters to create a flotilla of decorated boats to join *Kennet* along the way. Back in 1816, press reports state that the ceremonial first boat was greeted by peeling church bells, brass bands and cheering crowds, and canal barges were bedecked in flags and streamers. We would love to create that spirit of celebration and achievement again." All boaters who spend at least a day with the flotilla will be eligible for a free 200th anniversary plaque. For more information about timings along the route, email: friendsofkennet@gmail.com or on the

CRT website; canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/our-regions/north-west-waterways/leeds-and-liverpool-bicentenary

Other Events:

- **Burnley's Canal Exhibition**, open until 31st October, in Burnley.
- **Bicentenary Celebration & Awards Evening**, 19th October, 7-10pm, Accrington. Drinks reception, three-course meal, entertainment, blind auction, speakers. The Bicentenary Awards will shortly be released for nomination and entry. For enquiries email sarah.knight@canalrivertrust.org.uk.

Ombudsman's report

The Waterways Ombudsman scheme deals with complaints about CRT, which are referred to the Ombudsman after completion of the Trust's own complaints process. The Ombudsman, Andrew Walker, and the Waterways Ombudsman Committee have issued their combined Annual Reports for 2015/16. The number of complaints entering the CRT complaint process rose from 185 to 222, although this was still fewer than the 232 in 2013/14. Fifteen new investigations were opened (down from 16) and

17 investigations were completed (up from 14). Of the 17, three were upheld and a further six were partly upheld. Only one was not about boating issues; it concerned the operation of a swing bridge. As in earlier reports, the complaints covered a very broad range of topics, with no clear theme. Anonymised summaries of investigations completed during the year are available at www.waterways-ombudsman.org/media/1085/ombudsman-annual-report-15-16.pdf. Andrew Walker can be contacted at PO Box 854, Altrincham, WA15 5JS, Tel: 0161 980 4858, email: enquiries@waterways-ombudsman.org

New Chair for ANT

Jack Hegarty, Wychavon and Malvern District Councils' Managing Director and Chief Executive, has taken the helm by becoming Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Avon Navigation Trust. Former General Manager, Clive Matthews, has been promoted to the role of Chief Executive at the Wyre Piddle-based Trust.



Proposed new mooring restrictions in Oxford

The notorious mooring congestion at the southern end of the Oxford Canal and on the River Thames is being addressed by Oxford City Council. There are already mooring restrictions on the canal, and new specific locations include the river near the Trout pub, Castle Mill Stream and from Folly Bridge to Hertford College boat-

house. The Council is proposing a public space protection order (PSPO) that would include a 48- or 72-hour mooring limit with no return within 28 days to avoid fines of up to £1,000. The stream from the southern end of William Lucy Way to Hythe Bridge Street has also been identified as an area where no mooring should be allowed. As well as the mooring restrictions, the order would ban people obstructing paths or the waterways, putting up structures, leaving rubbish and failing to control dogs. Landowners, including a number of Oxford University colleges, the EA and Network Rail, have all supported the draft order and will decide what regulations to impose within their boundaries.

Liveaboard boaters have responded that the proposed PSPO is not conducive to having a family or staying in Oxford and as a result people will leave. One noted the lack of permanent mooring spaces in the city and said that the proposed regulations had forced her out of Oxford along with some University researchers and nurses, commenting: "It's clear they don't want boaters here." Another said: "We are in a situation where many people cannot find living accommodation in the city." The Council's draft PSPO is expected to be discussed by the city Executive Board in October before going out to wider consultation. A city councillor said: "The 72-hour limit will actually increase the number of spaces for boaters on the waterways. A number of landowners who currently don't allow mooring may open up spaces if the controls are there to enforce a 72-hour limit."

2016/17 winter moorings

Winter moorings permits for between one and five months will go on sale from 3rd October. They will be available at fixed locations from 1st November to 31st March 2017. There are four price bands:

Band 1—£15 per metre per month—mooring rings or bollards, within walking distance of a location with local amenities and good facilities nearby (water, elsan/pumpout, rubbish disposal) and good public transport links.

Band 2—£13.50 per metre per month—as above, but without public transport links.

Band 3—£10.00 per metre per month—a mooring or towpath site with some facilities on site or within a short cruise and likely to be quite

close to a village or town.

Band 4—£6.50 per metre per month—a towpath location, which doesn't have any facilities on site.

More information on winter mooring locations and prices is at canalrivertrust.org.uk/refresh/media/thumbnail/29512-2016-17-winter-mooring-price-list.pdf and you can buy a permit at licensing.canalrivertrust.org.uk/Account/SignIn

Winter stoppages

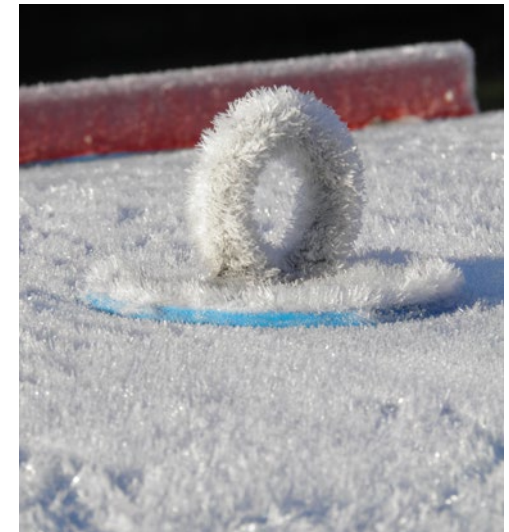
Details of CRT stoppages are available at canalrivertrust.org.uk/notices and River Thames lock closures between November and February at www.gov.uk/guidance/river-thames-conditions-closures-restrictions-and-lock-closures.

