



NABO News

The Magazine of the National Association of Boat Owners
Issue 5 September 2019

**CYCLOPATHS ON
TOWPATHS**

**CRT : HOW DID
THEY DO?**

**MARPLE WHARE
BACK IN THE
SPOTLIGHT**



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Next NABO News copy date

Articles, letters, cartoons and photos are most welcome. Images in JPEG format please. Please email or post your contributions by November 23rd 2019. Our email address is nabonews@nabo.org.uk

Cover photo

This month's cover photo has a more relaxed type of cycling than the towpath cycling described in this issue Taken on the Leeds and Liverpool at Skipton by the Editor.

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.



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



CRT's Annual Report, published in July, makes for mixed reading: income and expenditure on the waterways were up in all areas over the year, but boater satisfaction declined significantly. CRT attributes this to 'disruption due to summer water shortages, changes to licence fees, concerns about network maintenance, and concerns about the Trust's repositioning.' Correspondence in this issue and

Don't be shy! NABO needs YOU

Editor **Peter Fellows** describes some current threats to boating and why you can help NABO.



Photo: CRT

social media posts by NABO members and other boaters suggests that failing or leaking locks, overgrown vegetation and CRT's inability to control speeding towpath cyclists are more likely causes of boaters' dissatisfaction. I have devoted a significant section of this issue to problems caused by towpath lycra-louts and possible ways that CRT could address them.

There is also the looming threat of a change in the law regarding use of red diesel, which can only result in increased costs to already hard-pressed boaters (unless everyone gets a trading licence and becomes exempt!). I have included NABO's response to the HMRC consultation on the effects of these proposed changes and also a response to Oxfordshire County Council's consultation on new local cycling and walking infrastructure plans.

Graham Clarke gives a critique of CRT's resubmitted plans for the development of Marple Wharf, thrown out by Stockport Council last year; yet another instance of a threat to waterway heritage. Elsewhere, Helen Hutt reports on changes on the River Nene since her last visit and Mike Rodd describes CRT staff changes in Wales and the South-West. In Techies' Corner, Tony Brooks explains why false readings can occur on temperature and pressure gauges.

Finally, NABO's AGM is on the horizon in November and I have included a nomination form to stand for the Council. We need new blood to keep NABO up to speed to address boaters' needs and I would encourage you to consider standing. As it says on the form, "Don't be shy!—being on the Council is rewarding and interesting ... and occasionally frustrating. You'll learn what goes on behind the scenes and make new friends into the bargain. I hope to see you at the AGM."



Since my last missive, it all started with rain; lots and lots of rain. On July 29th, we noticed a video on Facebook of Toddbrook reservoir overtopping—hardly surprising considering the amount of rain we'd experienced.

The canal was so full that the water was level with the bank and CRT opened sluice gates near us to feed water into the River Goyt. On Thursday morning, 1st August, the local news said that Whaley Bridge was being evacuated; all excitement and apprehension. Toddbrook reservoir supplies the Peak Forest canal and is the top feeder for the Cheshire Ring. If it flooded, it would take out the Whaley Bridge shops, the railway station, the school, houses, the basin and any boats in Whaley Bridge. Although the police advised boaters to leave their boats, we studied all the projections and, while there might have been a slight surge, the river and floodplain would have taken the full impact. Videos showed the river at 14-15 feet above its normal level on the Wednesday and there had already been evacuations due to the river flooding. But on Thursday this had dropped seven or eight feet as the EA managed levels. All traffic was stopped going through New Mills, the A6 was closed and there were no Buxton trains; it was quiet.

We were cut off until 7th August, six days later, when the dam was deemed safe and residents were allowed back and the roads reopened. It was a bit surreal hearing all the traffic again and surprising to see how life returned to normal. Whaley Bridge has reported a surge in visitors and we can attest to an increase in boating traffic and speed—"SLOW DOWN" and "get rid of the motorway in your head" are often heard emanating from our boat.

I want to congratulate the

Customer Service team at CRT. They worked their socks off, emailing updates to boaters in the area, plus boaters sighted in the area within the previous fortnight, and generally keeping everyone up to date.

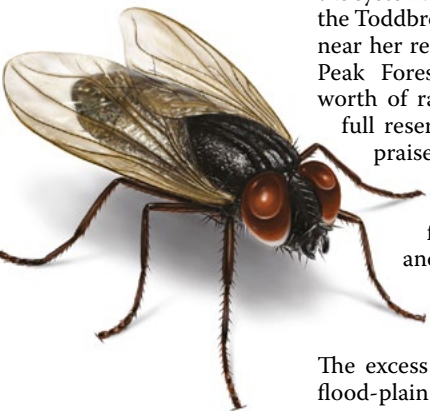
As far as the reservoir is concerned, the dam came close to breaking, but it didn't and the investigation will tell us what happened. Anything else is pure speculation. But I will say that to factor in two months' rain in 48 hours into an already full reservoir is possibly something that needs to be thought about when doing the inspections and forecasts, as these events may become more frequent.

Keep your chinook up

Stella Ridgway on an eventful time in the High Peak.

And so our little towns were on the world stage for a brief time, but now back to earth. CRT's AGM is on 19th September, a Thursday, so I need to change my dialysis day—last year, I did dialysis and then travelled down and was completely shattered, so I've learned my lesson. I hope that if any of you get to Birmingham on the 19th, you will say hello. You will see the NABO submission to the red diesel consultation; this may or may not be an academic exercise.

The nomination forms for NABO Council are in the magazine in time for our own AGM in November. I so hope that you will consider being a council member. There are six meetings a year, three by teleconference and three 'in person.' We need more people on the council to get a greater breadth and depth of boating experience across the system. There are also meetings with the Trust that you can attend if you wish, but it is not an onerous task; it is good to share experience and knowledge.



This month's Council meeting was by teleconference, with many members phoning in during a break from cruising in different parts of the system. Chair, Stella, reported on the Toddbrook dam event in August, near her residential mooring on the Peak Forest Canal. Two months' worth of rain fell into the already-full reservoir over 48 hours. She praised CRT's response, both by keeping boaters and local residents informed of developments, and by opening all the sluices into a full canal and the sluices from there into the River Goyt.

The excess water drained onto the flood-plain to a depth of more than

two feet. Councillors await news of plans for what will happen to this and other earth dams around the system.

Widebeams, especially the newer 12-foot wide boats, continue to create difficulties, even on wide canals, where there is insufficient depth at the edges for two to pass each other. Boats are being forced towards the bank, with some using bow-thrusters to get off the mud, eroding banks and causing even more silt to be deposited in the canal. There was also an incident during the summer in which a widebeam became jammed in a bridge-hole on the Grand Union, near the Blue Lias, and CRT contractors needed to remove part of the towpath in order for it to pass through. CRT has a growing problem with widebeams, but is not yet fully aware of it. As with speeding cyclists, overgrown vegetation and places that need spot dredging, boaters need to report problems to CRT so that they can be acted upon.

Fly on the wall

Observes proceedings at Council in September

NABO calendar 2019

Council meetings are held at boat clubs in the Midlands area. Members are welcome to attend; please just let the Secretary or the Chair know in advance (contact details inside cover).

The remaining dates for Council meetings in 2019 are as follows: . October 13th, November 17th (includes AGM).



Bridge deconstruction to allow a widebeam to pass.
Photo: Mark Tizard

Glandwr Cymru appoints new Chair

The Canal & River Trust in Wales has appointed Steve Thomas CBE to chair its advisory board in Wales. Steve was chief executive of the Welsh Local Government Association for 14 years until



Steve Thomas
Photo: www.business-live.co.uk

the end of 2018, where he developed strong connections across Welsh Government. His knowledge of the wide range of programmes and policies will influence the Trust's work in Wales. He has also held a number of voluntary roles which align with the work of the Trust in Wales, including chairing the Prince's Trust for Wales for five years.

Unfortunately, the centralised CRT contact form does not have a reference number for each complaint or suggestion, so it is difficult for boaters to follow up whether remedial action has been taken. Also CRT is not collating statistics that would identify problems in specific areas, and so remains unaware of them.

NABO has responded to an HMRC consultation on stopping the use of red diesel for propulsion by privately owned boats. The higher duty on white diesel will make boating more expensive and fuel-sellers are likely to stock the type of diesel that they can sell most of; not both red and white.

