

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT OWNERS CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday 5th March 2011
in the Library Room, Braunston Memorial Hall, Braunston
starting at 10.00 am

PRESENT WERE: Phil Prettyman (Chairman), Matt Beamish, Richard Booth, George Boyle, Sue Cawson, Jim Cook, David Daines, Sandra Green, Steve Harmer, Mike Harrison, Martin Jiggins, David Lowe, Iain MacTavish, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Alison Smedley and Rupert Smedley.

Clair Butler, Sarah Hale, Bernard Hales and Margaret Booth were in attendance.

1. Apologies and Welcome

Apologies had been received from Viv Scragg.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on 8th January 2011 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

3. Run through of AGM arrangements

3.1 The committee nominations and elections were discussed. A nomination had been received for Laura Sturrock as Treasurer.

3.2 Sarah Hales was appointed by the committee as Publicity Officer. This is a non-committee post as the constitution currently doesn't allow for a Publicity Officer and the two additional posts allowed are currently filled.

3.3 It was agreed that amendments to the constitution to allow for a more flexible structure should be considered by the committee during 2011 with a view to putting proposals to the 2012 AGM.

3.4 Everything is arranged for Malcolm Braine to speak after the AGM; Roger Fuller is arranging for it to be filmed.

4. Ellesmere Port Easter Gathering and Liverpool/Wigan Events

4.1 Ellesmere Port Easter Gathering – a room at the Home Guard Club (top of Northgate staircase) is booked for a gathering on Maundy Thursday evening where Ray Buss will give a talk about the canals in Chester.

4.2 Alison had been asked whether Club members would entertain a delegation of 10 visitors from IWA Ireland who are visiting Chester on Mandy Thursday (21st April) and will be in the vicinity of Tower Wharf from 10am to midday. This was agreed and volunteers will be needed to offer cups of coffee and show them engine rooms etc.

4.3 The Liverpool Boat Show had been cancelled, but an event has now been reinstated and named "Spring on the Waterfront" from 29th April to 6th May. Logistics for Mersey crossings, etc, remain the same (convoys planned for 28th, 29th and 30th April). Moorings will be in Salthouse Dock. The main difference is that the marine industry element of the event won't take place, so funding is no longer available to cover the costs. Sponsorship has been identified for almost everything including Ship Canal surveys, rental of marquee, MSC transit and pilot fees. The only thing boaters might have to pay for is the lock fee. BW are having to be more flexible than usual regarding locking through the Liverpool Link and this might result in better arrangements for other boats in the future.

4.4 Wigan – 14/15th May 2011 – George Boyle will ask BW about reserving some moorings, and investigate a room to use for gathering and for the committee meeting. Tim Young's short boat *Severn* is a possibility for this. [Post meeting note: Tim has confirmed that *Severn* can be used for the committee meeting.]

5. Chairman's Report

5.1 Phil reported that things are hotting up on the move to charity status for BW. He had the opportunity to meet with the panel that is appointing the new charity trustees. After introducing himself and HNBOC he gave a talk (see transcript circulated separately). He also gave out copies of photographs and beefed up the freight bit by stressing

how our members are involved in a full time or a part time basis. It seemed to make an impression and set the scene for the others. Phil was not over-critical of BW, stressing how we wanted to work together to set up the new charity and overcoming the financial and other challenges ahead. He stressed the range of professional expertise that is available through our organisations and how this should help the new charity. Other speakers at the event included Peter Stone (Grantham Canal), Nigel Stevens (BMF), David Kent (Anglers). John Dodwell (CBOA) attended a second session of the same panel. Phil had circulated John Dodwell's report of his session for information.

- 5.2 Further to these meetings, Phil has made a number of suggestions to BW and the panel. Firstly advisory panels should be established sooner rather than later. They can offer important advice to BW now as well as providing a framework for the new charity. Following the model of the Heritage panel (which BW sees as successful) Phil has suggested the following: Volunteering, Marketing and Communications, Community, Commercial, Navigation, Education, Angling and Heritage as subjects for advisory panels. This is being followed up with meetings later this month. The Club could (should) have representatives on several of these. Phil's second suggestion (to the panel) was how a membership organisation for the charity could be set up. This was purely a personal opinion as he feels that executives and managements are more responsive to membership-based organisations and would be less likely to perpetuate a 'top-down' approach.
- 5.3 Further to recent email debate, Phil asked for clarification on the issue of the licensing of Joey boats. Phil suggested that there should be three classes of boats: motor boats, butties and un-cabined unpowered open boats. Bernard said there are probably less than 20 serviceable joeys. Mostly kept in museums or off-line and probably don't do less than a week's boating; presence at a museum/creating a scene at one of the 4 main museum sites in the country. Mostly currently licensed as museum boats. Phil will raise this at a meeting he has coming up with Sally Ash. If it needs to be progressed beyond this Phil will raise it at the BWA meeting and/or BWA Heritage group. It was noted that there is a completely different set up on the Thames with powered boats, unpowered boats (50%) and "barges" (free unless they are carrying something!). Richard will look up number of butties still unmotorised. There is a danger that if butties aren't cheaper to licence then owners are more likely to be tempted to motorise them.