Bye-bye to Central Shires

In August, the Central Shires waterway was absorbed into the East Midlands, West Midlands and Manchester & Pennine waterways, because the waterway lacked a clear regional identity and did not fit with the way local authorities and business groups are organised. In 2017, CRT plans to open a new central Birmingham base in Cambrian House to replace the Fazeley office, but the Fazeley facilities will continue to be operational.

I name this boat ...

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



Waterways Minister

Rory Stewart was moved to International Development in the recent ministerial reshuffle and was replaced by Dr Therese Coffey (Suffolk Coastal) as DEFRA Parliamentary Under Secretary of State. She is also Deputy Leader of the House of Commons.

Bridgewater update

As reported in the June issue of NABO News, the Bridgewater Canal Co. Ltd., owned by Peel Holdings, announced changes to the reciprocal agreement for CRT licence holders. It is now enforcing £40 charges for boaters using the waterway for more than seven days or returning within 28 days. Peel Holdings has declined to reconsider the new arrangements, despite approaches by IWA and CRT, and at the time of going to press, it had not responded to NABO Regional Reps, David Fletcher and Stella Ridgway. This change will not affect you if you are passing through the Bridgewater within seven days between the Rochdale, Trent and Mersey or Leeds and Liverpool canals, but if it is a short trip out and back, you will need to decide whether to pay or wait. Shared boats will be charged when re-entering the Bridgewater Canal regardless of the fact that there is a new crew. (see www.bridgewatercanal.co.uk/boating/licensing).

Around the regions

Mike Rodd, the Welsh Waterways rep, gives an update on the Mon & Brec, K&A and Bridgewater and Taunton canals and Stella Ridgway reports on the NW waterways.

Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal

Another great year for what has to be one of the UK's most beautiful canals, with most hire companies reporting a good number of boats going out—with your NABO rep rescuing at least two boats! Some continuing issues with boats without home moorings—CCing used not to be allowed but someone in CRT decided it was OK. Some boaters annually lie to CRT by saying they have a home mooring and there is apparently still no check being made as to whether this is true. Whilst NABO supported the new 48-hour visitor moorings, we still can't figure out what CRT's brand new signs mean in terms of the 14-day maximum allowed per month. Physically, there have been a few problems with the canal this year, but that is expected given the nature of this lovely but fragile waterway. We are delighted to see that the Welsh Assembly has agreed to provide some £2 million towards essential maintenance this year, including some more canal relining.



The Kennet and Avon Canal

While the underlying issue of non-compliant boats continues, there has certainly been far more movement this year. However, it is worrying that there is a serious reduction in the total number of visiting boats—maybe this is a reflec-

tion of the bad press that the waterway gets. Too many lock and bridge failures, too few visitor moorings available, moored boats to be slowly passed by and queues at the west end, etc. At the east end there also seem to be many more boats dumped for weeks on end.

Bridgewater and Taunton Canal

This lovely little waterway is reporting a further reduction in boat numbers and sadly seems to be suffering from both reduced vegetation cutting and silting up.

North West waterways

Maintenance, or lack of it, still seems to be an issue. Funds were diverted away to repair the waterways affected by the floods; however, leaks, especially on the Macclesfield, Peak Forest and Huddersfield Canals are a worry and at one point both the Macclesfield and Peak Forest Canals were closed due to unplanned stoppages. There are plans to clear offside vegetation below Bosley Locks (keep a look-out for dates) and the Upper Peak Forest Canal has benefitted from this.

There is a lot of discontent regarding the arbitrary way Peel Holdings have introduced a charge if a return is made on the Bridgewater Canal within 28 days and, while we realise that the company must make the canal pay, installing hardcore along the majority of the towpath between Altrincham and Manchester means that the towns and sights along the canal cannot be explored as you cannot moor. In fact, both Manchester United and Manchester City have missed opportunities to harness the tourism opportunities, both having canals running right by their grounds.

Speed is an issue, both on the towpath and the canal: it is worth noting that life is supposed to be at a slower pace and the journey is as important as the destination.

Norwood Tunnel exploration

Engineers from CRT have carried out ten-yearly inspections of the 240-year-old Norwood Tunnel near Kiveton on the Chesterfield Canal. James Brindley was working on the tunnel at the time of his death in 1772 and at 1.6 miles (2.6 km) long; it was the longest canal tunnel in Britain when it was opened in May 1775. However, subsidence from mining works led to sections sinking and, despite efforts to raise the roof, it finally collapsed after heavy rain in October 1907. This split the Chesterfield Canal into two sections, causing trade on the western section to cease during World War I, and on the eastern section between Kiveton Park and West Stockwith by 1955.

Before the latest inspection could take place, the engineers had to break through the brick wall sealing the eastern portal. They then used a

small dinghy to inspect the 520 yard (475 m) stretch between the portal and the collapsed roof, looking for cracks and leaks and to assess the overall condition of the tunnel. For the first time, volunteers from the Chesterfield Canal Trust, who have been working to link the two canal sections, had the chance to enter the tunnel to see inside it.

