

HISTORIC NARROW BOAT CLUB
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 11.00 am on Sunday 2 August 2015
at Aylesbury Canal Society HQ, Aylesbury

PRESENT: Phil Prettyman (Chairman), Richard Booth, David Daines, Sarah Edgson, Nick Grundy, Mike Harrison, Paul Hunter, David Lowe, Michael Pinnock, Ros Prettyman, Val Roberts, Laura Sturrock.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from George Boyle, Clair Butler, Sue Cawson, Bernard Hales, Iain MacTavish, Daniel Mawdsley, Norman Mitchell, Alison Smedley, Rupert Smedley, James Tidy, Amy-Alys Tillson.

2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2015 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 2016 GATHERINGS

3.1 HNBC 50th Anniversary Gathering at Basingstoke

Phil reported on a meeting he had attended on 8 July 2015 with Fiona Shipp and James Taylor (Basingstoke Canal Authority) and Martin Leech (Vice Chairman of Basingstoke Canal Society). It was clear that there had been a very positive shift in attitude at BCA who were now very keen to see boats using the canal and were enthusiastic about our event. The BCS were also keen to support us as it would also be their 50th Anniversary and there were many advantages in running the two events in tandem – BCS were on the spot, had insurance for a public event and a bar licence. It was estimated that BCS would probably have about 50 boats, and HNBC 39. They had some reservations about our chosen date but it was agreed to back our choice of 6/7 August 2016, although they strongly advised against Brookwood Park as a venue because:

- At this time of year, it is an active wildlife spot and we would encounter considerable problems with Natural England.
- The 5 locks above Woking are back-pumped, but only 8 locks of water per day can be handled. The 6 locks below Woking are also back-pumped but 16 locks per day can be handled, so twice as many boats.
- There are no facilities close to the canal.

As an alternative BCA and BCS suggested a site in Woking. Phil visited the site with Martin Leech and thought it was suitable with several advantages:

- It is secluded, almost rural, yet close to the town centre, and walking distance from the railway station.
- There is a suitable green park space large enough to accommodate marquees.
- Water supply is close to the canal.
- We might expect strong support from Woking Council who were keen to raise the profile of the canal and might be persuaded to provide some practical support for the event.
- Potential moorings (one mile) with a good width of the canal.
- Good deep moorings at an old wharf site about 100m away.

On the downside, the stretch of canal alongside the best part of the site was shallow at the edges. BCA hoped to be able to carry out some dredging and some staging or pontoons might make it more feasible.

David D commented that the biggest potential problem was water supply but that Woking was probably a more practical option. Phil said that the club would have to manage our boat arrival and departure times very carefully, and crews would have to book slots to use the locks. Once on site, boats might be able to go in pairs further up the canal, again booked and dependent upon water restrictions, or if this were not possible, perhaps the club could hire the BCS trip boat for an outing above Deepcut Lock.

Val asked about club-only activities such as film shows/quiz, and it was suggested that we might be able to hire a separate hall/room as the town centre was close.

Cost – several possibilities needed to be explored, depending on whether members intended to go straight to the gathering, or to use their time to explore southern waterways. Phil would list the options in his Chairman's Notes in the winter edition of the newsletter in plenty of time for members to obtain a gold licence in January 2016 if required.

A further meeting was needed on site with BCA and BCS representatives and committee members. Laura, Richard, Nick, Clair, Iain, Ros and Phil were available during mid-August, and David D subject to boating commitments. [Post meeting note: Thursday 20 August was fixed for the meeting.]

3.2 Easter Gatherings

2016 – the club’s resources would be taken up with organising the Basingstoke gathering later in the year, so it was thought more appropriate to support Ellesmere Port’s Easter event. **2017** – the club would organise its own Easter gathering possibly at Pelsall but in any event somewhere on the BCN.

4 PUBLICATIONS

4.1 **Weaver** – Mike reported that Peter had completed the overall map and was now working on the individual chapter maps. It would be ready for printing by the end of August so that review copies could be sent out before its official launch at the November club social meeting. Mike would tell Paul the final number of pages in order to register the book with ISBN. Mike had reproduced the copyright statement from the Ken Keay book. Selling price £12 as agreed at the March 2015 committee meeting. Val would bring forward the publishing date for newsletter 2015/4 in order to include an announcement of its imminent launch. Mike would circulate the final version in .pdf format to the committee for proof-reading before sending it to the printers.

4.2 **Harecastle tunnel records** – Iain was in the process of copying them.