Over the summer, there have been more and more incidents of inconsiderate speeding cyclists. 'Share the space' is not working, especially where towpath improvements have allowed cyclists to ride at higher speeds. As a result, fewer people, including pedestrian commuters, are using the towpaths because of the perceived dangers. This is not good news for CRT's Waterways and Wellbeing campaign and, as one Council member put it: "They shot themselves in the foot with the Sustrans deal."

Byeee!

Around the regions with NABO's regional reps

Wales and the South West Mike Rodd



The sudden and seemingly mysterious departure of Richard Thomas, the recently appointed Director of Canal and River Trust in Wales & South West, came as a real shock, as the positive and regular meetings with him were proving to be most encouraging.

Indeed, a trip was planned with him for the following week on the Mon & Brec on our boat!

His replacement on a temporary basis, CRT's Head of Customer Service, Jon Horsfall, is well known to NABO and meetings are presently being set up.

Also, after a long appointment process, the eventual replacement of the very popular operator managers on both the K&A (Dale Marshall) and the Mon & Brec and the associated waterways (Kevin Phillips), came as a huge disappointment to all boaters.

Both individuals had extensive and detailed knowledge of their canals, and enjoyed excellent working relationships with boater and user-representative organisations. We welcome Rob Eaton who takes over both roles.

How did they do?

A summary of CRT's Annual Report for 2018 / 2019



Annual Report
2018/19

Overall boater satisfaction scores declined to 61%, attributed to disruption due to summer water shortages, changes to licence fees, concerns about network maintenance and concerns about the Trust's repositioning

More than £204,000 to empty 900+ litter/dog waste bins more than 86,000 times

Fly-tipping costs increased from £54,000pa to more than £215,000pa, 80% of 5,000 tonnes of waste reused or recycled

117,500+ calls to customer service centre, mainly about summer restrictions due to drought and prolonged stoppages at key sites over winter. 97% resolved at first contact and 97% of emails responded to within two working days. 93% of customers satisfied with how their query was dealt with and 90% of enquirers rated the service as either good or excellent

£9.1m spent on vegetation and environmental management, cutting more than 4,500 miles of grass, and a further £1m managing off-side vegetation along 300km of canals

649 days of unplanned closures, against a target of 450

317 reported incidents to members of the public (313 during 2017/18). 34 were attributable to an infrastructure fault or failure (29 in 2017/18). 40 fatalities on the network

KEY PROJECTS

- £2.8m for reconstruction of Stanthorne Embankment, Middlewich.
- £500,000 for a culvert repair on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal.
- £1.65m to rebuild lock 11 on the Marple Flight.
- £7.2m on 24 dredging schemes, removing 100,000m³ of sediment, 98% reused and recycled. 96.25% of planned preventative maintenance on mechanical and electrical assets delivered.
- £7.7m improving towpaths.

Property and non-property investment portfolio increased by 3%.

PROPERTY INVESTMENTS

- Phase 2 of Brentford residential scheme, West London.
- Residential scheme at Bow Wharf, East London, and new industrial units at Tyseley, Birmingham.
- Start on a residential scheme at Hale Wharf, East London.
- Work on a hotel and industrial development at Rickmansworth
- Joint housing venture on Icknield Port Loop.
- Restoration of the Roundhouse in Birmingham.
- Planning permissions for work at Brentford, Bulbourne Yard and Finsley Gate Wharf, Burnley.

Income:

- 1 Boating licences and moorings: £46.4m from boaters and boating businesses, ≈22% of overall income.
- 2 £1.9m from utilities and water sales. Consents achieved for new hydro-generation plants on several weirs. Four canal transfer schemes incorporated into Water Resource Management Plans of two water companies. 171 licence applications by CRT to abstract water to supply waterways.
- 3 More than £1.8m from Friends, one-off donations, in-memoriam giving, sponsorship and towpath fundraising. Number of Friends increased to 28,600.
- 4 £18.5m from donations, legacies and income for third-party funded projects. These included a private donation of £30,000 for Regent's Canal, £191,000 from Sport England, £170,000

"[The decline in] boater satisfaction scores is attributed to disruption due to summer water shortages, changes to licence fees, concerns about network maintenance, and ... the Trust's repositioning."

from the Welsh Government for work at Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Trevor Basin, £2.8m for Titford Pools at Oldbury (£1m from the European Regional Development Fund and £1.8m from Highways Agency), £767,000 for the Trent & Mersey Canal from National Lottery Heritage Fund, £239,000 from the Local Economic Partnership for towpath improvements on the Erewash Canal in Ilkeston,

Income Source	2017/18	2018/19	% change
Boat licence income	£20.4m	£21.1m	3.4%
Number of boats with a licence at 31 March ¹	34,207	34,367	0.5%
Income per private 12-month licence (annualised)	£630	£646	2.5%
Income from mooring permits (restated to include garden permits)	£7.3m	£7.7m	5.5%
Boating trade ² (BWML shown separately)	£9.0m	£9.7m	7.8%
Other	£1.4m	£1.7m	21.4%
Total boat licences & moorings	£38.1m	£40.2m	5.5%
Income from BWML ³	£8.5m	£6.2m	-27.1%
Total boating and moorings income	£46.6m	£46.4m	-0.4%

¹ 3.5% of boaters do not hold a current licence.

² Income from businesses undertaking trading activities on or in facilities connected to the waterways, or premises leased from the Trust.

³ £2.5m in relation to the disposal of British Waterways Marinas Limited in December 2018, retaining network access income from the sites that were sold. The proceeds were invested in the non-property portfolio.

The full report can be downloaded at canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/news/2018-19-annual-report-and-accounts-published.

£100,000 in principle from Sport England to refurbish Liverpool Watersports Centre, £100,000 from corporate partners to support corporate volunteering events to improve waterways and £1.9m from the People's Postcode Lottery for Community Roots projects, including environmental improvement work on the Montgomery Canal.

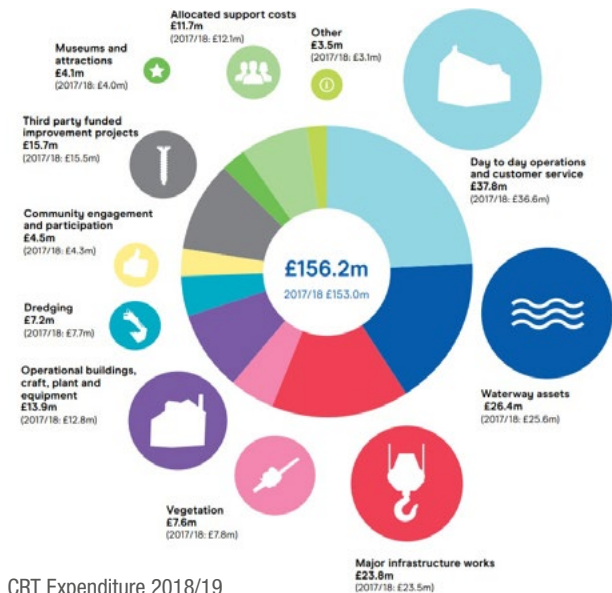
5 The Defra grant funding was £41.3m, with additional £10m due to satisfactory performance against performance conditions. Total CRT funds have increased from £791.2m to £845.3m.

Expenditure:

Spending increased across all key areas, with additional spend on emergency repairs for major breaches being partially offset by re-phasing of other major work.

The allocation of expenditure has been re-analysed to more accurately reflect the activities of the Trust following the regional re-structure and repositioning as a Waterway and Wellbeing Charity:

- 1 A new category 'Community engagement and participation' has been created, which includes expenditure on delivering and supporting community/youth/education art projects and website and paper-based literature to support community engagement.
- 2 National teams and supervision expenditure has been allocated to the business areas that the teams support.
- 3 Other expenditure has been reclassified to two new core areas, where these are not shown in separate categories, such as vegetation and dredging:
 - Caring for waterway assets (the Asset Improvement team expenditure, primarily direct service programmes to maintain and improve assets, often involving stop-pages, rather than external contractors completing major infrastructure work. The costs include equipment and support of engineering and inspections teams).



CRT Expenditure 2018/19

- Day-to-day operations and customer service (The Operational team dealing with network users, primarily through reactive minor repairs and customer service activities).

Asset condition:

87% of listed structures in 'Fair' condition or better (86% in 2017/18). Three structures remain on English Heritage's 'At Risk' register.

Restoration work started on the Roundhouse in Birmingham, a £2.5m joint venture with the National Trust, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund with Historic England.