They commented on how good the old brickwork is looking. Robin Stonebridge, Chair of the Trust, said: "This was like Christmas and birthdays all rolled into one for our members—the Norwood was without doubt one of Brindley's gems and we would like to see it used as part of the canal restoration. This was a great chance to see what state this part of the tunnel is in, and to work with CRT to see how we can get the canal up into Kiveton Waters."

More information on restoration of the Chesterfield Canal is at www.chesterfield-canal-trust.org.uk.



Come and join us ...

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

Nominations must reach us by October 2nd 2016

Please send the General Secretary any **Resolutions** you wish put before the AGM meeting with the names of proposer and seconder by September 24th.

Please send to:
gen.sec@nabo.org.uk
or by post to:
RICHARD CARPENTER,
PO Box 104, Leyland
PR25 9AN

The NABO AGM is on Saturday November 12th at the Wolverhampton Boat Club, Barnhurst Lane, Bilbrook, Wolverhampton, WV8 1RS (by boat it is on the Shropshire Union Canal, about one mile up from Autherley Junction). We will start at 10.30 am with the AGM formal business, followed by a presentation and discussion. After a light lunch, there will be a meeting of the new Council, to which NABO members are welcome.

Call for new blood

After several years in which nearly all of the Council's twelve places have been filled, some longstanding members have now decided to stand down. This is a golden opportunity to introduce new ideas, expertise and thinking to NABO. Please consider putting yourself up for election at the November AGM; we would particularly like to find someone who can replace the inestimable legal prowess of Geoffrey Rogerson.

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. 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 social media skills to help with supporting our Facebook and Twitter presence, so if this is you, don't be shy—let us know.

Please complete the nomination form in this issue, photocopy it if you would rather keep your NABO News intact, and then return it to Richard Carpenter, General Secretary, by 9th October. If you don't have anyone to propose 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:

Secunder

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, PO Box 104, Leyland, PR25 9AN to arrive by October 2nd 2016

*If you don't have anyone to propose and second you, don't worry, just phone one of the Council members and we can sort that out for you.

Please use the space on the nomination form for necessary declarations, or include an attached sheet.

Walking the Bow Back 'line'

David Fletcher leaves the helm and stretches his legs

Details can be found at www.the-line.org and at other websites, just search for 'the-line' together with 'London'.

Photos, clockwise from top Bow Locks from Bow Creek Mill on Three Mills Island CRT moorings at Three Mills, Olympic park in the background Towpath moorings on River Lea near to Bromley by Bow Duckweed on the Limehouse Cut at Bow Locks

All photos: Val Fletcher



The Bow Back are not on most boaters' list of must do's. Thames tidal waters below Limehouse in London are not for the faint-hearted. But I see in the Towpath Telegraph that the redoubtable St. Pancras C.C. has recently been there. Fortunately, you can also do it on foot, and to guide you there is a published three-mile walk on the web that is well worth doing. This is also somewhat easier on the boat insurance. The towpaths and general ambiance have improved as part of the Olympic Park works, and improvements continue this year.

The walk is called 'The Line' and opened in the middle of May, offering three short connected walks through an aquatic cityscape in East London. The route is peppered with curious works of art, many by household-name artists. The Line is billed as a world-class sculpture walk, with the route broadly following the line of the Meridian, linking two of the iconic sites of East London: the O2 and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. It starts at the O2 site on the south bank of the Thames with a loop around the stadium area on the river bank. There are lots of craft to see

on the river, with private and commercial traffic; goods and passenger vessels. Crossing the river is by the Emirates Cablecar, perfectly safe and a great view over the docklands area, City Airport and the tidal entrance to the Bow Creek.

The first part of the towpath proper is not yet open, but a walk to the nearby Docklands Light Railway and a short ride take you to Star Lane Station, where the Bow Creek towpath can be rejoined going north. At Cody Dock there is a small group of tidal moorings at the old wharf for the former gas works and a café.

Continuing north, you come to the Bow Locks, little used, but the way back into the canal system and the Limehouse Cut. The tidal river continues parallel to the canal/ River Lea to Three Mills Island, the Prescott Channel and the new barge lock. There is a park here and plenty to see, with new construction all around, the original tidal mill buildings, and, on the skyline, the towers of Canary Wharf. And there are CRT moorings in the middle of it all.

The River Lea towpath continues north to Stratford and the Olympic Park, unrecognisable from how it was, only five or six years ago. The park is open to walk through and there are bars and facilities there. Access to the O2 and Stratford is very easy using the tube. Not to be done on a rainy day though! But an eye-opener to what is going on in the East End of London, to see the tidal waters and some interesting sculptures as well.



Fishing from your boat

Peter Fellows looks at the requirements for drowning worms.

Fishing in canals is permitted all year round, but on most rivers there is a closed season from March 15th to June 15th.

As a boater whose only experience of fishing is confined to retrieving windlasses with a magnet, the requirements for extracting fish from canals and rivers was something of a mystery. Here's a summary of what is needed. An EA rod licence is legally required to use up to two fishing rods or poles, along the same lines as a gun licence is required to use a gun. The rod licence is

required to fish anywhere, including your own pond in the back garden if you have one. Rod licences can be bought from a local Post Office, by phone or online at www.postoffice.co.uk/rod-fishing-licence or from www.gov.uk/fishing-licences/buy-a-fishing-licence (Take care: there are other similar-looking websites that (legally) charge a £20 'administration fee' to buy a rod licence—this is not required to get a licence).