5 SPEAKERS AT CLUB MEETINGS

5.1 **November 2015 Social** – Dr Della Sadler Moore with Lorna York on “Care on the Cut”

5.2 **AGM March 2016** – Val had received an email offering a talk on the history of the Basingstoke Canal by Roger Cansdale, the press officer for the BCS. It was suggested that two speakers be sought, both to speak about the Basingstoke, one at the AGM before members set off, and another one during the gathering itself. The team visiting on 20 August would explore this further. Paul reminded the meeting that IWA had a list of speakers, and it was agreed to consult this if nothing suitable could be arranged with BCS.

6 WRITTEN REPORTS had been submitted from the following committee members, and are contained in the Appendix to these Minutes. These were taken as read; the topics covered are listed below, with any decisions or further discussion topics shown as bullet points.

6.1 **Chairman** (Phil Prettyman) – see item 3.1, Basingstoke Gathering.

6.2 **Secretary** - (Paul Hunter) – investigating problems with member discounts; letter of approval to West Mids area manager re Worcester Bar railings.

6.3 **Treasurer** (Laura Sturrock) – bank balances; donations.

Laura explained that it was important to develop a policy on what to do with funds raised by donations (cash, books).

Later in the meeting, under Any Other Business, Paul raised the question of a request for funds to help with the cost of sign-writing the Peacock, which had been John Hemelryk’s boat. The Peacock was currently at Brinklow, was owned by The Think Tank (previously Birmingham Science Museum) and kept at BCLM. As far as he knew, the mooring fees of £1,500 pa went into BCLM’s general funds. As one of the club’s restoration awards was named after John Hemelryk, Paul wondered if an occasional grant from club funds could be made to really important boats such as the Peacock. Discussion points were as follows:

The Peacock:

- Michael – signwriting was superficial and cosmetic work, not restoration.
- Phil – we have turned down significant applications for funds in the past, it would cause resentment if we were now to give funds to one boat. Our policy has been to donate funds to projects that had the potential to benefit all our members and it was important not to rush into a decision for one boat.
- Sarah – we could help by mounting a fund-raising campaign for the Peacock.
- Michael – we did not give money to the Gifford appeal earlier in the year so it would hardly be fair to give money to the Peacock now.
- Phil – we could write to the Think Tank to ask what their plans are for the Peacock with a view to setting up discussions between Think Tank, BCLM and HNBC. Perhaps establish a Friends of Peacock group. Paul to write.

Donated funds in general

- Laura – no benefit in analysing source of funds into those raised by subscriptions, donations and the Shop, all money went into club funds
- David D – we could consider a small cash donation to the winners of each year's Keay and Hemelryk Awards
- Phil – we could consider setting aside a boat restoration fund each year and inviting bids on a first-come first served basis.
- Laura – both of the above would be difficult to administer and would involve inspecting boats, placing the “inspectors” in an invidious position when grants were at stake.
- Michael – it was important to support projects that improved the infrastructure of the canals.
- Nick – maybe we could set up a fund for Hurleston and ask CRT to match-fund.
- Mike – Hurleston might be popular but we should not lose sight of the fact that it was CRT's responsibility.
- Phil – a donation of, say, £1,000, would be a drop in the ocean for what would be needed by Hurleston, but perhaps we could sponsor an event to highlight the locks, or contribute to a specialist survey.
- Val – HNBC is a members' club, not a charity set up to give money away to good causes. Much of its income was raised by Clair & Iain's work on the Shop and without this the club might be much poorer in the future. Projects are preferable (Ribble Link, Anderton, Thames & Severn), not individual boats.
- Laura – the club had about £18,000 in reserve, so could allocate £6,000 to good causes without risking a cash shortage.
- Ros – Waterways Recovery Group was always a good cause and fairly uncontroversial.
- Paul – would prefer to see cash spent on existing main canals rather than potential re-openings.
- Phil – CRT now much more hopeful and can plan again now it is not shackled to government edicts.
- David – proposed donating £1,000 to WRG's van appeal. Second by Val and agreed nem con. Laura to action.