Other work on heritage structures included: Beeston Iron Lock footbridge, Walbut Lock on the Pocklington Canal, helping to reopen an additional two miles of the canal to boats, Hayhurst Bridge in Northwich, three historic cast-iron bridges on the BCN, Lock 15 on Grantham Canal, Parbold Dry Dock, £1.3m for Stainton Aqueduct on the Lancaster Canal from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Rural Payments Agency.

New moorings were constructed at Millwall Inner Dock in London and a new mooring pontoon at Barons Quay in Northwich.

Defra Targets	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2018/19 Target
Towpath condition (Grade C or better)	79.7%	80.8%	more than 60%
Principal assets (Grade C or better)	86.8%	86.8%	more than 77%
Condition of flood management assets (Grade C or better)	99.0%	99.0%	more than 96%
Boating customer satisfaction	70%	61%	72%
Visitor satisfaction	91%	92%	90%
Regular visitor numbers each fortnight (from monthly surveys)	4.3m	4.1m	4.5m
Public safety measure—number of reported incidents	29	34	25
Internal safety measure (accident frequency rate as number of accidents per 100,000 hours worked)	0.09	0.29	0.10
Number of days of unplanned navigation closures within CRT control (individual instances over 48hrs)	490	649	450
Employee engagement (those answering positively to six key engagement measures)	68%	65%	69%
Volunteer satisfaction	96%	96%	95%
Volunteer hours	616,300	671,800	670,000
People aware of the Trust	36%	38%	42%
Friends donating to the Trust each month	24,100	28,600	30,000
Number of children reached through education programme	81,700	92,200	85,000
Community adoptions	225	254	260
Diversity (% employees black, Asian and minority ethnic)	5.1%	5.6%	5.5%
Diversity (% female senior management)	22%	34%	25%

...and Alan Richards summarises in The Floater

www.thefloater.org/the-floater-july-2017/crts-annual-report-spin-v-facts

To sum up—for those whose eyes gloss over when presented with masses of figures—just two examples of how CRT attempts to put a positive spin on its failures. CRT sets KPI's which are monitored by its board on a bi-monthly basis. However, failure to meet its yearly targets is hidden away in a 100+ page Annual Report whilst a press release seeks to turn these failures into success stories.

- SPIN** Increased annual visitor numbers by 33 per cent to 396m
- FACT** CRT's claim is not based on its published KPI target figures.
- FACT** CRT failed to make target on visitor numbers last year.
- FACT** Visitor numbers were actually down in 2016/17 compared to the year before.
- FACT** CRT visitor numbers in 2016/17 were the same as BW visitor numbers in 2009/10.
- FACT** CRT's claim of a 33 per cent increase in visitor numbers over five years is eclipsed by BW's 48 per cent over a similar timeframe.

- SPIN** Numbers of Friends have grown to 22,000 and donations are now £2.9m per annum
- FACT** CRT's 2016/17 Annual Report states Friends grew to 20,600 rather than the 22,000 claimed
- FACT** This is not the first time that CRT have made inflated claims regarding number of Friends
- FACT** CRT failed to meet its Friends target of 22,500
- FACT** CRT's ambition of 100,000 Friends over ten years equates to an increase in Friends of 10,000 per year. On this basis they should now have 50,000 Friends after five years rather than 20,600.
- FACT** CRT's ability to recruit and retain Friends fell by 20 per cent last year compared to 2015/16.
- FACT** For the fifth year running CRT lost money in attracting donors.
- FACT** To date, CRT has lost £5m attempting to attract donors.
- FACT** In 2016/17 it spent £1.27 for each pound raised in donations.

Dam disruption

Stella Ridgway recounts how her life as a liveboard on the Peak Forest canal was affected by the Toddbrook dam event.

Opposite
The effects on the canal at
Whaley bridge
Stop planks
Towpath Closure
High water levels
Photos: Stella Ridgway
Below
Chinook carrying aggregate
to Toddbrook Reservoir
Photo: Crown Copyright

Normally, we go for water, to empty rubbish etc. on the alternate weekends to coal-boat 'Alton' coming. We should have gone on the last weekend of July, but it rained almost constantly; heavy rain. It stopped for an hour on the Sunday afternoon, but then it was heavy showers and rain on Monday and Tuesday as well. Standing in the rain for three hours isn't conducive to either renal

failure patients or those suffering from COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) as my husband does, so we waited until Wednesday when it seemed to be a bit sunnier. We were thinking of going to Bugsworth Basin (a two hour cruise there and back), but it looked as though it might shower so we headed to New Mills marina (about 10 minutes). We winded at the winding hole just past the marina (for those who haven't been on the Peak Forest canal, the marina has a very short jetty) and it rained - it was like being in a tropical monsoon - but it only lasted an hour or so. On Thursday morning, it was raining again at 6am when I went for dialysis in Stockport. It rained heavily on and off all morning and, coming home, the local news said that the rain was expected to continue and that Whaley Bridge was being evacuated.

The previous week, it had been 32°C and I had postponed taking the dogs to the groomer, as it was too hot to walk them on the pavements, postponing the appointment until 5pm on Thursday. The showers stopped and the sun was shining, so I headed off to the groomer. We got half way and the heavens opened – an absolute downpour again; I was soaked and the dogs, even though they love water, hate the rain. When we got to the groomer, as she finished grooming a German Shepherd, a combination of heat, dog hair and being wet, set my asthma off and I had no inhaler! (The last time I had an asthma attack was about 25 years ago, so I normally don't carry it around). So I went home, stopping

to get my breath and being helped by the junior doctor who lives in a house next to our mooring. She sent her husband to the boat to get my inhalers and I got home, changed into dry clothes and set off to collect two very clean Labrador Retrievers. As we came out of the groomers and turned the corner to cross Union Road Bridge, there was police tape across the road and a very earnest policeman telling me we couldn't cross the bridge. This would have meant not getting home at all really, so I explained that we only needed to cross quickly, and we wouldn't be crossing the other bridge towards the Co-op, so he reluctantly allowed us across. We got to the towpath to find a police car and policeman telling me I couldn't go onto the towpath. I explained that we lived in one of the boats just around the corner (he hadn't seen them) and that, if necessary, we would cruise away from danger. Later that evening, two boaters from the marina, the Canal and River Trust and the policeman inserted stop-planks in Bridge 29, lifting them on the Saturday to allow boats from Whaley Bridge to come through. It was quite a surreal sight to see the Judith Mary moored alongside the boats at the marina.

Strines Road was still open, as was the Sheffield Line, but these were both closed on Friday night as the reservoir repair operation got into full flow and the weather forecast predicted heavy rain (which, fortunately never arrived). On Saturday morning, at 6am, my phone rang and my transport driver asked me to speak to the policeman at the junction to tell him that I needed to go for dialysis. The headlines were full of Whaley Bridge, even my family in the US, Norway, New Zealand and Australia had it on their TV news. By now, the Chinook had arrived to drop aggregate and, going home af-

ter dialysis, it was very quiet. In the afternoon, we took the dogs down to the Tor's and we could see where the river level had been on the Wednesday. The flood plain was indeed flooded, the farm had flood planks and sandbags up and the road was still flooded. The river was very fast flowing and we carried on round, discovering later that the police had closed off the street access to the Tor's, although they never closed the way down from the canal. All weekend, we saw people walking along the towpath from Furness Vale and Disley to go to the Co-op—Tesco was closed all week. Strangely, pedestrians were allowed to cross the bridges in New Mills, but not vehicles. From Saturday, with no vehicles, trains, buses, or planes overhead (because of a no-fly zone for the Chinook), it was really quiet; all you could hear in the background was the reassuring sound of the Chinook.

What some boaters failed to realise is that, in a civil emergency that uses multiple emergency services plus council services, all notices are sent out by the local constabulary, so the best place for us to look and keep bookmarked was the Derbyshire Constabulary website and social media; their advice to boaters never altered, leave your boats. After six days, the dam was deemed safe and residents were allowed home and the roads were reopened. We could hear all the traffic again as life returned to normal.



Toddbrook Reservoir latest

At the end of August, CRT appointed an experienced project manager, Rob Jowitt, to lead a team of experts to work out what went wrong and to prepare a detailed design plan for repairing the dam wall. Contractor, Kier, is on site to manage water levels and deliver the repair works to the dam. The reservoir is nearly empty and is being kept at below 10% of its usual capacity. The Marple flight on the Peak Forest Canal and the Bosley flight on the Macclesfield Canal are both open. Apart from Toddbrook, there are three other reservoirs that supply water to the Peak Forest and Macclesfield canals. Their current holdings are all above the long-term average and CRT believes that there will be sufficient water available to support navigation throughout the remainder of the autumn.