Fishing rights

Owning a rod licence does not give you the legal right to fish - you also need a fishing permit.

CRT owns fishing rights on much of the canal network and on river navigations where it owns the land. At other locations on rivers, where CRT is only the navigation authority, the fishing rights often belong to the riparian owner. In some cases, the fishing rights have been bought by angling clubs and associations.

Having a CRT boat licence doesn't give you the right to fish from your boat or the towpath - you must have a fishing permit. If CRT owns the fishing rights, it manages them by either licence agreements with angling clubs or under its Waterway Wanderers scheme canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/fishing/waterway-wanderers-scheme. The fishing permit is typically either for a day, or season membership of the angling club or a Waterway Wanderers' annual permit. Most clubs offer day permits on some or all of their sections, available from the club's patrolling bailiff for around £5. The Waterway Wanderers permit runs for 12 months from the



Rod licence fees

	Non-migratory trout, char, freshwater (coarse) fish and eels	Salmon and migratory (sea) trout plus the fish in column 1
Full season expires 31st March	£27	£72
Junior Concession	£5	£5
Senior Concession	£18	£48
8 Day	£10	£23
1 Day	£3.75	£8

date of issue and costs £20 for adults, £10 for senior citizens (over the age of 65) and £5 for juniors (16 or under on the date of purchase). Individual members of the Angling Trust are also entitled to the £10 concessionary rate by sending a photocopy of their membership card.

To buy a fishing permit when moored up in a new location, if you have mobile phone internet access on board, you can find out which club controls a particular stretch of waterway using CRT's 'Our fishing' website canalrivertrust.org.uk/enjoy-the-waterways/fishing/fishery-list or the 'Fishing info' section of the Angling Trust website fishing-info.co.uk/index.html. Some clubs,

such as the Lure Angling Canal Club, which rents fishing rights on the Grand Union and South Stratford canals, offer the ability to buy a fishing permit via a mobile phone www.lureanglerscanalclub.co.uk/public/pay/shop/.

Changes next year

There will be changes to rod licences in April next year. The new system will be a 12-month rolling licence rather than a fixed period that ends on 31st March, so that you will get 12 months' fishing from the day you buy a licence. Also the two rod maximum limit will be raised to three rods and junior anglers under the age of 16 will be able to fish for free.

Airbnb in London

From £120 per night. Stay on this beautiful romantic narrowboat in the heart of London and see London from a different perspective. The 57-foot canal boat was built over 100 years ago and is full of character and history. She can sleep 4 adults and 1 child. Check in anytime after 2pm. Check out 10am. Extra people: £20/night after 2 guests. Cleaning fee: £40. Security Deposit: £300. Weekly discount: 11%. Monthly discount: 31%.

The WC is a cassette toilet, which would usually have to be emptied by the host every 3-5 days. Water is held in a tank on board and needs topping up every few days. This will be done by your host. In the winter months heating is by the solid fuel stove which burns a combination of smokeless coal and logs, which are provided.

Living on board is not quite like a convention-

al house and needs understanding and patience - it may therefore not be for everyone. Power is supplied from batteries which means appliances that we take for granted such as hair dryers can run the power supply down very quickly. If the power runs down the engine will need to be started to charge up the batteries.

The boat is moored in three different locations: West London - Portobello/Ladbroke Grove, Central London: Kings Cross, East London: Shoreditch. It is not on permanent moorings so will be moving every two weeks.

House Rules: No parties or events. The boat is not available for cruising unless by prior arrangement with your host and should be regarded as a static houseboat. You are asked to behave in a considerate manner to other boat users on the canal with regard to noise, especially at night."

NABO comments: There are insurance, licence and BSS issues here: if a boat or part of a boat is let, the boat is deemed a hire-craft and needs a suitable licence and BSS accordingly. This is similar to the requirements of a landlord certificate as the renter needs to be protected from hazards and neglect by the landlord.

CRT Annual Report & Accounts

NABO Council member [Stella Ridgway](#) wades through the figures

The report can be read at canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/features/annual-report-2015-16.

At the end of July, CRT published its Trustees' Annual Report for 2015-16, with the strapline 'We'd like to show you the ways we have created living waterways, enriched lives and transformed places during 2015/16'. I have read the report and set out my thoughts, and some detail below, trying to include as much as I feel people might be interested in.

Finance

The total income was £188.7m, with the top three sources as follows:

- DEFRA grant of £49.6m in 2016-17, up from £39m in 2014-15.
- Leisure boating contributed £42.4m 2015-16, up from £40.9m in 2014-15.
- Investment and property income was £42m, down from £44.8m 2014-15.

The expenditure on raising funds was £39.4m, including £17m for leisure boating and £16m on investment management. It is worth noting the donations and legacies section, which the 'Friends' scheme falls into: it generated £2.5m but cost £3.6m to seek voluntary contributions. The net funds saw a decrease from £45.9m at 1st April 2015 to £23.1m at 31st March 2016. Rental proceeds are £49.5m, purchase of investment property £40.9m, sales of investment property £44.3m.