6.4 Membership Secretary (Sarah Edgson) – verbal report at the meeting:

19 New members had been signed up since the last meeting and these were noted:

Ed Harty & F Mace	Cambourne	1784
Ernie Parsons	n/a	1785
Taylor's Boatyard	n/a	1786
Tom Cauldwell	Heyford	1787
Barry & Jenny Wood	Gerald No 13	1788
David Bradshaw	n/a	1789
Michael Beveridge	Banstead	1790
Vince Morris	n/a	1791
David Richards	n/a	1792
Alan Buckle	Bletchley	1793
Jason McCabe & Lucy Tomkins	Russia	1794
Paul Cobley	n/a	1795
Trevor Wilson	n/a	1796
Roger & Jacqueline Barnes	Alsager	1797
Simon & Jane Carey	Cepheus	1798
Daniel Partridge	Hare	1799
Roy and Clare Henney	n/a	1800
Jane Marshall and George Marshall	Viceroy	1802
Ian Saunders	Blissful Daze	1803

Membership cards – Sarah circulated a sample of the new combined letter+membership card which was approved for immediate use. For Joint members, it was agreed that they should receive one membership card showing both their names.

Labels for newsletter – Sarah had met with Steve Wood and they had sorted through problems with the label printing. These could now be printed in alphabetical order and Sarah would ensure, by a manual sort if necessary, that the matching letters were also in the same order. Val commented that the labels were needed by 10 August. Sarah would inform Val when the bulk labels were posted.

Lapsed membership – Sarah would contact Bernie Crossland (1707) to invite him to renew.

Membership lists - Val queried the issue of membership lists for committee and general membership use. At the previous meeting it had been agreed that we would cease to publish full contacts details in a list (on the website and by post on request) as had been done in the past. Instead, the club would produce a full confidential list only for committee members showing Member Name, Membership No, Address, Phone and Boat name, to assist in the administration and running of the club. It had also been agreed to produce two lists for the general membership: one alphabetically by member, with Boat name, and one alphabetically by Boat name, with member. Neither list to show contact details.

Sarah would produce full membership lists for the committee's use and would prepare the limited edition for the general membership.

- 6.5 **Archivist** (Richard Booth) – report from Iain MacTavish on research into long-term storage.

It was agreed to ask Iain to go ahead with his investigations into Deepstore's facility and to set it up for the club.

- 6.6 **Newsletter Editor** (Val Roberts) – next press date 3 August 2015; labels/letters required for mailing newsletter; lapsed member; new Christmas cards; contact details on membership lists; wrongly credit photo from the Weaver collection.

Labels for the newsletter had been discussed under the Membership Secretary's report.

Backup of Newsletters - It was agreed that Val should purchase another high capacity external hard drive. It was also suggested that she might set up an iCloud facility for this purpose – action on this to be postponed until a meeting at Val's house, to be arranged.

Weaver photograph in Waterways World – Val would write to Waterways World asking them to correct the citation on the photograph of the White Heather they had printed, and to publish a correction. If there was no response to her request, Phil would write as well.

- 6.7 **Club Shop** (Clair Butler) – sales since at Braunston, Scarisbrook, Audlem; postal sales; new books in stock; second-hand books purchased; raffle prizes; Aylesbury event 19 September 2015.

- 6.8 **Navigation** (Sue Cawson) – more representation of live-aboards and continuous cruisers on NAG's mooring & licensing group; pawl restrictors, suspension of further implementation; visit by NAG to Henhurst Lock to view access difficulties; update on CRT's response to reports of problems.

Bankside rangers – Nick reported that the Beatty had been spotted 4 times within a short distance.

CRT's database – Michael reported anomalies that were causing problems (lack of details of boat's home mooring, leading to automatic generating of warning letters) and David D confirmed others (no provision for suspension of moorings for boating events, again leading to inappropriate warning letters)

CRT Head of Boating – David L remarked that he had been impressed by new appointee Mike Grimes, who came from a strong customer service background and was himself a boat owner. He wondered if he might be a suitable speaker for a future meeting.

Tunnel signs – Richard reported that new CRT signs had appeared at tunnel mouths, advising maximum widths. These were inaccurate due, he thought, to conversion from metric to imperial units. Richard would send details to Sue for future NAG meetings.

Winding holes – Richard reminded the meeting that, as reported by Sue earlier, CRT did not have a definitive list of winding holes. He had therefore started compiling his own list while he was out boating. Committee members were asked to send him contributions to expand the list. Richard suggested that the list could be presented to CRT to ask them to confirm its accuracy. This was agreed.

- 6.9 **Press Officer & Social Media** (Amy-Alys Tillson) – request for NarrowBoat column topics; filming request for boat in Stoke Breurne; usage numbers on Twitter and FaceBook.

- 6.10 **Website** (Ros Prettyman) – nothing to report

- 6.11 **IWA Liaison** (Alison Smedley) – date set for group to discuss filming boating techniques; Heritage Alliance meeting in September; only two heritage boats at IWA Festival Northampton.