Red diesel demise?

NABO's response to an HMRC consultation

Stella Ridgway puts the inland waterways boater's case

The consultation documents can be viewed at assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/817231/Implementation_of_CJEU_judgment_on_diesel_fuel.pdf

There is a petition against the changes at petition.parliament.uk/petitions/269295. If there are enough signatures, Parliament will be asked to reconsider and debate this.

Following the judgment made by the European Court of Justice that private pleasure boats will not be able to use red diesel for propulsion, in July HMRC began a consultation for evidence of the impact on private leisure craft of complying with the ruling.

Commercially operated boats and residential boaters with fixed moorings will still be able to use red diesel, but other boats would be required to use white diesel. The scheme that was introduced to allow boaters to buy red diesel and pay the duty differential with white diesel on fuel used for propulsion will end. Although red diesel can still be used for heating, it would have to have a separate tank, and there would be no dispensation for diesel used by the engine to generate hot water and charge batteries. The consultation ended on 9th September and NABO made the following submission:

"The National Association of Boat Owners (NABO) is a voluntary membership organisation, principally consisting of private boat owners based on the inland waterways of England and Wales. NABO exists to represent the interests of its members with navigation authorities and government organisations and to promote responsible ownership and use of inland boats

Our constituency

The craft in question, as represented by our membership, are typically privately owned narrowboats, canal and river cruisers and small barges.

The dimensions and capacity of

the network mean that these craft are usually less than 21m in length and less than 4m beam (width). For a more detailed description of the situation of boaters in our constituency in Greater London please see 'Moor or Less—Moorings on London's Waterways' led by Jenny Jones (now Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb). The nature of these craft, and the fact that they are mobile, means that they rely on self-contained systems for heating, domestic electrical power and propulsion, and such systems are designed as their primary energy systems. For propulsion, craft rely almost exclusively on diesel engines. It should be noted that there is no obvious viable alternative to diesel engines for propulsion. Petrol engines are highly discouraged because of the fire and explosion risk from the fuel.

Our main areas of interest are around the potential adverse impacts that private boat owners might experience in the event of insensitive regulation of:

A. The use of diesel for navigational propulsion.

The government intends to abolish the scheme introduced in 2008 that allowed users of diesel-powered private pleasure craft (e.g. motorised yachts, canal boats and motorboats) to purchase red diesel and pay the duty differential between red and white diesel on the fuel used for propulsion.

It intends to remove the right of operators of such craft to use red diesel for propulsion and mandate the use of white diesel. Users will be allowed to continue to use red

diesel for on-board non-propulsion use, where they have a separate fuel tank for this purpose. For propulsion, craft rely almost exclusively on diesel engines. This means that craft with only one tank will pay more tax than they currently do, as they will have to purchase fuel taxed at the higher white diesel duty rate for both propulsion and non-propulsion uses, and pay the standard rate of VAT as white diesel is not eligible for the reduced rate of VAT. Red diesel is currently taxed at 11.14 pence per litre instead of 57.95 pence per litre for unmarked (white) diesel.

B. Non-propulsion use of diesel

When in navigational use, the diesel engines, almost without exception, provide low-voltage electricity generation for both domestic and locomotive use [engine starting], typically stored in lead acid battery banks (typically 12v or 24v low-energy systems). In most cases, hot water is also generated by linking engine cooling water to simple calorifier systems, which use engine coolant to heat an immersion style water tank. It is therefore also apparent why it is necessary for boat owners who are stationary on temporary/visiting moorings and long-term moorings to need to run their navigational engine, at least every few days, to recharge domestic batteries and produce hot water while the boat is occupied.

It is noted that only boats moored permanently on residential moorings, which have Council Tax applicable, will be able to use red diesel. Many of our members use their boat for leisure purposes only and the use of white diesel will mean that the running costs for their leisure craft will increase. The introduction of the need to use white diesel will also affect their ability to source the correct type of diesel, as most marinas and boats that sell fuel will only

Alison Tuck

"Suppliers of red diesel will have to buy additional storage tanks for white, so marinas and boatyards will have to make the decision as to whether it's profitable to do this. If a boatyard is running a hire fleet and selling red, it uses the majority for their hire boats. Are they going to then fit new storage tanks for white to supply other customers? Possibly not.

We are currently looking into supplying diesel at Urban Moorings. As trade boats, we can still use red, so we will be supplying red. In order to supply white, we will have to buy another storage tank at a cost of £1400 (1300 litre capacity). Our current red diesel supplier does not supply white. White diesel tends to be sold in larger quantities and we have access issues for big tankers, so it looks like we won't be able to supply white. I think this will be typical for many marinas and boatyards, so the risk is that white diesel will not be available on large parts of the system for private narrowboats."



stock either one or the other. Once a boat fuel tank contains red diesel the dye remains, so Customs authorities will not be able to accurately check whether a boat has red or white diesel in the tank.

Conclusions

We therefore urge HMRC to carefully implement these changes, as having separate tanks fitted will be beyond the scope for most boat owners due to insufficient space for two tanks. Boating is a major source of tourism income as our members travel the country and, if implemented, this proposal will have an adverse impact on the communities who rely on canal tourism."

Come and join us...

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

Nominations must reach us by October 3rd 2019

Please send the General Secretary any **Resolutions** you wish put before the AGM meeting with the names of proposer and seconder by October 3rd 2019.

Please send to:
gen.sec@nabo.org.uk
or by post to;
MARK TIZARD
PO Box 7366,
Wolverhampton, WV1 9GQ

The NABO AGM is on Sunday November 11th at Tamworth Cruising Club, Kettlebrook Road, Tamworth B77 1BS. We will start at 11am 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

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 offer ideas and advice on recruiting new (and younger) members, so if this is you, don't be shy—let us know.

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.

Please complete the nomination form in this issue, photocopy it if you would rather keep your NABO News intact, and then return it to Mark Tizard, General Secretary, by 3rd 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: MARK TIZARD, PO Box 7366, Wolverhampton, WV1 9GQ to arrive by 3rd October 2019

*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.

Winter moorings

CRT has 'rationalised' the winter moorings on offer for 2019/20, removing sites where no winter moorings were sold last year. Around 100 sites will be available between 1st November and 29th February, compared to 135 in 2018.

Two new price bands have been added this year, now seven bands, reflect each site's relative attractiveness, such as location and facilities, the level of demand from boaters, and to ensure that prices are in line with private mooring operators and CRT's own long-term mooring sites.

Permits will be charged per metre, per month rate, and boaters can book moorings in increments of one month.

The price bands have had a 3% inflation increase applied. 36 sites have moved into lower price bands and 25 have moved into higher price bands; the rest stay the same.

CRT have reported on last year's sales of winter moorings. The total number of months booked was 2305, raising a total income of £314,149.40.

CRT's future provision of winter moorings is to be reviewed after consulting the Navigation Advisory Group to consider the longer term options.

Do NABO members have any views on whether winter moorings should be provided by marina operators rather than by CRT?



Get up early!

**Booking for CRT winter moorings opens
6am Tuesday 1st October**

CRT Winter Mooring Sales 2018 and prices for 2019

Band	2018 Price metre	Number Sold 2018	2019 Price metre
Band 6	£6.70	262	£6.90
Band 5			£8.50
Band 4	£10.30	151	£10.60
Band 3	£13.90	150	£14.30
Band 2	£16.00	75	£16.50
Band 1	£18.00	80	£18.50
Band 0			£20.00
	Total 2018	718	

Monday 9th September

Boaters will be able to look at the sites on the online booking system at www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/winter-moorings

Tuesday 1st October 2019

Bookings for the moorings through the boat licensing site will open at 6am and will be made on a first-come, first-served basis licensing.canalrivertrust.org.uk/Account/Register.

For further information, either call customer services on 0303 040 4040 or email wintermoorings@canalrivertrust.org.uk.

Photo: Gilliv Rhodes

The Nene revisited

It's a good five years since **Helen Hutt** last cruised this beautiful river.