6. Secretary's Report

- 6.1 Since the last meeting Alison had sent the letter sent to BW re craft licencing.
- 6.2 Alison had emailed David Blagrove as discussed at last meeting to confirm agreement to getting involved with an Easter Event in Stoke Bruerne in 2013
- 6.3 River Dee – Further to email correspondence concerning the Dee Branch in Chester, Alison reported that IWA Chester Branch have not taken us up on the offer of campaigning opportunity when boats are in Chester on their way to the Port for Easter.

7. Treasurer's Report

- 7.1 Matt Beamish reported that the balances are as follows:

	Debit	Credit
Current A/c statement balance (Nat West) as at 31/01/2011*		£3,770.35
Allowance for uncleared cheques		
Expenses	£179.92	
Newsletter 2011/1	£1,346.34	
Christmas Cards 2011	£1,022.34	
Errors not yet refunded		£7.00
Current A/C balance		£1,228.75
Savings A/c (Santander) (0.1% interest) as at 31/01/2011		£12,406.27
Back dated interest Oct-Jan 2011 1%		£37.63

Total funds at bank**£13,672.65**

* Current account statements for February not yet received.

- 7.2 Promised increased level of interest on Deposit account has now been made and back-dated to October 2010.
- 7.3 Errors/Fraud. One outstanding error remains to be reimbursed. Low intensity activity continues.
- 7.4 Accounts have been examined by Dave Turner and will be presented to the AGM. Dave has kindly agreed to continue to examine the accounts next year.
- 7.5 Matt suggested that the committee should consider raising the annual subscription. It has been set at £12 since 2001. He will mention it at the AGM this afternoon and suggest that it is likely that at next year's AGM we will be putting forward a proposal to increase the sub.
- 7.6 Matt suggested that the current mileage rate of 15p should be increased. He suggested the rate needs adjusting up to 23 or 25p/mile - and perhaps committee members should be encouraged to share as much travelling as is possible.

8. Membership Secretary's Report

- 8.1 David Daines reported that as at 3rd March, there are 453 members, including 5 Exchange & 2 Honorary. At time of last meeting 446 inclusive. Of paying members 286 are non SO and 160 are paid by SO. As at 3rd Mar, there are 44 non SO January renewals yet to be received. 2 of these should have been paid by SO, but for which no bank payment was received in January. David has written to both of these and is awaiting a reply. Both have caused SO problems in the past and Val has 2011/1 Newsletters withheld until confirmation of renewal received.
- 8.2 The following new members were approved:

Dave Cleverley	N/A	1176
Robert Crew	[Nuts in May]	1621
John Pick	[Neston]	1622
Alan Fincher	[Chalice]	1623
Grant Gibson	N/A	1624
Ben Selfe	Lyra & [Knot Krazy]	1625
Christopher Dean	N/A	1626
Sue Daines	Cyprus & Cedar	1627

- 8.3 David raised the issue of labeling "other halves" which had been resolved by changing "wife" to "spouse" so that it reads "spouse or partner" which everyone will hopefully find acceptable. This led to the issue of joint membership/additional memberships at the same address. It was agreed that an item should be put on the July agenda about constitutional changes, membership categories, etc
- 8.4 A letter about selling BW keys was passed to Clair for consideration.

9. Newsletter Editor's Report

- 9.1 Val reported that the press date for 2011/2 is 8th May. She has profiles from George and Iain which she didn't have room for in the current issue as she needed to restrict page numbers to get members lists in. Val thanked everyone who sent contributions in good time ahead of press date.
- 9.2 Val has bought 2000 2nd class stamps (£640) and 2500 C5 envelopes for magazine distribution at cost of £54.66.
- 9.3 Val has arranged for 7,500 Christmas cards to be printed £796.50 and bought 7,500 C6 envelopes for same £153.18 and 750 Cello bags £18.00. Together with printing 2011/1 £509 and inserts £184.00 she has presented a rather large bill to treasurer!!
- 9.4 Everyone agreed that the latest magazine was very good, and there had been lots of very positive comments about the previous bumper issue.

10. Archivist's Report

- 10.1 Richard Booth reported that he is still working on the full boat list, currently at 800 historic boats (inc part boats). Not quite ready for the website, but he should be able to ascertain number of unpowered butties/joeyes.