Employees' costs

Under employees' costs, it is worth noting that the key management personnel are the Trustees and Executive Team and total employee benefits, including pension con-



tributions, were £1.6m (£1.4m in 2015), although no remuneration was paid to any members of the Board of Trustees. They did, however, receive a total of £19,897 (up from £12k in 2015) in expenses. Richard Parry received £188,000 (including a car allowance of £9,768) and benefits in kind of £1247, totalling £189,847. One employee received higher remuneration than Mr Parry: Stuart Mills, the Property Director, received a salary of £171,824 (including car cash allowance), performance related pay of £32,655 (reflecting the strong performance of the property portfolio to year ended 31 March 2015) and benefits in kind of £2,682, totalling of £207,161.

Employer contributions for pensions to the defined contribution

pension scheme were £10,730. The value of the pension input to the Waterways Pension Fund defined benefit scheme, after deduction of employee contributions, was £41,688. During the year £870,000 was spent on redundancy payments and other termination costs.

Joint Ventures

Canal & River Trading CIC (a wholly-owned CRT subsidiary) holds 50% in Icknield Port Loop LLP and H2O Urban LLP; 49.5% in ISIS Waterside Regeneration LP and 49% in both City Road Basin and Paddington Basin Business Barges Ltd., but only ISIS and H2O posted profits (£3.2m and £1.4m respectively). It is worth noting that the voting rights and profit share are 50:50, even with a 49% shareholding. I cannot see where trade boats fit into the accounts and there is nothing in the accounts regarding the Waterway Partnerships. Of course, we have no

way of knowing exactly what all the subsidiaries are doing and the lack of profit in shared partnerships.

The report is silent on the lack of new funds being introduced by the Waterway Partnerships

Assets and incidents

The relevant standards that CRT has to meet in order to get the next DEFRA grant of £10m for year ending 31 March 2017 include the percentage of assets in Classes D—E, which was 13.8% (it has to be below 25%), compared to 14.1% in 2015. The percentage of towpaths in Condition A to C (not less than 60%) was 78.4% in 2016, up from 76.1% in 2015. There were 31 unplanned towpath closures, up from 8 in 2015, and the number of closure days was 851 (up from 663 in 2015). In other data that CRT is required

CRT staff at Botterham staircase locks on the Staffs & Worcester trying to figure out a way to repair the broken balance beam
Photo: Joan Jamieson



to publish under the DEFRA Grant Agreement, there were 21 customer incidents (down from 30 in 2015), where an infrastructure defect was the major cause (note that these are the reported incidents); 17 employees who lost time through injuries (same as 2015), including 11 HSE reportable 'over 7 days' injuries (six in 2015) and 71 total recorded injuries (96 in 2015). The number of volunteer days was up from 58,774 in 2015 to 68,817 in 2016. The number of 'Friends of the Waterways' (who also have a place on the Council) is 22,500 per month, but it is not possible to tell how many 'Friends' are also boaters.

Last year, charitable giving cost CRT £7.20 for each £5 it raised

Elsewhere in the report under 'Our plans for the future,' there are targets for towpath Condition A-C (> 60%), number of principle assets in Condition D-E (< 23%), Condition of flood management assets graded D-E (<4%) and unplanned navigation closures (< 570 days).

Other aspects are of concern: the way that certain sections of the boating community are treated; the way every boater without a home mooring is treated; and, in general, the lack of understanding can be off-putting. Although CRT says "talk to us, we will listen," it very much depends on the local staff and how they wish to behave. To my mind, if they want to centralise everything and make the customer come first, then as the second largest income stream, boaters deserve more respect than they perceive they currently have.

Charitable Giving (or not)

In relation to charitable giving, Mark Tizard adds:

In addition to why the report is

silent on the lack of new funds being introduced by the Waterway Partnerships (their original published *raison d'être*), there is also a question over CRT's 'Friends' or lack of. The report states 'As the Trust passes its fourth anniversary we have good reason to be optimistic that we have put in place strong foundations to rise to the challenges ahead.'

However, that's not quite the whole story. Allan Richards has been taking an initial look at the numbers: as the annual report confirms, the Trust is still having massive problems in the recruitment and retention of 'Friends.' The number of active Friends who regularly donate to the Trust, is given as just 15,800 after four years, which is 1,200 down on a revised 2015/16 target of 17,000. The Trust's expenditure on voluntary income during the year was again significantly more than the income. This expenditure not only includes the costs of recruiting Friends but also retaining them. The original aspiration was to have 100,000 regular donors at the end of 10 years, but CRT now says that it will have less than a quarter of that number (22,500) by the half-way stage. Worse still are the significant losses that CRT has made: in 2015/16, it lost £1.1m on charitable giving, which has to be added to cumulative losses of £3m over the first three years. Put another way, last year charitable giving cost CRT £7.20 for each £5 it raised. The simple fact is that the differentiator between CRT, the charity, and its predecessor, British Waterways (a non-departmental government body), is the ability to raise further income by charitable giving. However, the charitable income stream is flowing the wrong way, a problem that CRT does not even acknowledge and seems incapable of addressing.