Volunteers - Michael commented on his experience of some volunteers who had no experience and little training (eg 40 minute wait caused by inappropriate advice from a new volunteer at Hillmorton bottom locks). Other volunteers were extremely helpful (eg Banbury, Audlem and Chester). Michael would use these experiences/stories to inform the discussions with CRT about a film for training volunteers.

6.12 Area Reps

Central Shires (Rupert Smedley) – no report

East (James Tidy) – closures and restrictions on the rivers Ouse and Nene; FaceBook Fen Boaters page worthwhile; new mooring restrictions in place at Ely; Cam licence extension doubts.

East Midlands (Mike Harrison) – verbal report

- Stamp End Lock, River Witham - following request for input on merits of mitre versus guillotine gates, Mike had responded in favour of mitre gates.
- Reported 'Abnormal load' of 270 tonnes on the river Trent. Mike commented that this tonnage would have been abnormal on the roads, but not on the Trent. David L commented that CRT had been exceptionally helpful about the trip and had issued positive press report. He also mentioned a potential contract of 2,000 tonnes a week by barge into Nottingham.

Kennet & Avon (Nick Grundy) – a number of unplanned emergency stoppages; correspondence about removal of walkways over lock-gates at Bath Deep lock.

- Nick was pleased that the response about Bath Deep lock indicated that CRT was aware of the dangers and was trying to address them.
- David L commented that to try to reduce the danger of boats becoming hooked up on lock walk-ways, the published maximum length had been reduced for boats using the locks on the Calder & Hebble.

London (Michael Pinnock) – verbal report at the meeting

- London borough councils, responsible for monitoring housing benefit, were collecting data about boat rentals and live aboards. CRT was faced with the problems of making boat residents homeless when licences or moorings were not paid.
- Maintenance on the London canals seemed to be quite good, apart from the area around Camden.

Manchester & Pennine (George Boyle) – no report.

North East (David Lowe) – new Leeds visitor moorings; inexperienced boater rescued on tidal Ouse; Leeds Waterfront festival successful; first shipment of marine aggregate arriving in Hull.

North Wales & Borders (Iain MacTavish)

- Phil reported that another meeting was set for August to talk about Hurleston. Richard reported that he had tried with the Squire and noticed it was quite tight and caused more problems than when he had previously gone through with the wider Dane.

North West (Daniel Mawdsley) – successful local festival; new sill fitted at Poolstock Lock after damage; collapsed culvert on Rufford branch; boats stranded either side of Ribble link.

South East & Thames (David Daines) – problems with CRT towpath wardens having incorrect information about temporary suspension of moorings for waterway festivals.

South Wales & Severn (Norman Mitchell) – no report

West Midlands (Sarah Edgson) – verbal report at meeting

- Rushall – water draining into the garden of a canalside property was causing concern.
- BCN Challenge – 8 boats had got stuck at Curdworth, and the W&E was becoming full of rubbish. Sarah would raise this at the next User Group meeting.

7 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ACTION LIST (not already covered in other items above)

- 7.1 (May 2015, minute 6) Richard had received no suggested definitions for a replica or reproduction boat. It was suggested that he research the definition as used by National Historic Ships register ready for the next committee meeting. CRT's Historic Boat discount excludes converted boats, but if they were accepted by NHS, there was a case to be made to CRT to do likewise. Phil to follow up with CRT's new Head of Boating

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 David D noted that historic boats attending this year's Shackerstone Family Festival were being asked for a £20 fee when in the past their attendance had been seen as an attraction and they had been invited free of charge.
- 8.2 Liverpool Rally 10-12 June 2016 – to celebrate 100 years of the Leeds & Liverpool canal. Val (newsletter) and Ros (website) to add to 2016 calendar of events.

9 NEXT MEETINGS

3 October 2015	11am	Gloucester Docks Museum
28 November 2015	11am	Lapworth Village Hall, prior to Social
9 January 2016	11am	Samuel Barlow, Alvecote
5 March 2016	10am	Lapworth Village Hall, prior to AGM at 2.00pm

It was suggested that August meetings might take place at a canal event, as many members were already present (eg Audlem), but this was discounted as in the past members had had other commitments during an event and had not been able to attend for the full time. Nevertheless, the August 2016 committee meeting might have to be held during the Anniversary Gathering on the Basingstoke Canal.

The meeting closed at 5.16pm.

Phil Prettyman

Chairman