This summer I noticed quite a few changes—some good and some bad. Let's start with the good. Renowned for its lack of mooring opportunities, the river is now blessed with an organisation called Friends of the River Nene (www.friendsoftherivernene.co.uk), which has built up a portfolio of (currently) ten delightful bankside sites available exclusively to its members. It costs £12 a year to join and, in my view, that's money well spent. The sites are mostly between Wadenhoe Lock and Doddington Lock and they all appear on Google maps. Otherwise, some 'unofficial' bankside moorings have gone, along with the EA overnight mooring at Titchmarsh Lock, and the EA's remaining pontoon moorings can only accommodate one or two narrowboats.

The locks themselves seemed easier to operate than I remember; mostly electrically-operated and only three with those huge wheels to raise and lower the guillotine gate. Paddle gear and pointing gates were all in good order. Grass was beautifully manicured!

The bad news is the decline in EA facilities: no rubbish disposal/recycling between Peterborough and Northampton Marina; pumpout and Elsan closed at Peterborough (so I was told, although I didn't need to use them myself); and all services closed at Irthlingborough.

And the nail in the coffin has to be the closure of the King's Head and its lovely mooring at Wadenhoe; hopefully the pub is being refurbished prior to reopening and not

being redeveloped.

Nonetheless, a lovely journey upriver, enhanced this time by approaching from the Wash—the crossing itself is a wonderful experience but the long, straight, five-hour slog on the incoming tide up to Dog in a Doublet Lock is not something I'm in a hurry to repeat!

Nene manual guillotine lock
Photo: Peter Fellows



Towpath speedsters

SIR – It is not just roads that are plagued by cyclists (Letters, August 8).

Over the past few years, the Canal & River Trust has been improving towpaths and encouraging more people to enjoy the peace and relaxation of the waterways. Sadly, towpaths are now taken for speedways by cyclists in Lycra, who rush along shouting loudly to each other.

They have no regard for families walking along the path, anglers peacefully fishing, or boaters sitting out enjoying a drink. I have seen joggers and normal-paced cyclists forced into the undergrowth and one elderly lady reduced to tears because she and her dog were both deaf and were now too frightened by fast bicycles to walk there any more.

Just because cycling is healthy, cyclists do not have rights above everyone else. And I would point out that anglers pay for a rod licence and boat owners pay for a cruising licence.

Anne Woods

Letter to The Times from Anne Woods

by Mark Townsend in The Guardian in July (who has permitted me to reprint his article, which also introduced me to the term ‘Cyclopaths’).

CRT seems to be in denial about

“Exhortations, such as the ‘Drop the Pace’ campaign, or painting ‘sleeping policemen’ on urban towpaths, are not going to solve the problem.”

the extent of the problem, or at least unwilling to take any serious measures to address the issue. Exhortations, such as initiating the ‘Drop the Pace’ campaign, or painting ‘sleeping policemen’ on urban towpaths, are not going to solve the problem. Even the guidance offered to cyclists in the cycling FAQs on its website is mealy-mouthed: “We

Cyclopaths

Stop! says **Peter Fellows**, it’s time to address this towpath menace.

For several years, NABO has been getting reports from boaters of cyclists speeding along towpaths, causing collisions and resulting injuries to pedestrians, pets and wildlife—and other cyclists. Over the summer, I have received yet more letters from boaters describing incidents and near-misses, and the issue was also highlighted

don’t specify speed limits on the towpath. We ask that everyone uses common sense, with primary consideration for pedestrians and those handling boats, as they are often the most vulnerable. At busy times anyone in a hurry should use an alternative route.”

Cycling associations are no better. The Cycling UK website states: “There is little evidence to support the view that cycling on towpaths creates excessive hazards to walkers or to cyclists themselves.” And: “Towpaths are, of course, shared by a range of users—walkers, anglers, and boaters. Research* shows that cyclists and walkers are able to mix happily on off-road routes and that conflict is more perceived than real.

Conflict is rare, but if it does happen, insufficient width and poor maintenance are important factors. On towpaths in particular, problems can occur if they are heavily used, especially in urban areas and during fishing matches.”—So nothing to do with the behaviour of some cyclists then! (*The research quoted was from 2003; the problems were far less severe 16 years ago).

Reports by boaters in the waterway press and on social media show a very different situation, with speeding cyclists causing distress and injury on nearly all parts of the system. The worst-affected towpaths are ones leading into towns and cities, with Leamington Spa/Warwick, Bath, London, Manchester and Birmingham featuring prominently this summer. But rural towpaths are also being targeted, as described in Graham Hearnden’s letter in this is-

sue, and the athletics community, Strava, regularly displaying fastest times along stretches of the Leeds & Liverpool towpath, among others, on its website.

It is time that CRT stops this madness and implements concrete measures to stop speeding along towpaths. It cannot do this by appealing to cyclists’ better nature or sense of responsibility for the welfare of others—this has been tried and it has failed. It requires CRT to police towpaths in areas where problems are known to exist and to hit offenders where it hurts; in their bank accounts.

Action by boaters

To do this, CRT requires help from boaters, by reporting all incidents, whether a near-miss or a collision, to CRT’s Customer Services (0303 040 4040) during office hours or by filling out a CRT incident reporting form (<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/contact-us> and select ‘Reporting an incident accident or near-miss’) and emailing it to customer.services@canalrivertrust.org.uk with as much detail as possible.

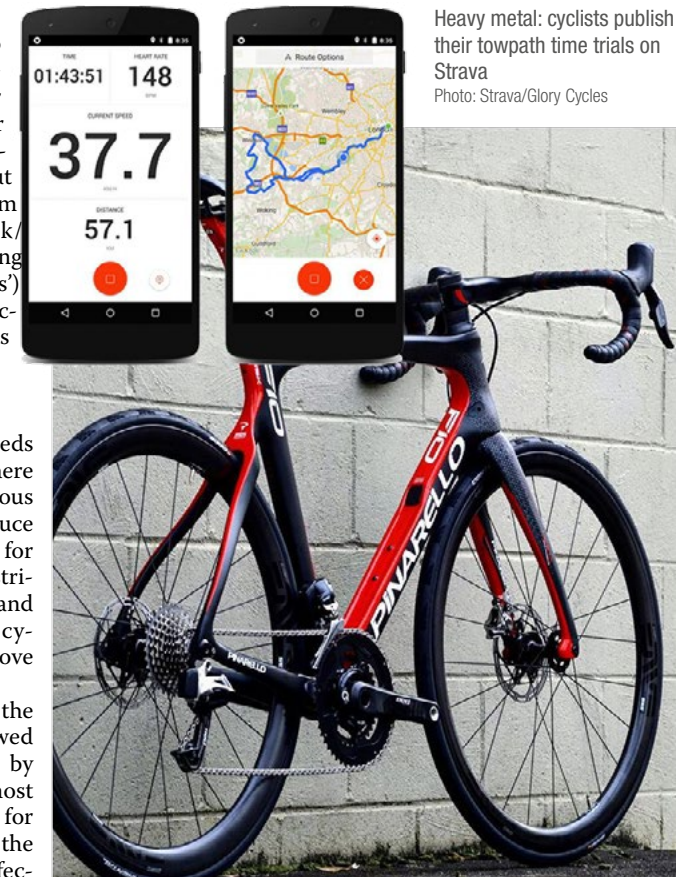
Action by CRT

Using this information, CRT needs to identify the towpaths where speeding has become a serious problem. It should quickly introduce signs at key towpath entry points for cyclists, telling them that pedestrians and boaters have priority and that ringing a bell does not give cyclists the right to make others move out of their way.

The signs should also give the times when cycling is not allowed on the towpaths, as suggested by Mark Townsend. Given that most speeding cyclists use towpaths for commuting to and from work, the prohibition would be most effective

“Pedestrians and boaters have priority ... ringing a bell does not give cyclists the right to make others move out of their way”

from, say, 8-9am and 5-6pm. It would be relatively easy to police the ban at checkpoints on commuter towpaths, enforced with on-the-spot fines. Additionally, despite a reported lack of cooperation with CRT by



Heavy metal: cyclists publish their towpath time trials on Strava
Photo: Strava/Glory Cycles

Research quoted: Countryside Agency. How people interact on off-road routes: phase II. CA report CRN69, 2003 publications.

naturalengland.org.uk/publication/65057

The Guardian is running a 'Cities' series of articles, titled 'Canal revolution', looking at what our changing waterways reveal about modern British cities www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/jul/25/the-canal-revolution-how-waterways-reveal-the-truth-about-modern-britain

Strava, all cycling time-trials or cycle racing along towpaths should be banned immediately, and this should be publicised on the Strava website and by other cycling organisations.