Friends with benefits

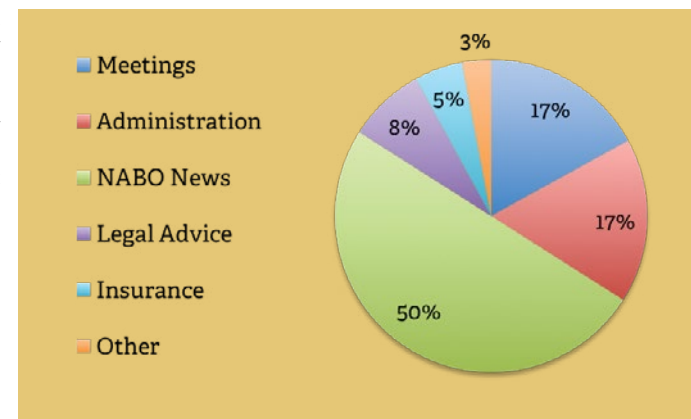
NABO Treasurer **Helen Hutt** outlines where your subscription money goes

If you pay a subscription, you want to know where your money goes. Roughly half goes into the production and printing of NABO News, the cost of which is partially offset by a small amount of advertising. NABO News is our largest cost but it is also our greatest asset and you tell us you want us to keep it on paper rather than having it available solely online. Some members do chose to download online which is a saving, but this is only a minority.

A sixth goes on the cost of meetings—the AGM, Council Meetings, meetings with other organisations including CRT, BSS and others. This can include travel expenses (at a very reasonable 20p per mile!), catering and any necessary paperwork. Very important work: if we are not there we have no influence.

Another sixth goes on administration in its various guises: website maintenance, accounting software, PayPal charges on membership fees received in this way, stationery, postage, audit fee or honorarium, etc. We are hoping to reduce some of these costs, for example by sending out renewal notices by email rather than post. We do not currently pay for administration done by members who give their time to stuff envelopes and do the chasing. Can you help?

From time to time we seek legal advice on matters concerning, in particular, the interpretation of CRT's terms and conditions, in order to be able to challenge navigation authorities against the imposition of unlawful and unnecessary regulations. This varies from year to year but we budget around £2,000 per annum and currently have reserves to



fund further legal bills. Other costs, including insurance and depreciation, make up the final sixth.

At the beginning of each financial year (1st April) we set a budget and this is reviewed by Council on a quarterly basis to ensure that we remain in the black, make any necessary adjustments to our expenditure, and maintain our reserves for any large expenditure (most likely fees for legal advice). Annual accounts are audited before being presented at the AGM in November.

How can you help? Part of our costs are 'per member,' and at least half are 'fixed' regardless of membership, so it's easy—recruit more members! Like so many other organisations, our membership is static but the last thing we want to do is increase subscription rates. With more members, fixed costs are spread over a wider population so we can hold subscriptions at the current level (last increased in 2013). With more members, we carry more influence, which is the whole point of NABO.

Priorities for the coming year

Vice-Chair, [Mark Tizard](#), sets out the issues facing NABO and its members.

Let us have your thoughts on what should we be doing next year. Please contact me at vicechair@nabo.org.uk

As the AGM is fast approaching, I thought it would be a good opportunity to summarise and elicit members' views on what NABO should be focussing in the coming year. The key areas of concern that we have been made aware of are navigation, enforcement, vegetation, moorings, relationships with CRT and the support of our membership.

Navigation

A growing concern is the number of closures to navigation being published by CRT this year. Many are a result of infrastructure failure—21 emergency navigation closures published in August alone including broken lock beams, paddle failures and inoperable swing bridges.

What should/can NABO do to put pressure on CRT to improve its planned inspection and maintenance activities? NABO, as a representative on the Navigation Advisory Group—Operations, has been active in advising CRT on issues of depth, identifying issues and lack of facilities etc. All boating associations are becoming concerned about the need for better dredging and water management. The southern Grand Union summit and the area around Slapton are getting very bad.

Enforcement

NABO is concerned that the rate of licence evasion is slowly creeping up and hoped that, with the increased level of sighting activity, this would have led to evasion rates reducing. Your Council remains broadly in

favour of CRT's published cruising guidelines for boats without a home mooring with regards to minimum cruising range, and it notes that boaters who are offered 6-month licences normally improve their range such that a 12-month licence is subsequently offered. We are clear that enforcement should be both fairly and reasonably applied, with the involvement of the Welfare Officer as required. This does not always appear to have been the case.

NABO, while not unsympathetic to some recent proposals by NBTA, is against setting up special arrangements to exempt boaters with school-age children from range requirements, as these can be seen as divisive. The proposal applies to very few cases and there is flexibility to deal with individual cases already in the '95 Act. Part of the problem is an dearth of permanent moorings. Local councils now have to consider boaters in their housing needs assessment, so there maybe a case for CRT engaging with councils to provide moorings for people who are unable to continuously cruise—CRT being a navigational authority rather than a housing provider.

We remain opposed to the recent changes to CRT's licence terms and conditions, and specifically the requirement for boats with a home mooring to continuously cruise.

Vegetation

CRT spends about £10m a year on vegetation management. About 50% on towpath maintenance—grass-cutting and making sure trees and hedges and reeds don't impede nav-

igation. The other half is spent on things you won't necessarily notice. CRT says that they need to clear vegetation from tunnels, culverts and bridges on a regular basis to extend their life and save money on costly repairs.

Numerous complaints from members this year that the state of the towpath edge and overhanging trees and bushes are making navigation hazardous. The Southern Oxford in particular, also the Macclesfield and the Leicester section of the Grand Union. CRT uses contractors for this work, prioritised by local waterways offices.