11. Boating Issues

- 11.1 Sue Cawson reported that the main recent issue had been the lock fendering, which has now been covered in the magazine.
- 11.2 Sue reminded everyone to encourage members to try to get their boats into Hurleston Bottom Lock (and go all the way up it if possible). Waterway Manager Wendy Capelle had offered assistance if we let her know when boats are going to try. Likely to be Monday/Tuesday/ Wednesday before Easter – Iain will advise Wendy Capelle. It is not known yet whether there will be a seasonable lock keeper at Hurleston this year.

12. Area Representative Reports

- 12.1 **London** – Sandra Green – there was a public meeting about the moorings issue last week. The whole of the Lee and Stort has been zoned to create areas for mooring, boats only allowed to stay in each zone for 7 days. Concern that this will not help with overstaying as they don't enforce the current rules. BW's intention is to roll this out across London, concern that this might be rolled out across the country. There is no legislative framework to support this, as 14 days is set in the British Waterways Act 1995 (which allows them to impose shorter restrictions to "alleviate congestion"). Bernard had heard that from the River Lee to Victoria Park is wall to wall boats, 3 deep in Victoria Park, probably 50% without licence. BW have taken on more enforcement officers.
- 12.2 **Manchester & Pennine** - next user group meeting due in early April. There have been towpath improvements in Rochdale area. George has written to his local MP as an individual with his concerns about BW's management team and their pay.
- 12.3 **North East** - David Lowe reported that he had attended a meeting yesterday of the northern operators about the operators agreement. Sally Ash is pressing strongly for her colleagues to agree to the de minimus concept, which would mean that club members could carry occasional cargoes without requiring an operators licence. David stressed that it is important for everyone to work together. The introduction of the operator agreement for day hire boats has been deferred.
- 12.4 **North Wales & Border** - nothing to report.
- 12.5 **North West** - No report.
- 12.6 **South East** - Martin Jiggins reported that there is a user group meeting due in April. Aylesbury Canal Society have signed a contract to build their marina at Circus Fields further up the Aylesbury Arm.
- 12.7 **South Wales & Severn** - Richard Frost had replied to say he is happy to continue attending meetings until such time as a new area rep is found [Post Meeting Note: Norman Mitchell was elected as South Wales & Severn Rep at the AGM; Richard Frost has been advised.]
- 12.8 **West Midlands** - Steve Harmer had nothing to report other than noting the recent correspondence with Dean Davies about the lock fendering.
- 12.9 **Central Shires** - Rupert Smedley had nothing to report
- 12.10 **East Midlands** - Mike Harrison has arranged a meeting at Stret Lock for 16th March when the lock will be dewatered, for the purpose of BW measuring the lock using laser equipment. Dave Turner will also go. Hopefully there will be a chance to go down into lock chamber and have a closer look.
- 12.11 **Fens** - Jim Cook had nothing to report.

12.12 **Kennet & Avon** - No area rep. Nothing to report.

13. Website

Ros had circulated web stats for January and February. Visitor numbers are holding up at about 1,000 per month, although they are spending slightly less time (by a few seconds) on site per visit. Steve suggests this may be because visitors are using the Recent Posts (305 and 272 views) facility to look at what's new rather than browsing through the whole site. Very pleased to see that the Leptospirosis page attracted 177 viewings in January. Overall it's still the boat pages that attract the visitors.

14. Club Shop

Clair had nothing to report. Clair thanked Val for arranging the Christmas cards.

15. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings not already covered

15.1 Ref item 8 in last minutes - New IWA Awards Officer is Paul Chilvers. Alison to email his contact details to Phil so he can make contact regarding the Alfred Ritchie Cockerel.

15.2 Weaver collection – Phil and Sue talked to Cath Turpin and the archivist at Ellesmere Port. This will be followed up further over Easter. If the collection was to be kept at Ellesmere Port the collection would be available for private research and anyone requesting to use anything from it would have to come back to the Club for permission.

16. Any Other Business

16.1 Alison had brought along a set of display boards that had been donated to IWA Stoke on Trent Branch but were unwanted by them. Clair and Iain agreed that they looked useful and they would investigate whether a further set could be bought to go with them.

16.2 November members meeting - Jim Macdonald was suggested as a possible speaker. Venue to be decided.

17. Dates and Venues of Next Meetings

- Saturday 14th May – on board *Severn* at Wigan, 11am
- 16th July – Hazelhurst Cottage, Denford, near Leek, 11am
- 17th September – Horsley Woodhouse, Derbyshire, 11am
- 12th, 19th or 26th November at new venue to be agreed (10am with members meeting 2.30pm)

The meeting closed at 12.25

Alison Smedley
Secretary