Action by Government

Of course, as Mark Townsend points out, such a restriction will force cyclists to use roads, which are more dangerous to them than towpaths. In the longer term, local and central governments must introduce more safe cycling routes on the road network, as are found in most European cities.

What is missing at the moment is the political will to acknowledge and address the problem and to make the necessary investment.

Benefits for all

As part of CRT's Waterways and Wellbeing strategy, it is surely in its interest to collect and collate towpath data that would support the

introduction of safe cycle routes on nearby roads to benefit cyclists. And this would allow it to reclaim the towpaths as tranquil places where boaters and pedestrians—and 'normal' cyclists — can relax.

Introducing and publicising the restrictions on speeding cyclists is likely to reverse the recent decline in numbers of towpath visits (200,000 fewer in the last year, according to CRT's latest annual report).

Many people, especially parents walking children to school or playgroup, dog-walkers, or people who just want to unwind somewhere in peace and quiet, are increasingly deterred from using towpaths by the actions and attitudes of the lycralouts.

It is in CRT's and boaters' interests to make towpaths as safe as possible, so that they are widely used, which will also support the upcoming negotiations for a renewed government grant.

Oxford cycling consultation: NABO's submission

In July, Oxfordshire County Council issued a consultation on plans for the development of new local cycling and walking infrastructure in the county. Graham Paterson replied on behalf of NABO:

"I am writing on behalf of the National Association of Boat Owners (NABO) with regard to the above consultation. We note that you are only seeking comments from cyclists, but would point out that any proposals regarding the Thames riverside or Oxford Canal towpaths are likely to affect all users.

As a direct result of the regrading of many of the canal towpaths, the number and, more importantly, the speed of cyclists has brought conflict between cyclists, pedestrians, and boaters who need to have mooring lines and pins attached to the bank. NABO recently took legal advice on behalf of its members to establish li-

ability in case of conflict between a cyclist and another towpath user.

It is important that any improvements to towpath or riverside paths take into account all users and also take into account both access and the protection of the rural environment. Specifically any improvements need to recognise and minimise cyclist's speed, which will increase should the paths be upgraded.

Recently the Canal and River Trust has launched a promotional campaign to attract more visitors to the canals, the numbers of which have dropped substantially over the last few years. We believe this reduction may well be linked to the recent regrading/improvements of towpaths, turning many into Sustrans cycleways and commuter routes. The increased numbers and speeds of cyclists have led to a reduction in the number of other towpath users."

On roads, cyclists are vulnerable

—but on towpaths they're the menace.

The use of Britain's narrow canal towpaths as cycling commuter routes is not sustainable. It's time to ban bikes at peak times.

Mark Townsend writes in The Guardian in July as part of the Cities Series

There was a loud screech of brakes. Katie Jackson recalls watching a cyclist, anxiously looking behind, speeding off along the canal. Below, on the towpath, lay her kitten. Jackson's pet died minutes after being struck by the cyclist on the Hertford Union Canal, Victoria Park, in east London in July 2015. For some canal cyclists, including me, it was the final straw. Appalled by the latest tragedy, I abandoned the towpath as a commuter route. Four years on, the decision is yet to cause regret.

My new route was longer, a 25% increase in time and distance. It also involved navigating several congested thoroughfares and a particularly perilous crossroads. It was profoundly more dangerous, but felt liberating. The need to issue endless apologies to dog-walkers had disappeared. Instead I concentrated on my own survival.

Over the previous months, racing along the narrow waterside path had felt increasingly incompatible with other users. Swerving past mothers with prams or cutting up small dogs trotting languidly by the water made me feel ashamed. My desire to reach the office on time was patently causing misery to others.

Take a canalside seat at rush hour and watch the chaos unfold. Guaranteed, you will witness a litany of near-misses. Amid the blur of

rushing metal, wide-eyed pedestrians nervously sidestep their way to work. The soundtrack is one of shrill bells interspersed with the squeal of brakes. Predictably, there are accidents. Anecdotal cases reported along Britain's 2,000 miles of canal include descriptions of hit-and-run cyclists crashing into guide dogs and pensioners. Canals, particularly in rush hour, have become the domain of bicycles, the trucks of the towpath. Some travel so manically they are called cyclopaths.

These waterways should be calm spaces where people seek solace. In our cities, their value is obvious as green spaces, linear escapes from the stresses of urban life.

Time-pressed commuters on bikes are destroying this precious resource. As cycling grows more popular (25 million Britons now own a bike) and cleaner forms of transport more attractive, the impact will escalate.

Away from the menace of reckless cyclists, the broader issue remains the paucity of credible cycling infrastructure on UK roads. There, cyclists suddenly become the most vulnerable of users. Almost 18,500 cyclists were injured in road accidents in 2016, including 3,499 killed or seriously injured. By contrast, of the 400 or so pedestrians who die in collisions each year, about 2.5% involve a bicycle. That cyclists choose crowded, uneven paths beside open

Published in The Guardian, Saturday 27th July 2019.

theguardian.com/cities/2019/jul/27/on-roads-cyclists-are-vulnerable-but-on-towpaths-theyre-the-menace

water in preference to superior roads is an indictment of the investment in the provision of safe cycling lanes.

But as canals become more crowded, so journey times will lengthen. Trips on roads, even with the interruption of traffic lights, are often quicker. A tipping point has been reached, the volume of cyclists exceeding the capacity of paths built during the industrial revolution for horses to slowly tow boats laden with goods. The issue now requires political intervention, a recognition that using canals as key cycling commuter routes is not sustainable.

Many of the UK's towpaths are narrow and cannot be widened; separating cyclists from pedestrians is not possible. Proposals such as speed gates and painting 3D "sleeping policemen" on the towpath, infrastructure modifications borrowed from roads, are not long term solutions. Nor is distributing leaflets enforcing cycling etiquette which, although well meaning, offers no evidence that it will influence mass behaviour.

Tigers need your old rope!



Can you help?

If you have any natural fibre rope that you no longer need, the Park would love to hear from you. Please contact Alice Vassallo at alicervassallo@hotmail.co.uk or on 01763 262226. Or send rope directly, for the attention of Alice, to Shepreth Wildlife Park, Station Road, Shepreth, Nr. Royston, Herts SG8 6PZ

The Canal & River Trust's messaging that cyclists should give way to pedestrians as the more vulnerable party is only selectively obeyed.

Prohibiting cycling on canals during peak times should be trialled and enforced with on-the-spot fines. The move would be easily policed, as the structure of canals means cyclists cannot avoid checkpoints. Fines should be invested directly into fundraising alternative, safe cycling routes on the road network.

Fundamentally, canals need to be reclaimed as places of contemplation—greenways that are quickly accessible to huge tracts of the UK's urban population. Not long ago canals served a purpose for cyclists, a traffic-free route through cities still in thrall to the internal combustion engine. But the rise in numbers and demands of a cleaner city mean their purpose for cycling has been outgrown. Their value needs to be re-appraised. These ancient routes, a retreat from the frantic hubbub of the streets above, are too important to sacrifice.

Shepreth Wildlife Park and John Marlen-Summers of the online rope company, Buy Rope, www.buyrope.co.uk is requesting donations of natural fibre rope for the Park's two Sumatran tigers, Kelabu and Ratna.

The Park has been home to the two tigers, since they were transferred from Chessington World of Adventures in March this year. The park is also home to meerkats, macaques, emus, caiman and lynx. With numbers of Sumatran tigers in the wild estimated at between 300 and 500, Ratna (aged 16) was part of a breeding programme to keep the critically endangered tigers alive in captivity. Now retired from breeding, she lives at Shepreth with her daughter Kelabu (aged 11).

Rope is used to keep the tigers stimulated and encourages natural behaviour, which has a positive effect on their physical and mental health. Buy Rope was first approached by Shepreth in May and has since donated two large coir boat fenders, which have been a big hit with Kelabu in particular. Donations of old boat rope will help the park to continue to provide innovative enrichment, including the creation of a tiger-sized cat scratch-post!

New homes for historic boats

Following a review of the historic importance of all the boats in its collection, the National Waterways Museum is seeking new homes for twelve vessels. It will offer the boats free of charge to accredited museums and then to individuals and private organisations who are able to meet the demands of caring for the vessels.