Navigations are being closed or restricted on a regular basis due to falling trees—could this have been prevented by better tree management? What do you think of the standard and quantity of the work being carried out?

Moorings

CRT has had a couple of consultations this year: the first on changes to visitor moorings in the South East that was largely stopped due to lack of evidence and the representations of NABO and the Navigation Advisory Group—Licensing and Mooring. Another consultation covered potential changes to towpath and visitor moorings in London with the likelihood of chargeable visitor moorings being established. We note that CRT is spreading the £25 overstay charge to more visitor moorings. As a principle, NABO is against charging, but it does appreciate that overstay on visitor moorings or on the towpath remains a problem in a few areas (although CRT has previously said this is not a major issue). An appropriate method of controlling overstay or are there other methods that could be used? For example, could overstay form part of CRT's *bone-fide* for

navigation considerations—a contentious thought, I know!

There is now a CRT visitor mooring guidelines policy document, which should be used to justify any changes or additions to visitor moorings. NABO would like these guidelines to be used to see if existing visitor moorings are fit for purpose. We would also like to see dredging and towpath management near to short-stay visitor moorings, so that boaters can stay longer nearby should they wish to.

Relationships with CRT

NABO Councillors are all volunteers. In addition to general council activities, NABO currently has members on NAG-Op (David Fletcher), NAG-L&M (Mark Tizard), BSS Committees (Mike Rodd and David Fletcher) and CRT's Council as a boater's representative (Stella Ridgway). Relationships with CRT are cordial, but we still struggle to persuade the Trust that NABO members have a wealth of knowledge that would be available, should CRT seek to engage with us in a meaningful proactive way.

Membership and Support

As a Council, we represent your views and, as such, we really want more members to engage with us. This doesn't necessarily mean attending meetings, but please contact us with your views and tell us your concerns. Our membership has stayed largely static over the last few years, which I'm told is a success given that we don't offer any fancy gimmicks.

Our Facebook group continues to grow, so please join and share your views—we police it pretty well to keep things friendly and boat-related. Please take a few minutes to engage with us—positively or otherwise.

Roving traders:

Heart and home handmade

A regular series looking at people who make a living from waterway-based trading. This time, it's Helen Francis, who trades as 'Heart and home handmade'.

For more information visit heartandhomehandmade.com

Helen makes hand-embroidered needlepoint cushions and wedding ring cushions. She also makes cushions to commission and has featured a wide variety of subjects including peoples' houses, boats, pets and hobbies. At the moment Helen is working on a family tree cushion to be given as a golden wedding present.

Helen embroiders onto canvas using wool and other yarn, and backs the cushions with felt which makes them very hard-wearing, so they last for generations. Helen also restores and makes up vintage pieces of needlepoint into cushions, sometimes adding a quirky twist, such as buttons or badges.

She's working on two themes at the

moment: national flags and board games. Having originally trained as a designer, Helen loves the colourful, graphic images of the flags and also the childhood memories associated with board games. She has completed Scrabble, backgammon, chess and dominoes cushions to date, but is finding designing and creating a snakes and ladders cushion a bit of a challenge!

Helen has been boating and embroidering for over 40 years, but decided to do more of both after retirement brought about by a brain tumour six years ago. 2015 will be her first proper year of trading from her narrowboat Betty, so she is a real newbie!

Helen is looking forward to her first full year of trading and is planning to travel from her home mooring on the Shroppie to Bath, as the Kennet & Avon will be new territory for her.



Letters to the Editor

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

Linear housing

Thank you for the work undertaken by NABO and the many achievements over the several years that I have been a member: the best part of twenty, if memory serves. Due to a period of ill health I recently resigned from all waterways associations, along with a number of other organisations, not just NABO. Since matters have improved, however, I am now slowly reassessing this position with a view to rejoining some.

I have been concerned for some time over the growing trend to treat our canals as an overflow housing area rather than to maintain them for their proper purpose: i.e. as a transport system (whether it be for commercial or for leisure purposes). This situation is aggravated not just by BW's historic inability to enforce proper mooring regulations but also by the intervention of local housing authorities, particularly in city areas, who chose to cover the licence and mooring fees of houseboat dwellers as a cheap option to providing council or assisted housing.

I am currently completing a cruise of the K&A canal from Bristol to Reading (ex. Sharpness and Portishead), a canal where not only the mooring situation but also the cruising situation is nigh on impossible: 'continuous moorers' every hundred yards, many with intimidating notices to passersby; and visitor moorings clearly marked '48-hours max' solidly blocked by ancient craft with rooftop gardens, whose owners very obviously view mooring regulations as little more than a joke. The K&A is not alone: the South Oxford canal has become largely a linear housing estate, whilst the London waterways, at one time a living museum of the city's canal history and a great joy to visiting boaters, are now a living nightmare.

This situation can only be reversed by positive and probably legal action brought about by pressure from a strong, national canal user group. Is there one? The IWA now claims to be 'in partnership' with CRT, like some kind of coalition government (and about as much use); whilst

NABO is surely obliged to represent all boat owners, regardless of their mobility or lack of it, destined to help both parties and please neither. I hope you will understand if I feel I should look elsewhere. But thank you, again.