In some cases, the museum has better examples of the type of vessel, or the boats don't play a significant role in the history of the waterways that the museum focuses on. Others have been changed so much over the decades that very little original material remains. Graham Boxer, Head of Collections and Archives, said: "We have 68 boats in our care but, with limited funds and storage space, we need to focus our efforts on those of the greatest historic importance, and so re-homing some is the right option. There are enthusiasts who could provide the right homes for these vessels, as they do for many of the historic boats still in use on the waterways."

If this is not possible, the museum may have to recommend documented deconstruction to compile detailed records of the boat, to preserve the boat's story for future reference and potentially to inform future conservation or restoration work on other historic boats.

Applicants will be asked to pay only the transport costs but must show what plans they have for the vessel, how they will be cared for over the long-term, what public benefit there might be, how the plans will be funded and what, if any, support will be needed from the museum. All expressions of interest will be considered anonymously before the final recommendations are made to the Board of Trustees for ratification.



Aries in happier times at Audlem Mill in 1980

Photo: Grawar at canalworld.net

The deadline for expressions of interest is 2nd November and details can be found at canalrivertrust.org.uk/places-to-visit/national-waterways-museum/the-historic-boat-collection/museum-collection-rehoming-12-boats or contact the museum at nationalwaterwaysmuseum@canalrivertrust.org.uk.

The boats that need new homes are:

'Aries'	Star class wooden motor
'Chiltern'	wooden motor narrowboat (stern only) c1946
'Marlyn'	wooden motor gigboat c1940
'Marple'	iron hull of ice breaker c1850
'Marsden'	iron hull of ice breaker early 20th Century
'Minstrel'	small boat, c1940
'Shirley'	small powered leisure boat c1930
'Speedwell'	wooden dumb barge c1925
'Spindrift 3'	c1910
'Stratford'	small iron riveted boat from the Stratford Canal c1930
'Ulla'	clinker-built salmon fishing boat c1952
'Whaley Bridge'	iron hull of ice breaker, date unknown.

The previous owner of Aries posted this on Canalworld in June 2018

"July 1982 we delivered the boat to the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port as an exhibit on semi-permanent loan, where she has been ever since.

The cost of the restoration ran to tens of thousands, a fortune. It was worthwhile as Malcolm Braine wrote to the Museum Director "Without any question at all she is by far and away the best condition Grand Union wooden motor boat hull left in existence."

It is sad to see the engine removed and the hull sunk, rotting once more. This was never the intention when taking the decision to place her in the museum. The museum formally purchased the boat sometime in 2004."

The full and fascinating story of its last restoration at Norton Canes can be found here; canalworld.net/forums/index.php?/topic/96687-mb-aries

Marple Wharf back on the agenda

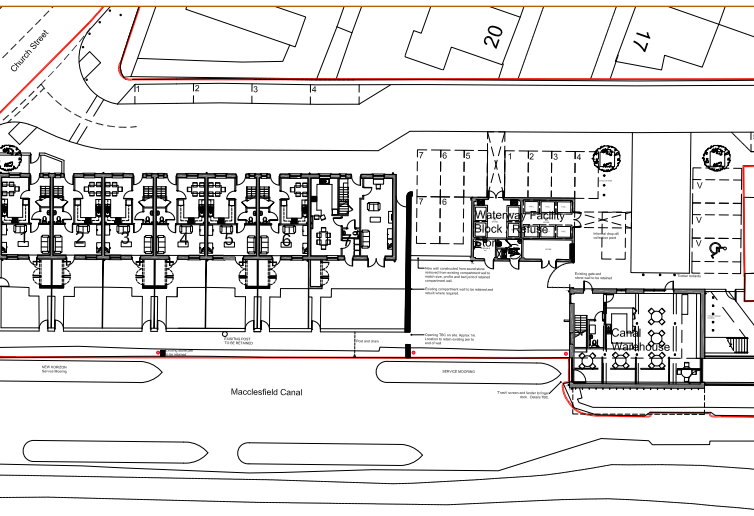
Graham Clarke dissects CRT's plans for development of this historic site.

The plans can be viewed at planning.stockport.gov.uk/PlanningDataLive/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=dates&keyVal=PVTN5SPJJVFoo

I was pleased to read on the Marple website of a proposal for community use of the warehouse at Marple Wharf.

The business plan provided by The Wharf Marple CIC Ltd. shows that a lot of time has been spent on developing and presenting the idea. However, I was very surprised to learn of the resubmission of the proposal by CRT to build seven houses on the remaining part of the wharf. An application by CRT for development of the wharf was turned down in December, due to concerns about the impact on heritage, the density of the development and the amount of traffic it would generate. If the previous CRT application was rejected for these reasons, I fail to see how this new proposal for the overall development of the wharf would mitigate the problems; on the contrary it would make them worse.

The plan of the proposed development showing relocated facilities block, warehouse cafe and new houses



Parking concerns

Only three parking spaces are planned, to cover the needs of the warehouse—fitness centre, café, heritage room and gift shop, New Horizons boat trips and visitors to the seven houses. This will barely cover the staff, let alone the users and visitors.

The Business Plan states: 'There is ample parking at the town centre, with Chadwick Street car park being just 100 yards away and public transport 100 yards away.' This is a significant underestimate and lack of appreciation of the parking requirements for the facilities. The Chadwick Street car park is some 300 yards from the warehouse, not especially convenient. It is uphill all the way from the car park to the wharf and difficult for families with pushchairs, people with disabilities or reduced mobility. This would, without doubt, result in parking on roads near the wharf.

Heritage issues

The combined uses proposed in the warehouse do not address the heritage issues, which were a further reason for refusing the initial application.

This is, first, because the cafe and fitness centre would occupy the majority of the warehouse space and, secondly, because the warehouse is only part of the site; other listed buildings are affected by the

overdevelopment and the heritage aspect of much of the site will be obliterated by the houses. The contextual setting for the wharf and the surrounding area has heritage importance—the top lock, Lime Kiln House, lime kilns—ignored by the housing scheme. This was all clearly explained in the Marple Civic Society heritage comments on the first planning application.

The photos included with the warehouse development proposal are misleading. The area to the right of the warehouse is shown as an outdoor seating area. This will not be possible as it is the area planned for access by passengers to the New Horizons boat and also for canal boat users taking their rubbish to the skips and their toilets to the elsan. The area in front of the warehouse is shown as grassed over. Again, this will not be possible as, according to drawings submitted by CRT, it will be a parking area for the seven houses, New Horizons, and a space for refuse lorries entering the wharf to turn around. Consequently, people reading the warehouse development documents in isolation will not have a true picture of the proposal.

Facilities for boaters

Moreover, the warehouse proposal document and public information leaflet make no mention of the planned houses and the associated parking, waste disposal facilities, toilet block for boaters and storage facilities that will be built next to the warehouse.

I am aware of one local resident who, having read the warehouse proposal, was shocked to then learn of the planned houses. Crowding the warehouse with parked cars and rubbish skips does not respect the heritage value of the building.

As far as I can see from the drawings, absolutely no change has been

made by CRT to the density of the planned housing. So on what grounds are CRT submitting a planning application and expecting a different outcome from last year?

Without the proposed houses, the proposal for the warehouse is fantastic. It would be lovely to have a community café, something connected to wellbeing and fitness, and something for heritage/education. If, in the plans, there was space around the warehouse to show off the building and to provide parking, it really would be marvellous. However, if it is wedged in between the houses, parking and waste bins, plus the New Horizons yard and all the related vehicles, inconvenience and inaccessibility could soon take its toll.

Fears about anti-boater feeling

The problems that boaters will have if houses are built include:

- complaints about boats/boaters by residents of the houses,
- poor access to the boaters' facilities—this site is also approved for self-pumpout by boats equipped to do so, which would probably no longer be the case,
- lack of space for loading/unloading boats,
- proximity of the boaters' facilities (toilets/rubbish) to the café,
- complete loss of space for plant and materials for canal and lock repair/maintenance.

It is yet another obliteration and loss of canal heritage and land to residential housing.