John Cheesbrough, NB. Time Out

After about 20 years of being a member, I am re-appraising my boating. This year, after a cruise of the system, I have realised that the towpath is being used for social housing and vast tracks of towpath have been let by BW and CRT to permanent mooring, even though we were promised that when new marinas were built, towpath moorings would be reduced. After 40 years of being committed to the canal system I did not envisage this outcome.

G. D Gerrard

Editor's note: Evidence suggests that more boats are moving in accordance with CRT's guidance, which NABO supports. In the last five years there has been significant growth in the number of boats without a home mooring but virtually no additional visitor moorings have been created in that period.

What a load of rubbish!

A wander around the NABO Facebook site and others reveals that leaving and clearing of boaters' rubbish is a continuing problem. I have copied some of the posts below and CRT's response that highlights the problem.

One photo was also taken at the end of August at Gayton Junction, north of Blisworth, and passed to CRT. The response was as follows: "The frequency of waste collection is seasonal, and the summer schedule is double that of the winter collections at all Biffa serviced sites. Gayton is an exception due to the weight limit on the bridge access, and is not serviced under the Biffa contract; it is serviced by the local authority. The service is alongside the normal domestic refuse collection for the street as they have an old com-

compact lorry which is smaller and thus able to gain access. It was this or no facility, so we live with this to cater for our customers.

The challenge in most areas is third party use and abuse of the facilities, even where we have secure compounds and signage galore. The national waste budget is up 20% from last year, as is the spend. If less folk thought that it was morally acceptable to fly-tip what is clearly a full-to-capacity facility, perhaps we wouldn't be in this situation everywhere. Equally, having lived aboard, I appreciate the need to get rid of waste. All unmanned sites are abused and cause significant issues for customers and the Trust. The waste bill, excluding hazardous waste such as engine oil and gas bottles, is £1.2 million per annum and increasing. Significant funds, I'm sure you would agree, that CRT could better direct towards worthwhile canal-related improvements rather than landfill tax."

Another photo was taken at the end of August at Giffard Park, Milton Keynes. There is a large waste bin in the adjacent car park, but some boaters can't be bothered to use it and have just thrown their rubbish bags in through the door. I have emailed the photos to CRT at Milton Keynes.

I also have seen inappropriate use of the waste disposal site at Cosgrove, Milton Keynes, where vehicles drive up and dump all sorts of rubbish, so I think CRT has a definite problem here.

Geoff Wood



This is the sight that greeted us at Town services, Northwich. Either CRT has got the contract set up wrong for emptying, or the contractors are not fulfilling their obligations. The problem is that any driver turning up from the contractors will refuse to take away the bins. Boaters and the people of Northwich deserve better, though perhaps one or two inhabitants may have contributed. This is a real health hazard.

Stephen Cross (Narrowboat Users Group)

Editor: As CRT acknowledges, this problem appears to be widespread. Brian Holt sent a photo of waste bins at Cropredy (admittedly shortly after the festival there) and Heidi Siggers appears to have visited the facilities at Milton Keynes a little while after Geoff Wood.

Caption Competition

Another interesting and varied NABO News with lots to think about. We have just come back from a potter on the Staffs & Worcs and I wondered if the photo below taken at Compton Lock might make a caption competition?

Howard Anguish

Editor: I will include a selection of any suggested captions that are suitable for a family readership! Howard's suggestion: 'Portapotti'



1. Cropredy (Brian Holt) 2. Gayton Junction (Geoff Wood) 3. Northwich (Stephen Cross), 4. Milton Keynes (Heidi Siggers), 5. Milton Keynes (Geoff Wood)

October



FREAKY FRIDAY

20% OFF

THETFORD
C200 FRESH-UP KIT

New



KIT CONTAINS

- Seat & Lid
- New Waste Tank with Wheels
- Bathroom Cleaning Spray
- Cassette Waste Tank Cleaner

Now features a handle & integrated wheels for easier emptying.

NORMALLY
£109.00

NOW
£95.00



Midland Chandlers
CANALBOAT EQUIPMENT SINCE 1979



E & O E.
All prices include VAT

END OF SEASON

FURNITURE CLEARANCE
NOW ON



See in store or on-line for more details.

THETFORD

DUO PACKS

1 x 1.5L Aqua Kem
1 x 1.5L Aqua Rinse



PROMO PRICE

£13.99



Aqua Kem & Rinse Spray

1 x 1.5L Aqua Kem Blue
1 x 500ml Aqua Rinse Spray

PROMO PRICE

£11.99

BACK in STOCK

SETTLER FOLDING CHAIR



FOLDS DOWN TO:
50 X 47 X 11CM



£34.99

NEW

AQUA KING II FRESH WATER PUMPS

AQUA KING II JUNIOR
12V 7.6LPM 20PSI



£81.99

AQUA KING II
12V 11.4LPM 30PSI

£85.99

A Warm Welcome Awaits You At Our Stores...

Parkgate Lock, Teddesley Road, **Penkridge**, Staffs, ST19 5RH.
London Road, **Braunston**, Northants, NN11 7HB.
The Wharf, **Preston Brook**, Cheshire, WA4 4BA.
Mercia Marina, Findern Lane, **Willington**, Derbyshire, DE65 6DW.

www.midlandchandlers.co.uk

T 01785 712437
T 01788 891401
T 01928 751800
T 01283 701445