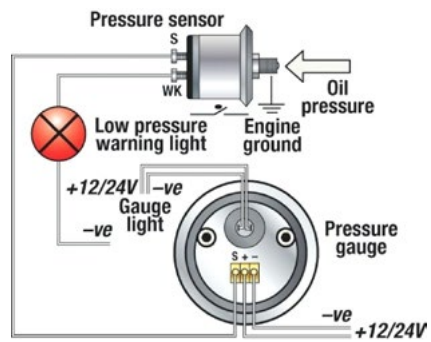


The warehouse at Marple Wharf
Photo: Peter Fellows

TECHIE'S CORNER

Aspects of boat design, construction, equipment, facilities or maintenance

A few times a year, I get questions, or read about, engine overheating or loss of oil pressure. In one case, a boater gave me a set of symptoms that were simply unbelievable. He said their temperature gauge got to 150°C, but he did not mention any clouds of steam and burned paint on the engine. Despite



Engine gauges

Tony Brooks explains false readings.



Tony Brooks has offered to answer any technical enquiries that members may have. Please send your question(s) to Tony via nabonews@nabo.org.uk and I will forward them to him. Note: Tony may use the questions and his answers without further permission to advise others.

telling me at one point that the temperature gauge AND sender unit were both new, it later transpired that his 'engineer' had only fitted a gauge, leaving the old sender in place.

American standard senders have about half the resistance of European ones and often (but not always) they use different threads. What I think happened is that the 'engineer' got a European sender and gauge kit, but found that the sender had a different thread. This meant that he could not fit it, so he left the American one in the engine.

Hence the reader swearing blind that the engine was overheating, although not displaying any other symptoms. Thus, the alleged 150°C was actually about 75°C, which is not overheating. The moral is always to change gauges and senders in pairs unless you KNOW, or you can test to find, which standard they were built to.

However, electric gauge

senders are not that reliable, so if you get what looks like an incorrect reading with no other symptoms, there will be a much-better-than-evens chance that the sender is failing.

As a quick test on the majority of senders, simply short the live terminal to a negative, like the engine block. If the gauge moves to full-scale deflection, any fault is likely to be the sender. If it does not, then it might be the gauge, but a wiring fault is always possible; especially if you have a large multi-plug in your main engine wiring harness.



Rewind

Issue No 5, 2004

Howard Anguish explores NABO News from 15 years ago



Slow Down The Chairman mentions the window stickers that say: "What part of SLOW DOWN don't you understand?" and says that it doesn't actually specify what this means. He suggests a better request would be "Pass moored boats slowly, or even very slowly or dead slow". I agree that I get annoyed when I see the stickers which are aimed at everyone, not only those who are going too fast!

What is a mooring? He also suggests that a definition of a mooring should be 'A piece of bank where one can safely and securely tie up any boat that can use that waterway without impeding other waterway users' (my underlining).

His contention is that many BW moorings didn't meet these criteria. In these days of increased towpath cycling and heavier towpath use in general, this is a campaign that has even more relevance today.

Tidal cruising The Secretary writes about a proposal for a NABO organised 'cruise in company' in 2005, cruising the Severn between Sharpness and Bristol, and asks for anyone who is interested to get in touch.

For a small fee (£10), NABO would make all arrangements—pilot, correct documentation etc.—for you. All you would need to do would be to turn up with the appropriate insurance and boat equipment. I can certainly remember one or two organised similar organised cruises—one down the Thames and up the Medway and, I think, one across the Wash.

However, would this be appropriate nowadays, with today's focus on Health & Safety and increased litigation?

Attend a rally for free (in 2005) The Secretary offered an invitation for members to help at boat rallies, with free attendance to the rally for a minimum of two people, free attendance for your boat and a bankside mooring close to the rally site.

This was a good way to spread the word about NABO and it may be worth considering the resurrection of this idea to assist in the search for new members.

Some thoughts on cleaning brass There is an interesting article on brass and how to look after it, written by Nigel Parkinson, which is still very relevant today and would make a useful article to reprint in NABO News, suitably updated where appropriate. To read it in full it can be found on pages 23—25 of issue 5 in 2004, in the 'Back Issues' section of the NABO website.

Overtaking A letter from David Cragg discusses the issues involved when overtaking another boat, making the point that the onus is on the overtaking boat to keep clear.

He also points out the little understood 'interaction' that can often take place—especially if passing either too close or too fast. The boat being overtaken can certainly help by slowing right down and allowing a boat to get past safely. He mentions that, like dancing, it takes "two to tango and one to lead"!

NABO News back issues are available online at: nabo.org.uk/index.php/reference/nn-back-issues-2

Letters to the Editor

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

Yet more cyclists spoiling it for boaters

Having just moved off from Tunnel Pool on the Leek Branch of the Caldon Canal, CRT has spoiled what I considered to be one of the most beautiful mooring spots on the canals. They have done this by allowing the towpath to be designated a cycle route. What was a peaceful location now has speeding cyclists passing (and a motor scooter and a quad bike). The dust generated covered our boat and made it uncomfortable to sit outside the boat.

The general point is that the path alongside the canal is a towing path, not a cycle path. I have encountered speeding antisocial cycling over the whole of the canal system. The days when we could walk our dog and enjoy the peace of the canalside are gone, as one is forever tense waiting for that "ting ting" from a cyclist behind you. As for dismounting at bridge holes, I have yet to witness this happen.

As to mooring on the towpath bank I would make the following points:

1) If a boat is stationary at the bankside, then a passer-by can assume it will be tied up to the bank, probably with a line fore and aft. 2) Unless the lines cross the towpath, then I see no reason to mark where they are attached to the bank. There is enough single use plastic on the canals without adding bags and bottles, which may blow away.

CRT has made a mistake encouraging cycling on the towpath (presumably so that the path gets a free upgrade from likes of Sustran etc.). It has destroyed the peace and tranquillity of the network. It should be made clear that pedestrians have right of way.

Graham Hearnden

A cyclist's view of towpath racers

I felt compelled to write to you. I do not wish any of my personal details publicised, but you are welcome to use all or any of my comments if you wish. I am a continuous cruiser and I have owned

my boat for five years. I am also a life-long cyclist. There are now thousands of National Cycle Network signs along towpaths. This has led to more cyclists assuming that the towpath is now their domain and pedestrians, boaters, dogs etc. have to give way.

I am amazed to read that CRT states that cyclists should give primary consideration to pedestrians and those handling boats. What is CRT doing to deliver this message' to cyclists? Surely, they should have conducted risk assessments. What preventative measures have been instigated? Measures such as rumble strips either side of bridge holes; clear signs at key entry points for cyclists, stating the priority rule; advice to cycling groups regarding cyclists' potential liability in the event of accidents; warning signs at top and bottom of lock flights that these are dangerous areas to speed through.

Increasingly I am seeing multiple bikes racing along the towpath, with parents and children having to step into undergrowth to clear the cycleway for bikers. This is awful and it will lead to fewer children being brought to the waterside on canals used by cyclists, especially in towns.

Several times, I have had irate bikers annoyed that I am hanging onto my centre line ahead of mooring up, blocking their raceway. At bridges, I have witnessed several accidents between oncoming bikes. If you are lucky, one of them may ding a bell, but they give, at best, a second for pedestrians to react. It's madness. Someone is going to get seriously injured or killed. I had a toddler with me and had to grab her and lean up against the bridge wall, or else she would have been ploughed into by a bike with two-inch wide tyres, racing along. Many bikers, like this one, have earphones in and simply do not hear a shout.

CRT is going to be prima facie liable for resulting claims in future unless it commences serious actions to minimise the risks and ensure that the towpath is restored to being for use by all—with the priority being pedestrians, then boaters and bottom of the list: cyclists.



Boating 'season'

With reference to Helen's correspondence with CRT concerning 'the boating season' and fishing on lock landings in the winter, I'm sure the enclosed pictures show the lack of understanding or enforcement of any CRT policy regarding fishing. Share the space!

Brian D Jarrett



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 Brian Holt



Maintenance on the GU

Earlier in the summer, the locks on the Buckby flight were locked from 10am to 4pm to conserve water. Fortunately, I closed the top gates and the photo (left) shows how much water leaked out of the lock in 20 minutes after I closed the gates. If I hadn't closed the top gate...

In a similar vein, the Foxton flight was locked at 4pm, meaning that, in my case, it was not possible to get down the flight after arriving and contacting the volunteer lock keeper at 12pm. In itself not a problem, but pointless as a water-saving measure, when, after the flight was locked, a paddle was lifted and water ran down the flight overnight. Evidently, this had been going on for days and even the volunteer lock keeper was confused as to why they were not running boats down the flight with the water! I suspect boaters would have a lot more respect for CRT if it just focused on dealing with some of the leakages.

Mark Tizard



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